

Lost Me, Gained Regret (Jane and Bryant Ferguson)

Chapter 291

Was there some bad blood between him and Dorothy behind the scenes?

Gregory half-closed his eyes, sounding utterly casual, "Don't flatter yourself. I was looking forward to dealing with her myself."

I promptly responded, "Fine, then today's drama is on you."

I could get back at Dorothy while keeping my hands clean. Why the hell not?

Gregory gave me a side glance, chuckling, "Jane, you sure know how to climb the ladder, huh?"

"Guess I do!" I laughed, "But when did you catch wind of it?"

Gregory looked at me like I was a fool. "You think Jarrod would make a move without giving me a heads-up?"

I furrowed my brows, thinking it over, and it clicked. "Got it."

Jarrod would tell Gregory about it. If Gregory nodded, it was like Jarrod was doing Gregory a favor since I had leveraged Gregory's influence when I approached him that day. If things went south, Gregory would be there to back him up. And if Gregory objected, it would be even better for Jarrod. He wouldn't have to risk facing retaliation from the Myers family. Either way, he was sitting pretty.

When back at River Villa, we parted ways after exiting the elevator, each heading to our apartment.

I had barely crashed on the couch when the doorbell rang.

Was someone having second thoughts about taking the blame?

I lazily made my way to the entrance, twisting the doorknob while casually saying, "Mr. Ford, you've changed your mind about taking the fall, have you?"

But standing there was Mark. His face was all smiles, but his eyes momentarily froze when he heard me mention Gregory and then softened again, "Jane, haven't had dinner yet, have you?" "Not yet." I shook my head and smiled. "Mark, what brings you here?"

"I got off work early today and picked up something for you to eat." He lifted the takeaway bag in his hand, "You're sure to love it."

I noticed the logo on the bag, feeling surprised. "Isn't that seafood joint way up north? Traffic's a nightmare, not to mention the wait..."

That place was an institution in RiverCity. We used to go there back in college. Back then, boundless energy, we'd trek any distance for a good meal.

Mark's smile was gentle. "If it makes you happy, I'd run till my legs fell off."

"Thanks, Mark." I hesitated before taking the insulated bag from him, smiling, "You must be hungry, too. Join me?"

As I spoke, I bent down to grab a pair of slippers from the shoe cabinet.

"It'd be rude to refuse." He stepped inside, his eyes lighting up with joy, feeling as if having dinner with me was the highlight of his day.

But I was worried I couldn't give him back the same kind of deep, real love he was showing me.

Mark came over, helping me unpack the bag, dish by dish. The aroma was enticing.

I tried the spicy fish, and immediately, my appetite surged, "Tastes just as amazing as I remember!"

"Knew you'd love it." Mark was clearly relieved, his smile lighting up his whole face. "If you like it, I can make the trip more often."

"No need. It's too far." I took a shrimp, gently declining, "With traffic and waiting, it's a three to four-hour round trip, not worth it." His gaze intensified. "If you like it, it's worth it."

Chapter 292

We were adults and had cleared the air between us days ago. It was evident what Mark's kindness and attention meant. I was at a loss for how to respond. I had said everything I needed to say that day. Constantly turning him down would only make things awkward, and we might end up not even being friends.

Mark hesitated, "Jane, am I making you feel pressured?"

I fiddled with my fork, about to speak, when he continued thoughtfully, "Like I said, you don't need to respond to anything. Just think of it as something friends do for each other." "When you're ready to start a new relationship, we can take it slow," he added.

My heart warmed at his words. I might have fallen deeply for him if I hadn't gone through that disastrous marriage with Bryant and if I were still at the age of acting on impulse. But I was afraid. The cost of getting my heart involved was too much for me to bear.

I slowly let go of my fork. "What if that day never comes?"

I didn't want to hide anything from Mark anymore, not when we had come this far. Seeing his stunned expression, I put down my fork. "If Bryant and I had never divorced, what would you have done?" "I would've stayed single," Mark replied with a forced smile, the soft light casting a glow over his head.

"I won't lie to you," he continued, "I returned to the country partly because I heard things between you and Bryant weren't as perfect as they seemed online." He looked at me squarely, a hint of self-mockery in his voice. "Does that make me despicable? Hoping for your divorce, hoping for a sliver of a chance with you."

