

# **Lost Me, Gained Regret (Jane and Bryant Ferguson)**

## **Chapter 381**

"I understand... I really do. How could I possibly blame you?"

I poured a glass of warm water, carefully slid a straw into it, and offered it to Cheryl, "Here, have some water."

As dusk settled and Cheryl drifted into sleep, Bryant and I finally made our way out. We planned to head home for a quick shower before coming back to keep vigil. The doctor had warned us... Cheryl could pass away at any moment.

On the way, I checked Cheryl's medical bills at the hospital. Bryant had transferred a hefty sum, running into millions. It was all spent on trying various new drugs and treatment options developed abroad, including two surgeries performed by top international specialists. Not just expensive, but it required connections too. Without these, Cheryl probably wouldn't have made it to Christmas. Yet, Bryant never mentioned any of this to me.

Sitting in the backseat, I turned to look at him, "Bryant, thank you for everything you've done for Cheryl. About the money... I'll transfer it to you now."

The proceeds from the sale of the house had been deposited, enough to cover the expenses.

His eyes fixed on me, "We don't need to settle accounts between us like this."

"But we should."

After all, we were divorced. I had no right to keep spending his money.

Bryant sighed, "Are you just trying to put more distance between us now?"

"Yes."

I was about to open my banking app when my phone rang. It was Gregory's call.

Bryant glanced at the caller ID, a touch of anger in his eyes, "He's calling already, just after an afternoon apart?"

"Bryant, I'm grateful for what you've done for Cheryl, but that doesn't give you the right to interfere in my personal life!"

I spoke firmly, "Don't make me remind you again, we're divorced."

He snatched the phone away, ended the call, and leaned over, pinning me against the leather seat, his voice cold, "If you insist on bringing up the divorce, then I won't hesitate to tell you..." Another urgent ring interrupted him. This time, it was the hospital. He didn't stop me this time. My heart sank as I answered, only to hear, "Mrs. Ferguson, Ms. Webster... has passed away."

My mind went blank. Despite being mentally prepared, it felt too sudden. Like being hit squarely by a punch. I was stunned, struggling to process the news. Even after unraveling the truth about our relationship discovering Cheryl and I had no blood relation, and learning who my real family was, I couldn't easily shift my feelings. In my heart, Cheryl remained my only family.

Bryant took the phone from my hand, responded to the nurse, and then instructed the driver, "Turn back to the hospital."

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With Bryant and Christine's help, we managed to take care of all the arrangements for Cheryl. The last time I was at the funeral home was for Grandpa. This time, it was for Cheryl. In just six months, it felt like was constantly losing. Losing over and over again.

Thankfully, there was enough to keep me busy. Janedream had just restarted after the holidays, and we were slammed with work. Worried about distracting Gregory, I hadn't told him about Cheryl's passing, focusing instead on wrapping things up so I could return to Vista Town.

A spring collection launched right before the holidays sold out immediately after a popular influencer wore it on a reality show, boosting sales across the board. Janedream was on a roll.

The night before my return to Vista Town, I was packing when someone knocked on the door. Opening it to see a man in a loose hoodie and casual pants, I instinctively thought it was Gregory, "How did you..." But then I looked up, meeting Bryant's sharply defined features. I clutched the doorknob tighter, a mix of emotions swirling within, "Bryant, you didn't have to do this."

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Bryant, always so sophisticated, went to such lengths for me. What did I do to deserve this? Yet, our journey to this point wasn't something that changed overnight. And it certainly has nothing to do with what he's wearing. Even if he looked exactly like Gregory, he'd still be Bryant, unchanged.

"I just realized, dressing casually is quite comfortable too."

Outside, even in casual wear, Bryant's nobility wasn't diminished. He said this while lifting his gaze towards the luggage in the living room, his previously gentle expression darkening.

"You're heading to Vista Town?"

"Yes."

"To see Gregory?"

"Yes."

My response was crisp, without a hint of hesitation. Whatever he inferred from my visit to Gregory, I had no intention of clarifying. If it helped him let go of his obsessions, it would be a fortunate misunderstanding.

Unexpectedly, a shadow of anger crossed Bryant's eyes, but he managed to keep his patience. "Vista Town is a mess right now. Going there won't help. Give me some time; I'll handle the situation with Dorothy and her daughter."

"And then?" I asked.

"Come back and be your true self, Mrs. Ferguson," he said.

I was somewhat at a loss for words. "Bryant, why are you acting like a middle schooler, failing to grasp the concept of divorce?"

Divorce, to me, meant that from now on, we were nothing to each other. No more intrusions.

He looked at me unwaveringly, "I know you're upset about how I dealt with Dorothy's situation."

"You want to vent, to have some peace, I get it. But there's one thing - you thinking of leaving me, that's not happening."

"I promise, I'll consult with you on everything from now on."

I felt like laughing but couldn't. In his view, it seemed he still believed I was just angry and throwing a fit. A little coaxing, a little embrace, and I would return to his side, becoming the quiet and understanding Mrs. Ferguson, just like countless times before.

Seeing my silence, he pressed his lips together, his voice deep and warm, "Jane, you've loved me for so many years. Those feelings can't just disappear. It's not too late to start over."

"... Yes." I took a deep breath. "I've loved you for many years, since I was eighteen."

"Loved you enough to marry you unilaterally, to take care of your family, to remain a shadowy Mrs. Ferguson."

"Loved you enough to carry your child, willing to have a child that belonged to us."

"But, Bryant," I said, my gaze steady on him, each word deliberate, "That was the Jane of the past. The Jane now wants to sever all ties cleanly."

His Adam's apple bobbed as he struggled to contain his emotions, his lips barely moving, "And if I don't want that?"

"It's not up to you!"

With those words, I firmly closed the door. Not bothering to check if he was still outside, I hurriedly packed my luggage. By the time I left, the corridor was empty. I let out a sigh of relief, took the elevator down, and bumped into Mark.

I smiled lightly, "Hey, Mark, were you looking for me?"

"Yeah."

Mark returned the smile, glancing at the luggage I was pushing, slightly puzzled, "Are you going on a trip?"

"Off to Vista Town, still have some unfinished business there."

Mark nodded slightly, gesturing towards the parking garage, "I saw Bryant's car when I came in. Did he come to see you?" "Yeah."

"He...?" Mark's eyes flickered, seemingly hesitant to continue, "He didn't do anything out of line, did he?"

"No, not at all."

Not wanting to part ways was typical of Bryant; what's so odd about that?

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"Just, I'm a bit confused," I said. "Mark, is there something you're trying to say?"

"Nothing."

"Oh, okay then."

I chuckled and glanced at my watch, "Looks like it's about time for me to head over to Vista Town."

"You..." He hesitated for a moment. "Is there still a chance for you and Bryant?"

"Mark."

I laughed, somewhat helplessly, "I'm really not in the mood to think about this right now. If you're trying to play matchmaker for him, please don't."

"I'm not here to patch things up for him."

He seemed to be gauging my reaction, hesitating before he spoke, "It's... there's something I'm not sure if I should tell you."

"What is it?"

"It's about the Myers family's fake heiress. I heard it from Molly."

Mark carefully said, "Have you ever wondered why she could replace you, who's pulling the strings behind her?"

"It must be Dorothy and her gang, right?"

Maybe there were others involved, but I had no leads at the moment. It was clear this scheme was targeted at me. Ordinary folks wouldn't dare meddle in the Myers family's affairs. But among those with power and influence, besides them, I couldn't think of anyone else I might have offended.

With this thought, I suddenly turned to Mark, "Do you know something?"

He avoided my gaze, "Never mind, it's just a guess."

The more he said that, the more I felt there was something he wasn't telling me. I pressed on, "What guess?"

Mark seemed troubled and after a long pause, he said, "You... you have to promise me, you'll handle this calmly, don't act rashly. It's very likely I'm wrong, just a misunderstanding."

"I'll try my best."

"Take a look at this." He handed me two photos, saying, "I stumbled upon this a couple of days ago, heard them talking about 'a union with Gregory,' and I couldn't figure out how Bryant would know her, until Molly told me she took your place..."

Taking a look, I immediately grasped Mark's implication. Both photos were of Bryant and the fake Lilliana at a coffee shop.

I clenched the photos, saying, "Thanks, Mark..."

"Jane, it might not even be like this."