"No way. Before my divorce, you've always maintained your boundaries," I said, caught off guard by Mark's candidness, with my words barely escaping my lips. "But divorce doesn't mean I'm ready to be with someone else again. Up to now, just like Chris, you're important to me, a good friend."

The light in his eyes dimmed a bit when I mentioned "a good friend." But I didn't want to deceive him.

Mark looked down, lost in thought, and lifted his gaze, his expression still gentle. "Jane, how about we set a timeline? Like six months, a year, two years. I'll give up if I can't make you fall for me by then." I hesitated, "Let's say six months."

Christine and I had different views on love but agreed that love didn't necessarily grow over time. Sometimes, it was just there, or it was not. If it were possible to fall in love, the years passed, and the next six months should be enough. If not, I didn't want to waste his time.

"Okay." Mark agreed happily, "Let's eat before it gets cold."

After dinner, I walked him to the door, and he glanced toward Gregory's place, suddenly asking, "Jane, are you close with Mr. Ford?"

"We're friends," I replied honestly, "Not close, but not distant either."

Much like Mark had described, Gregory was bold and unrestrained, a mystery to most.

"Okay." Mark's expression softened, "I'll head off then. You should get some rest."

Bryant and Dorothy's engagement party was next month. With Dorothy's unique taste, the design work would take some time.

I rushed through several days of work, and by Friday night, I had sent the initial designs to her email.

The following morning, before seven, someone knocked on my door in a chaotic rhythm.

Chapter 293

Most folks knocked with a rhythm of either two quick taps followed by a longer one or two long knocks followed by a quick tap.

But the person outside my door was playing a whole different tune. "Knock-knock, knock-knock, knock-knock, knock-knock, knock." "Knock, knock, knock! Knock, knock, knock."

The knocking somehow morphed into a melody reminiscent of a childhood jingle. Still, it didn't make me any less grumpy about being woken up. Shuffling in my slippers, I went to the door and yanked it open, only to find Gregory at the door, his hair a mess, draped in an oversized hoodie.

Seeing me still in my pajamas, he smirked, "Jane, you remember we've got that trip to Vista Town today, right?"

I was impatient. "Yeah, of course. I texted you last night, asking when we were leaving. You never got back to me, remember?"

The prospect of hitting up the Vista Town market had to go through him, and suddenly, my morning grumpiness vanished, replaced by a sense of urgency and perhaps even a touch of appreciation. "I figured you're usually up at odd hours and thought I should let you catch some extra Z's. And then again, what's got you up so early today?"

He leaned lazily against my door frame with his eyes half-closed. "Haven't slept yet."

I said, "Then maybe you should head back and get some sleep."

I could use a bit more shut-eye myself. Work had been a beast, and good sleep was a luxury I hadn't indulged in for days.

Gregory eyed me. "So, am I going back to sleep, or are you?"

He glanced at his wristwatch, casually adding, "Twenty minutes. If I don't see you with your luggage ready to go, consider that business opportunity gone."

Bang! That snapped me awake. I slammed the door shut, rushed back to my room, and packed my clothes into my suitcase.

After a quick wash-up and grabbing a few sandwiches and yogurts from the fridge for breakfast on the go, I reopened the door to find Gregory had vanished. When checking my phone, I saw a message from him sent ten minutes ago. [Waiting downstairs]

That was true to his style without unnecessary words, not an extra punctuation mark in sight.

I headed downstairs, expecting to see his usual flashy sports car, but instead, a luxurious sedan parked out front.

Standing by the car, the driver politely inquired, "Ms. Webster?"

I nodded, replying, "That's me."

"Mr. Ford is already inside." The driver took my luggage, opened the car door for me, and there was Gregory, fast asleep with an eye mask on, oblivious to the world.

The journey from RiverCity to Vista City was short, barely two hours on the highway.

Seeing him so peaceful, I finished my makeshift breakfast and, finding a comfortable position, drifted off myself. "Lily..."

In a light sleep, I faintly heard a murmur beside me. And almost instinctively, I responded with a soft "Hmm..."

That response jerked me awake. Opening my eyes, I saw a pair of blue, scrutinizing eyes staring right at me!

Startled, I patted my chest, trying to calm my racing heart. "Gosh, why are you looking at me like that?"

That was a different Gregory, his usual carefree demeanor replaced with an uncharacteristic chill. "Did you just respond?"

"No, not at all." His intense gaze made me uneasy, and I almost instinctively denied it.

Meanwhile, the car smoothly entered a grand estate, passing through a sea of flowers before stopping before a mansion that seemed to leap out of a fairy tale.