Mark, worried I'd act impulsively, was still trying to explain for Bryant, "And even if Bryant did it, he probably did it out of fear of losing you. Don't be too mad." "Stop making excuses for him."

I pursed my lips, "I'll confront him and ask for clarity."

Although angry, I felt this was out of character for Bryant.

Mark asked, "What if it was him, what will you do?"

"There's nothing to do."

I was eerily calm, "We'll just be strangers from now on."

Mark looked shocked, quickly masking his surprise at my coldness, "What if it was me, would we become strangers too?"

"Probably."

I looked at Mark, smiling lightly, "I can't accept someone making decisions for me or manipulating things behind my back. It's terrifying. But, Mark, you're definitely not that kind of person." "Of course, I'm not." He smiled gently. "I'll always be your senior."

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Driving towards the Ferguson Group's office, I mulled over several possibilities. But still, I felt it wasn't Bryant. Such tactics were too low for him. He would disdain such actions.

"You're meddling too much! Mark, even if it was me behind the Myers family incident, it's not your place to question me."

Just as I approached the CEO's office door, intending to knock, I heard a man's cold voice from inside.

"And what's with this act of being all self-righteous? You probably don't want her ending up with Gregory any more than I do, right?"

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I was stunned for a moment.

It felt like a slap across my face. I should've never trusted Bryant. Or I shouldn't have even bothered coming here in the first place.

As I turned to leave, Kevin glimpsed the photos in my hand and started making excuses for Bryant, "Mrs. Ferguson, please don't misunderstand. Mr. Ferguson went to see her to warn her not to..." "Enough! You know better than anyone if he did it!" I stormed off, and my strides were quick with anger.

Just as I reached the underground parking lot and was about to slam my car door shut, a large hand carelessly gripped the door, stopping me.

Bryant had changed out of his casual clothes and back into one of those tailor-made suits that suited his aura better. His face was stone-cold as he glanced at the photos I carelessly tossed on the passenger seat. "So, you doubt me because of what someone else said?"

"Is it me doubting you, or did you do something?" I had heard him clear as day in his office.

Bryant let out a cold laugh. "What have I done? Even if I'm a jerk, I wouldn't stoop so low as to mess with your personal life!"

"You better not have!" I tried to slam the door shut, but his strength was overpowering. The door barely budged. "Let go."

Bryant raised an eyebrow. "You still don't trust me?"

"No!" I snapped back coldly.

His sharp eyes looked down at me mockingly. "So, who do you trust? Mark? He's the one who gave you the photos, right?"

I replied coldly, "That's none of your business."

Bryant insisted, "Jane, anything that involves you is my business."

I snapped, "We're divorced!"

"Oh." Bryant lowered his gaze to mine, pausing before he started slowly, "Yes, that day we were interrupted by the hospital's call, and I forgot to finish what I was saying."

I frowned. "What are you talking about?"

Bryant spilled the truth. "The divorce certificates are fake."

The news blew me away. "What?"

He spoke softly, "Exactly what it sounds like."

"So, we're not divorced?" I asked hesitantly.

Bryant looked into my eyes, replying, "I never wanted to divorce you from the start. The divorce certificates were a smokescreen."

"And what about me?" I couldn't help but confront him, "Bryant, do you even care about what I think? What am I to you, just someone you can manipulate at will? You say we get divorce certificates, and now, you're telling me they're fake? You never considered divorcing?"

It was ridiculous and unacceptable.

He spoke softly, "I made that decision on my own. You can react however you want, but..."

"No buts." I suppressed my anger, giving him a mocking smile. "You think I'll still get trapped by a marriage certificate like before?"

"I could be with Gregory or anyone else, and you can't morally bind me with the title of a husband."

"If I commit bigamy, as long as you don't mind the embarrassment of Mr. Ferguson being cuckolded, feel free to call the cops on me!"



As I drove to Vista Town, I worked hard to stay calm.

It was fine. Bryant was the big boss of RF Group. The longer he dragged this out, the more I would get from the divorce. If I was not morally bound, Bryant couldn't control me. And he would still have to pay

me.

I kept telling myself this, but in the end, I was still furiously upset. Damn Bryant! How could he make such a despicable move, using his power to manipulate everyone around him?

I didn't check in the hotel first but went straight to the hospital. Even though Gregory said Grandma was stable, I was still worried.

I didn't want to run into Dorothy's family and have another endless argument. But when I pushed open the hospital room door, their family of three looked up with smiles that were off somehow.

Especially Susan, who suddenly teared up and hugged me, choking up, "Lilliana, Lilliana... I was blind before. Not only did I not recognize you, but I also always made things difficult for you. I was wrong..." I frowned and pushed her away, creating some distance. "What's this all about?"

Her expression stiffened as she cleaned her tears. "These past few days, your dad and I have been talking..."

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"Wait a sec." I interjected with a light voice, smiling, "My dad? Who's my dad?"

That day, the ones who fervently denied me were them, too.

But Susan could twist and turn with the situation. She chuckled awkwardly, "Oh, darling, are you still holding a grudge? We're all family here. We couldn't wrap our heads around it that day. That's all." "Exactly, Jane, let bygones be bygones," Dorothy interrupted.

"That attitude of yours." Susan told her off, but not with anger, "Jane is your sister. Show the respect."

Dorothy glanced at me, reluctant at first, but then, as if a thought struck her, she smiled, "Yeah, Jane, you're my sister now."

I almost got goosebumps, casually observing the scene and wondering what they were cooking up this time.

Susan nudged Richard. "You too. Seeing your daughter and not even a hello?"

Richard cleared his throat, glanced at me, and motioned toward the door. "Aren't you here to see Grandma? Go on in."

"Okay." I pushed the door open, seeing Ramona still unconscious on the bed, feeling a bit powerless.

When Ramona would wake up was still uncertain. The trio in the living room was probably hatching some plan by then.

After a while, when I went out, I saw Susan still wearing a forced smile. "Jane, your dad, Jane, and I are glad you're home safe and sound. We should've thrown a welcome party for you, but with Ramona sick and all the troubles at home..."

There she was, hitting the main topic.

I stayed silent, looking into her eyes, waiting for her to cut to the chase. "The company's facing a huge financial gap for our most critical project. We're at a deadlock with RF, and nobody dares to invest now. We have no choice but to ask RF for help. Being part of the Myers family now, maybe you could lend a hand?"

I smiled. "Oh? And how would you like me to 'lend a hand'?"

"Stop fighting with Mr. Ferguson." Susan shamelessly continued, "There's an old saying, 'For better or worse.' Mr. Ferguson has been nothing but good to you. How about settling down and becoming Mrs. Ferguson for real? From then on, the Myers family will be your stronghold, and no one will dare to mess with you."

"Sure." I nodded in agreement, and as they sighed in relief, I slowly pointed toward Dorothy. "First, she needs to leave."

Dorothy glared at me. "Jane! What gives you the right to..."

"And what makes you think I have to throw away my entire life for the Myers family, only to have you share in the spoils?" I chuckled coldly, seeing right through their motives.

"Let me guess. I'm just dressing you up for the ball, right?"

"Jane..." Susan was getting anxious. "Dorothy has been with the Myers family since she was little. Though adopted, she's no less than our own."

"Oh, is that so." I smiled faintly, "Then Dorothy can go to Bryant, can't she? After all, being a 'former' fiancée, Bryant might still care and do her a little favor."

With those words, I turned and exited the room. But just as I opened the door to leave, I saw Gregory striding toward me.

Seeing me, he stopped in his tracks, a smile playing on his lips. "Aren't you coming?"

I smiled back. "How did you know I was at the hospital?"

He gave me a casual look. "I have my ways."

I nodded. "Oh."

"Missed me..."

"I've got something..."

We both started to speak at the same time.

He raised an eyebrow. "You first?"

"Yeah, sure." I had braced myself, but facing him, I found it hard to speak, even though Gregory and I didn't share anything out of the ordinary.

When sensing the gravity of the situation, Gregory's face softened. "What happened?"

"Me and Bryant," I began as calmly as possible, "The divorce papers we got last time were fake."

None of the reactions I anticipated happened. The air only stilled for a while before Gregory said with a mock laugh, "So, you're saying, when you marry me, you'll be bringing half of the RF Group as a dowry?"

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I paused, turning to him with a huff. "Did I ever say I'd marry you?"

"Everything else, I can go by your word." Gregory's lips curled into a slight smirk, "But this, this is where I call the shots."