It appeared he had notified them of our arrival, as a butler, dressed in the part, was already waiting for us at the door.

"Mr. Ford, Lady Ramona heard of your return and has been waiting for you here since dawn."

Gregory seemed to have a close relationship with Ramona, his eyes lighting up, "Ramona's here?"

Chapter 294

The Ford Residence was vast, emanating a sense of heritage and vintage charm at every turn. It was apparent that the house was a fortune passed down through generations. Despite its refurbished exterior, the interior retained traces of its storied past.

Contrary to my expectations of splendor, simple but significant touches like a hand-painted vase casually placed in a corner spoke volumes. It was an antique from the Victorian era, valued at over a million dollars.

Gregory strode leisurely, hands in his pockets, embodying a sense of calm.

He led me past the grand dining room, heading straight for the backyard, where two elegantly dressed elderly ladies were from afar. One was savoring her coffee by the fireplace while the other was trimming a potted plant with scissors.

Approaching them, Gregory poured himself a cup of coffee and joked, "Ladies, you're in better shape than I am, braving the outdoors in this chilly weather."

Adah playfully hit Gregory's back, scolding, "You rascal, you've finally decided to come back, huh?"

"Oh, leave the boy alone! He's come to see us, after all," Ramona interjected, pulling Gregory to her side protectively.

Squeezing her shoulder, Gregory replied, "Exactly, Ramona knows how to treat me right. Grandma here loves to find fault."

Their banter left both ladies in a mix of laughter and tears.

Gregory motioned for me to come closer and introduced me, "This is Jane, a friend I've recently made in RiverCity."

Catching on quickly, Adah remarked, "What a beautiful young lady, so gentle and graceful. Greg tells us you've taken over your parents' custom design business, and you're doing quite well?"

"Adah, Ramona," I began, feeling somewhat relieved at their kindly demeanor, "I've recently taken over my parents' brand. We do custom orders and online sales. Thanks to Mr. Ford's kindness, he looks out for a friend's business like mine."

Adah raised her eyebrows in surprise and then covered her mouth with a laugh, glancing at Gregory. "Do you have something on her? You've always been a troublemaker, and it's the first time I've heard someone praise you so highly!"

I couldn't help but almost smile at that. Indeed, I was counting on Gregory to help promote my business, so a little flattery was necessary.

"Nothing gets past your keen insight," I played along.

Unfazed by being called out, Gregory retorted, "She needs something from me."

Adah turned to me. "This boy can be a handful. If you need anything, you might be better off asking us old ladies instead..."

"Grandma! Don't start. Why not just show her your clothes collection so she can get a sense of your fashion tastes?" Gregory quickly interjected.

Despite her words, Adah's actions showed nothing but affection, "Fine, fine, as you wish."

Adah led me upstairs to a spacious living room, which opened into an expansive wardrobe. The majority of the clothes matched the style she was wearing that day.

I smiled, "Madam, for this custom order, would you like to stick to your usual style, or are you thinking of trying something new?"

"Up to you," Adah responded without hesitation, her face expressing genuine openness, "You young people surely know more about fashion than an old lady like me. You handle the design. I'll handle the wearing."

The client wasn't picky, but I knew I couldn't take the task lightly. Back in the yard, I subtly inquired about Adah's preferences. Adah didn't put on airs like someone from a distinguished family. She was straightforward and exceptionally approachable.

Chapter 295

Hanging out with them felt like a breath of fresh air.

After a good chat, I pulled a measuring tape from my bag to take Adah's measurements.

Gregory directed, "Ms. Webster, could you also measure Ramona while you're at it?"

I agreed without a second thought, "Sure."

Having more people meant getting to work on more designs. I was over the moon about that.

Ramona waved her hand. "I don't need it."

"Ramona!" Gregory interrupted, convincing her, "If you refuse, wouldn't it seem like I'm playing favorites?"

"Okay, you got it." Ramona conceded with a laugh.

As I finished measuring, the butler came to announce dinner was ready. However, Gregory had to leave due to an urgent phone call. Before leaving, he handed me a room key.

I felt it was also time for me to leave. "I should probably head out with you."

"Jane," Adah said warmly, insisting, "Don't worry about him. Stay and have dinner. After we eat, I'll arrange for a driver to take you to the hotel."

"You see, my grandma is very approachable, but she rarely invites people over for dinner."