I rolled my eyes at him. "What, you're going to tie me up if I don't agree?"

While saying that, I headed downstairs. Seeing Gregory follow me to the car, I asked, puzzled, "Where's your car?"

"The driver took off." Gregory pulled open the passenger door, his long legs slipping into the car before mine. He settled in with such ease, even quicker than I did.

Today was unusual. Gregory didn't fall asleep the moment I got into the car. As I started the engine, he asked, "Did you find out anything from your aunt?"

"Yeah, a bit." Mentioning my aunt dampened my spirits slightly. As I drove, I shared, "I was indeed kidnapped back then, but I managed to escape into my dad's car, and he saved me."

"They mentioned something about 'Susan' while searching for me." As I spoke, I waited for his thoughts. "Do you think... the person who kidnapped me could be... Susan?"

"It's highly probable." Gregory frowned slightly, "But she was nice to you before the kidnapping. So, I never suspected her all these years."

"Right." I pursed my lips. "No wonder I felt somewhat familiar when I saw her before."

After all, when I was little, she was kind to me, someone I once called Mom.

Gregory seemed thoughtful, then asked, "Any other leads?"

"There are." Just as I was about to continue, he instructed near a traffic light, "Turn left here."

"Huh? Where are we going?" I was confused for a moment. That wasn't the way to the hotel, but I followed his direction and signaled to turn. Gregory's voice was relaxed and pleasing. "I'm taking you somewhere special. You'll see."

"Oh."

"Keep talking."

I whetted his appetite. "I'll tell you when we get there then."

I decided to play coy, too.

He chuckled lazily. "Learning the tricks of the trade, huh?"

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Following his makeshift navigation, I slowly drove into a vintage townhouse neighborhood in the heart of Vista Town.

Stepping out of the car, I was puzzled, but Gregory opened the trunk and hauled out my luggage.

I looked at him, confused.

"No hotel this time." After saying it, he pushed the luggage cart ahead, striding forward confidently.

Standing several steps ahead, he glanced back at me, seeing I hadn't followed. "What, you've already cooked up some drama about me being a brute?"

I rolled my eyes. "Who's imagining that?"

He smiled. "Only the imaginer knows."

His provocation worked. I quickly followed, "I know you're not that kind of person, Gregory. I've always trusted you."

Gregory laughed. "Is that so?"

"Yeah." I wasn't sure if I was praising him or trying to calm myself, but my response was firm.

It was a charming duplex in a serene setting.

As Gregory unlocked the door, I was amazed by the entryway adorned with a collection of Doraemon figures, my lips curving into a smile. "You're into this, too?" Gregory replied, "It's you who's into it."

Under my puzzled gaze, he raised an eyebrow, teasing, "Don't like it anymore?"

"I still do." I realized that the wall filled with Doraemon memorabilia was to my taste.

With its evident wear from years gone by, the neighborhood housed an interior that was spotless and well-kept, with brilliant natural light and a cozy, country-style decor. It was just the type a girl would fall for.

While I was curious about his preference for such a style, Gregory handed me the keys to the fingerprint lock. "It's all set up with your childhood favorites in mind. I wanted to give it to you as a birthday present back then but never got the chance."

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I was about to refuse, but after hearing his words, I accepted, joking, "So, there was a time when you treated money like dirt?"

I sneered inwardly, 'Now, you won't wake up early if there wasn't a profit in it, but back in the day, you'd hand out a house just like that.'

Gregory arched an eyebrow, "Thanks for the compliment. After all, I did take quite a few treasures from you back in the day."

'That's just staying true to your roots,' I guessed.

After slipping into some house slippers, he wheeled his luggage into the bedroom. "I've got all the basics covered, but take a look around and see if there's anything else you need." "Sure." I nodded, looking around, feeling an unexplained sense of security I hadn't felt in a long time.

The early spring sunset streamed in.

He leaned against the door frame, casually asking, "Can we continue? What else did you find out in RiverCity?"

"This." I pulled a rabbit-shaped pendant under my shirt, "You recognize it, right?"

"Of course." His expression tensed slightly, "You've been wearing it all this time?"

I said, "Yeah, not long after I saw you in RiverCity, my aunt gave it to me."

"Unbelievable." He scoffed playfully, pinching my cheek hard. "Who taught you to hide it so well?"