Gregory grinned sheepishly. "Can I ask for this favor?"

I had no choice but to agree.

The table was laden with a lavish spread, half made up of easily digestible food suitable for the elderly ladies and the other half consisting of beef, lamb, and seafood. Adah took the lead. "Jane, make yourself at home. Help yourself."

"Sure." I smiled obediently.

Maybe it was a longing for familial warmth. In the presence of such kind elders, I naturally behaved myself. Near the end of the meal, the servants brought out individual desserts.

I took a bite without thinking, only to realize something was off. I discreetly spat it out into a napkin.

Ramona caught the moment. She always seemed gentle, but unlike Adah's easiness, she was somewhat distant with strangers.

Her eyes flickered with interest, speaking to me directly for the first time, "Ms. Webster, do you not like peanuts?"

"It's not that." I smiled awkwardly, explaining, "I'm allergic to peanuts."

Ramona's grip on her spoon tightened as she asked, "Have you been allergic since childhood?"

"Yes," I replied honestly.

Ramona's gaze softened toward me, sighing, "My granddaughter is also allergic to peanuts."

I instinctively followed up, "Dorothy?"

"No, the rightful heiress of the Myers family." Adah handed Ramona a tissue, cutting to the chase. "Lily's been gone for ages now, and you're the only one in the Myers family who still keeps her close to your heart."

"I do!" Ramona dabbed at her eyes. "She's my granddaughter, delivered by my own hands. Born prematurely by two months, so tiny, I feared she wouldn't make it."

That was when I learned Ramona was an obstetrician.

Adah seemed moved, too, her eyes reddening, "It's a shame, such a fate for a girl born into a family like the Myers, yet she hardly enjoyed any of it."

"True." Ramona sighed deeply, a mix of affection and helplessness, "The ones who should be enjoying life aren't, and those who shouldn't be are."

As an outsider, it felt somewhat awkward to interrupt. But somehow, seeing Ramona like that, I felt a pang of empathy and offered, "Ramona, they say fortune and disaster are two sides of the same coin. Maybe Ms. Myers is also living a good life now."

"Ah, let's hope your words come true." Ramona clasped her hands. "All these years, I've been doing charity work, hoping it would somehow make up for everything and bring Lily some protection from above."

Chapter 296

Although Gregory was all about dollars and cents, he booked me a room in the six-star hotel in Vista Town.

I had plans to head back to RiverCity that very night, but Gregory, over the phone, said, "I'll be heading to RiverCity tomorrow. I can give you a lift." "Okay then."

A ride in a Bentley wasn't something you turn down.

The next day, I had hoped to sleep in but got rudely awakened by a call.

"Come down." It was Gregory's lax voice.

Woken up by him two days in a row, I couldn't help but feel irritated. "Jesus, did you pull an all-nighter again?"

Gregory faked surprise. "Wow, someone's grumpy in the morning?"

I took a deep breath, forced it down, and smiled. "Not at all, just worried about you. Mr. Ford, what's the early morning call for?"

Gregory yawned. "Ramona wants to see you."

"Huh?" Caught off guard and yawning myself, I crawled out of bed. "Now?"

He suddenly snapped, "What else? You think I have nothing better to do than to wait for you down here because I've been secretly in love with you for years?"

"Okay, fifteen minutes." I quickly washed up, changed my clothes, grabbed my bag, and went downstairs.

There was the Ford family hunk's car, boldly parked under the porte-cochere. He was leaning casually against it, head slightly dipped, playing with a lighter in his hand, giving off this vibe of defiance. I jogged over. "Let's go."

"Just in time." He glanced at his watch casually. "Not a second less."

He was implying I was dawdling.

I raised an eyebrow and smiled. "Take that as a compliment on my punctuality."

I was ready to hop into the back of the Bentley.

"Ms. Webster, mind playing chauffeur?" He stopped the door with one hand and gestured toward the driver's seat with a nod, tossing the car keys into my hands.

Then, he comfortably settled himself into the passenger seat.

Beggars can't be choosers. That was why he sent me the location to the Myers Mansion, making me his driver by default.

Reluctantly, I walked around the car to the driver's seat, about to complain about his lack of chivalry, when I saw him pull out a sleep mask from nowhere.

With a tilt of his head, he was out like a light.

I thought, 'This guy must've been a sleep-deprived ghost in his past life.'

Still, I eased up on the accelerator and brake, driving more gently than usual.

We smoothly arrived at the Myers Mansion, a grand estate nestled on a hillside, its serene gardens reminiscent of classic countryside estates. And the person in the passenger seat was still deep in slumber. I reached over and tapped his shoulder. "Mr. Ford?"

There was no response.

I kept calling out to him. "Gregory? Gregory?"

"Just call me by my name. It sounds better." He suddenly yanked off his sleep mask, bleary-eyed and staring at me, "You saying 'Mr. Ford' almost sounds like you're teasing, not being real about it."

I was speechless. I couldn't pinpoint why, but as Gregory said, I always felt like a free-spirited hedgehog around him, ditching all caution and sensitivity. But that side of me felt more real. Gregory snorted, "No comeback, huh? Seems I was right."

With that, he pushed open the door, stretched his legs, and got off. He knew the Myers Mansion well, effortlessly guiding me to find Ramona.

Upon seeing me, Ramona quickly stood up, her shawl nearly slipping off. "Ms. Webster, you're here."

"Yeah." I smiled. "Ramona, Gregory mentioned you wanted to see me?"

"I..." Ramona paused and softly said, "I also wanted to show you my dressing room in case you design something I don't like. We won't have wasted your time."

Chapter 297

"Sure." I happily agreed.

Ramona glanced toward Gregory. "Greg, why don't you head to the dining room for breakfast? And grab a bite for Ms. Webster, will you?"

"Got it." Gregory shot us a dubious look but headed toward the dining room without making a big deal about it.

As I thought Ramona would lead me to her dressing room, her warm hand suddenly grasped mine. "Here, have a seat."

"Okay." I was pleasantly surprised and sat down, my hands resting awkwardly in my lap.

I couldn't recall ever meeting my grandparents. Whether they didn't care for me or, for some other reason, I didn't remember a thing.

A look of longing appeared on Ramona's aged face as she gripped my hand tighter. "You know, after seeing you yesterday, I dreamt of my granddaughter, Lily. That girl, she was fussing about wanting to play with you. She seemed quite fond of you." Ramona smiled gently. "I woke up in the middle of the night, wondering if it was her way of telling me to look after you a bit."

Her words moved me, and I softly said, "Maybe it's just because you had her on your mind, Ramona."

"How would you feel about getting close to me like Greg does?" Ramona asked tentatively.

I was stunned. I had sensed the difference between Ramona and Susan but hadn't expected such a stark contrast.

Initially, I had planned to keep my distance from the Myers family, but faced with Ramona's hopeful gaze, I found myself unable to refuse.

Thankfully, I spent most of my days in RiverCity, so I wouldn't have to interact with Ramona too often. Finally, I obediently agreed, "Okay, Ramona." "Oh!" Ramona responded joyfully and suddenly inquired, "Heard you mentioning yesterday that you've taken over your parents' clothing brand?" "Yes." I nodded, "They started it before they passed away, but it's been neglected for many years."

Ramona's expression tightened with sympathy. "Your parents... they passed away?"

"Yeah." My gaze fell, and I spoke with melancholy, "They died when I was eight, trying to ensure my safety."

Mentioning that made my voice choke up a bit.

"They must have loved you dearly." Ramona patted my hand. "No wonder Lily likes you. You both had tough lives, separated from your parents early on without much happiness."

"It's not like that, Ramona..." I hadn't finished my words when a petulant voice rang out from behind, "Jane, are you trying to worm your way into my family now? She's my grandma. What do you think you are doing holding her hand like that?"

I stiffened, recognizing Dorothy's voice.

Ramona remained unfazed, not even sparing Dorothy a glance. "Who said you could come here?"

"Grandma!" Dorothy cooed, leading someone closer, "I'm here because I'm in love, wanting to bring him over for you to meet to see what you think!"

My eyes inadvertently caught the sight of the tall, imposing man beside her, and my nails dug into my palm. I should have known better than to come today.

With his aura of aloof elegance, Bryant appeared calm yet humble even before Ramona, "Ramona, I'm Bryant, Dorothy's boyfriend." He struck the perfect balance as the prospective grandson-in-law.

I forced a smile, finding the situation bitterly ironic.

Still holding onto my hand, Ramona took on the matriarchal role. "I heard you're recently divorced, right?"

Chapter 298

Nobody expected Ramona, with her seemingly kind and gentle eyes, to come at Bryant with such a sharp retort. It took all I had to suppress my laughter. But then again, I seemed to be the only one who could find humor in the situation.