Many things wouldn't have been so complicated if he had seen it earlier.

He had pinched my face out of shape. "I didn't realize it was so important."

"You're killing me." He let go, giving me a sideways glance. "So, what about the pendant?"

"There's a 'Taylor' engraved on the bottom," I turned to Gregory, "Do you know where this pendant came from?"

"It was a gift from your mom, Susan, when you were born." Gregory furrowed his brows, recalling, "About this 'Taylor', we asked Ramona about it. She said Susan was from the Taylor family." I was confused. "But Susan didn't take on the surname Taylor."

Gregory cleared my confusion. "Susan took her mother's surname. Something happened back then, and after she married into the Myers family, the Taylor family cut ties with her."

The more I heard, the more puzzled I became. But still, I felt that Susan couldn't be my biological mother.

Gregory chuckled lightly, straightening up. "No rush. The truth will come out eventually."

I smiled back. "Yeah."

Rushing wouldn't solve anything. So much was buried in the past. And uncovering it wouldn't be easy.

I glanced at the clock. "How about I treat you to dinner?"

"Ding dong." Just as I finished speaking, the doorbell rang.

Gregory opened the door, took two bags of fresh fruits and vegetables from the delivery guy, and walked toward the fridge, asking, "How's Bryant's cooking?"

I didn't think much before honestly answering, "Pretty good."

Thanks to Margaret's training, Bryant did have quite the skill in the kitchen, though I didn't enjoy it much.

"Oh, is that so?" Gregory casually responded, asked me what I wanted to eat, and stored the rest in the fridge.

I walked over. "Let me do it."

Gregory didn't seem like the type to cook. The last time I was at his place, the kitchen was as clean as a showroom.

Not sure what I hit a nerve on, he glanced at me, his tone lazy, "Afraid I'll poison you?"

"Of course not." I lied through my teeth, "Your cooking skills look Michelin-star level."

He seemed pleased with that response, nodding toward the living room. "Then go lounge on the sofa, sit, lie down, whatever you want, and wait for dinner." "Okay." With the way he talked about it, I thought tonight's dinner was a sure thing.

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His movements were swift. Gregory had washed and chopped the vegetables in less than half an hour. Although I mentioned wanting mashed potato, he seemed more inclined to make chips. It didn't matter. The chips were delicious, too.

Lazing on the couch, aimlessly scrolling through my phone, I watched Gregory come out of the kitchen wearing an apron. The typically proud Gregory scratched his head. "Uh, maybe you want to take a shower first?"

Puzzled, I responded, "I was thinking of eating first."

"Go take a shower. You'll feel refreshed and enjoy the meal even more," Gregory earnestly persuaded.

I couldn't figure out his angle. But that wasn't a hill to die on. Beggars can't be choosers, so I decided to compromise. Heading to my bedroom, I grabbed my clothes and made for the bathroom.

By the time I finished my shower, dinner was ready. Gregory was fiddling with something in the kitchen. Hearing me emerge, he momentarily looked guilty, then came out, saying, "Let's eat." "Wow!" I was impressed by his cooking skills. "Didn't expect this. You're quite the chef."

The spread before us could rival any restaurant in terms of presentation. I wondered which divine skill Gregory lacked since he seemed to have them all.

Gregory pulled out a chair for me, raising an eyebrow. "Open your eyes wide and see. I'm not lacking compared to your ex."

Sitting down, I looked up in confusion. "What about the chips? Aren't they ready yet?"

He lazily slumped beside me, "Chips? What chips?"

I reminded him. "Didn't you chop potatoes to make fries earlier?"

"Damn." Cursing under his breath, Gregory gestured toward the mashed potato on the table. "I was making these." [search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

Glancing toward the kitchen trash can, I had an epiphany and started praising him, "Wow, you're amazing."

It was a classic bait and switch. No wonder Gregory suggested I take a shower.

However, the restaurant's cooking was genuinely good. Each dish was tasty and perfect, making for a very comfortable meal.



Seeing me satisfied, Gregory smirked, "You like the food?"

I smiled. "Love it."

Gregory added, "Would you mind loving everything associated with it?"

I smiled, no longer wanting to play along., "Are you suggesting I fall for the restaurant's chef?"

"Jane!" He was grinding his teeth frustratedly, "You knew all along?"