The air was thick with awkwardness. What made things awkward wasn't Ramona's statement. It was that I, his ex-wife, happened to be right there.

I lowered my head, pretending to be engrossed in the view outside the window, trying to make myself inconspicuous.

The snow outside, not yet melted, was blinding.

I felt a gaze fixed on me and then heard Bryant's calm voice, "Yes, freshly divorced."

Ramona glanced at Dorothy, her tone cooling, "I heard you played a part in this?"

"Grandma..." Dorothy frowned, shooting me a veiled glare before gracefully sitting beside Ramona, gently shaking her arm. "Who's been filling your head with nonsense? Bryant's marriage was over long before. It's just that..."

"I'll ask you just one thing." Ramona eyed Dorothy coldly, "The day you announced your engagement, was their divorce final?"

Of course, it wasn't. Dorothy knew that better than anyone.

She was secretly grinding her teeth, but her face was playing it cool, all innocent-like. "They hadn't finalized their divorce then, true, but if Bryant was willing to divorce for me, doesn't it mean he loves me more than..."

"Enough!" Ramona's voice thundered, a flush of anger crossing her face, "Who raised you to be so shameless? If you dare repeat that outside, you're no longer a Myers!"

Dorothy was stunned. Then, her gaze landed on me angrily. "Jane, did you say something to Grandma? Making her think even her granddaughter..."

Ramona frowned. "What does this have to do with Jane? Don't direct your misplaced anger at my esteemed guest."

"Esteemed guest?" Spoiled by Susan, Dorothy couldn't hold back her temper even before Ramona. "What kind of guest is she? Don't you know her ex..." She stopped herself mid-sentence. It dawned on her that I hadn't said anything to Ramona.

Ramona probably just knew about Dorothy's engagement with Bryant and had looked into it. But she hadn't delved into my past with Bryant, so she didn't know about our relationship.

Ramona eyed Dorothy, her anger surging. "You've been spoiled rotten by your mother, haven't you? What stopped you from continuing? Speak!"

"I..." Dorothy swallowed her words, muttering, "Anyway, you always take Gregory's side over mine!"

Bryant's eyelashes fluttered, hiding whatever emotion he felt before looking up and speaking slowly, "Ramona, don't be mad at Dorothy. I hadn't acted appropriately."

I suddenly glared at him, thinking it was a sweet scene. If only I weren't here, it would be even more so.

Ramona's anger ebbed slightly. "At least you're taking some responsibility."

Then, her tone shifted dramatically, "But even at your best, you're still not good enough to be the Myers family's son-in-law!"

Unapologetically blunt.

After all, no one dared to cross Bryant in RiverCity. But here was Vista Town, dominated by the three great families. The vast Ferguson family, solely reliant on Bryant, had no support there.

Chapter 299

With the scandal involving Margaret and Albert still fresh in the gossip circles, Bryant knew any slip-up would have the vultures circling for the kill. Ramona had a few choice words for him, and he had no choice but to take it on the chin.

But instead of showing any sign of embarrassment, Bryant's face remained an unreadable mask as he calmly stated, "I'll prove my worth to you."

"Grandma." Dorothy was over the moon, "Hear that? How can you still be unhappy..."

"He's more than good enough for you. No need to prove anything." Ramona sat with perfect poise, "As long as you and your mother are happy, that's all that matters."

Her initial resistance flipped into agreement without another word.

Dorothy was left baffled. "What do you mean..."

"He would be far from a good choice for Lilliana to marry!" Ramona met Dorothy's gaze, "For you, he's more than good enough."

Her tone was calm, devoid of any disdain. Yet, it felt like a massive slap across the face.

"You always think I'm inferior to her! What kind of grandmother are you!" Before Bryant, Dorothy's cheeks flushed with humiliation, and she stormed out to the yard, forgetting Bryant was there. Bryant's eyes swept over me unguarded, shadowed, and restrained, but before Ramona, he said nothing.

Ramona gently patted my hand. "Jane, go have some food. The dining room is just out to the right. If you can't find it, ask one of the servants."

I agreed, "Okay."

That was their cue for a private chat. Pretending not to notice Bryant's gaze, I stood up to leave. When passing by the window, I overheard their conversation.

Ramona went to the point. "Now that we're alone, Mr. Ferguson, please tell me the truth. What does the Myers family have that you're after by marrying into it?"

I instinctively paused. Expecting a talk of mutual benefits, I was stunned by Bryant's calm response, "My dear lady, you jest. It's purely for love."

It was for love.

My gaze fell. Three years of being married and I never felt like Bryant loved me, yet here he is having feelings for Dorothy after such a short time of knowing her. Love seemed indeed a spur-of-the-moment thing.

Ramona sighed. "You're nothing like your grandfather."

Bryant was surprised. "You knew my grandfather?"

Ramona asked again, "Now, will you be honest with me, young man?"

After a long silence, Bryant's voice sounded bitter, "I have someone I want to protect..."

Suddenly, a hand clapped on my shoulder.

Startled, I turned to see Gregory raising an eyebrow. "Jane, eavesdropping much?"

I glared at him, lowering my voice, "Did you bug me or something?"

That was some curse. Whether I was peeking or eavesdropping, if it were sneaky, Gregory would show up faster than a cop on a burglar.

Gregory gestured toward the room with a jerk of his chin, his lips curling into a cheeky grin, "Got your divorce papers already. But you can't move on yet, can you?"

"Shut up. Don't be stupid." I rolled my eyes and headed toward the dining room.

I was just curious, and that was all. I was curious about what made me lose so miserably.

Gregory didn't follow, only elongating his "Oh" in a sing-song manner, murmuring with a hint of intrigue, "Truly a pair of star-crossed lovers."

Chapter 300

I had wandered off, the chatter around me turning into a distant hum. But the word "lovers" cut through the noise loud and clear. Me? A singleton? That term couldn't be further from my reality. The Myers Mansion was a maze, just as Ramona had warned. Eventually, I had to swallow my pride and ask a servant for directions to find the dining room.

"Ah, you must be the Ms. Webster the matriarch has been buzzing about all morning?"

Spotting me as I navigated my way, the butler promptly instructed the staff to whip up an additional breakfast.

I offered a small smile and a word of thanks before settling for a peaceful meal, prompting the butler to leave.

Midway through my breakfast, a shadow loomed over me, and before I knew it, an accusation hurled my way.

"Jane, I'm warning you. Keep your distance from my family! I don't give a hoot about whatever plans you've got up your sleeve, but quit sucking up to my grandma." My spoonful of oatmeal didn't falter as I replied, "And what schemes would those be?"

Dorothy huffed. "As if you don't know. You're not over Bryant and trying to use my grandma to get back in his good books to lure him back."

"Dorothy, I'm not like you." I set down my spoon and frowned. "I still have some dignity."

I could be devoted or deep in love, but stooping to desperate measures? That was way too embarrassing.

"You!" Dorothy rolled her eyes dramatically and suddenly broke into a sly grin. "You were behind that payback the other day, weren't you?"

I feigned ignorance. "What payback?"

"Even though Gregory covered for you," she leaned on the table, eyes narrowed. "I knew it was you. The bruises I got were the same as you had last time."

"Oh? And what do you plan to do about it?" I dropped the act. Given her arrogance, I had expected her to make a scene right there.

Instead, she smiled sweetly. "I don't plan to do anything for now because Bryant was so upset seeing my bruises. He wanted to go after you himself, but I stopped him."

I didn't doubt that. When Margaret had dragged me into oncoming traffic, resulting in a miscarriage, he had blamed me without hesitation, even slapped me for being heartless. And if I had sought revenge on Dorothy, he'd want to punish me on behalf of his darling.

Despite the warmth of the heated floors, a chill ran down my spine as I stood, "Is that so? Good for him. He truly is a wonderful man."

To Margaret, he was a great catch. Dorothy sure seemed to think the same.

But for me, he was just a whole world of trouble.

"Yes, and that's why I will marry him!" Dorothy lifted her chin proudly like a spoiled princess, "Oh, and about the designs you sent? I'm pleased. Just ensure you hurry up with the rest. We can't have any delays for mine and Bryant's engagement party."

"Hold on." I pulled out my phone and hit record, "Could you repeat that first part? Also, for the dress design, including labor and materials, that'll be 5.1 million dollars. You've paid 100,000 dollars upfront, so please transfer the remaining five million in two installments, with 2.5 million each. One today, and the other on the day of your fitting."

"2.5 million?" Dorothy frowned, displeased.

I smiled lightly, "Yes, Ms. Myers. That's the actual cost. Of course, feel free to add a little extra if you want. I won't mind."