"Yeah." I nodded, "Mainly because... no one cuts potatoes into chips when making mashed potato, you know that, right? Mr. Ford, have some common sense next time." Before I could finish, my eyes widened as I instinctively blocked. Gregory's lips momentarily touched my palm, sending a shiver down my spine.

He looked at me with a leisurely gaze. "Quick reflexes?"

I quickly distanced myself, swallowing nervously, "If you were any quicker, I'd have to call the cops."

"Jane, you're my nemesis." Gregory flicked my forehead, lazily getting up to clear the dishes.

Before leaving, he mumbled at the entrance, "All the daily necessities a girl might need are in the living room cabinet. Remember to lock the door, and call me if you need anything." "Anything else? Just say it all now."

"And," His voice softened, his eyes glistening with seriousness and mischief, "when are you planning to fulfill our marriage pact?"

I clenched my palm. "I haven't even got my divorce papers yet, and that marriage pact was made when we were kids."

Honestly, all these were just excuses. The real reason was I wasn't ready to offer my heart again, to be cherished or possibly shattered.

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Gregory saw right through me. "I want the truth."

I laid it all out. "I need some time to think things through."

Gregory crossed his arms, nodding in agreement. "Fair enough. Take all the time you need."

The following day, I had plans with Gregory to meet the person Farley had taken from Susan's place. Gregory mentioned the person had spilled some beans. He thought it best I should hear it firsthand before deciding whether to believe it.

Gregory said, "Otherwise, coming from me, it might seem I'm trying to stir the pot, which would ruin my good guy image."

The doorbell rang as I was about to get ready, change, and do my makeup.

After checking my phone, I saw I still had a good two hours before our meet-up. Smiling, I got up and breezed to the door, only to freeze at the sight of the visitor. "Mr. Ford," I greeted politely.

At that moment, Klein was a far cry from the imposing figure at the hospital that night. He was more like an approachable middle-aged gentleman. "Mind if I come in?" "Sure, please do." As I stepped back to let him in, my door remained ajar with a bodyguard standing watch.

Klein sat down, his gaze sweeping through the room, then sighed. "Greg acts like he doesn't care about anyone, but he's been fussing over you for twenty years. He even got this apartment fixed up just for you. The Ford family's heir, running errands like buying screws at the drop of a hat."

My heart raced. Well-off families usually outsourced the renovations. They'd show up once it was all done to check the work.

I got Klein a cup of coffee. "Yes, Gregory has been great."

And Gregory was good to me, beyond reproach. I shouldn't fear that he would turn on me as Bryant did when I offered my heart.

"Twenty years ago, you and my silly son would have been a match made in heaven." Klein finally got to the point. "But now, whether you divorce, you were Mrs. Ferguson. And he, well, he deserves a better fate."

I clenched my fists. "What are you implying?"

"I can tell you're a smart girl. Without the Myers family, you and Greg are worlds apart." Klein continued, "And with the Myers family under Mr. Ferguson's thumb, they're not what they used to be. Plus, you know well whether Mr. Ferguson will divorce you."

He might as well have said straightforwardly. Whether I divorced or returned to the Myers family, I was not worthy of Gregory.

I lowered my gaze. "Did you ask Gregory what he wants?"

"If he agreed, I wouldn't be here." Klein chuckled, effortlessly adding, "He's headstrong, but Mrs. Ferguson, you see things. I'm sure you understand. I have other sons besides Greg. If he insists on being stubborn, the Ford family has other options."

The implication was clear. If Gregory chose to be with me against his family's wishes, the Ford family legacy could be in the hands of his half-siblings.

I looked up, cutting to the chase. "Paul wouldn't agree, would he?"

I knew Paul was particularly fond of Gregory.

"See, I told you you're clever." Klein sipped the coffee, his voice steady, "Unfortunately, your situation has caused a rift between my father and me. He had a heart attack this morning and is currently in the hospital. I call the shots in the Ford family now."

Klein rose slowly, reminding me again of my place. "Mrs. Ferguson, I can't get through to Greg, but you definitely can."

## Chapter 390

He was adamant. When the conversation reached this point, I felt cornered. But, just this once, I wanted to be selfish.

I stood up. "Mr. Ford, if you can't make it happen, I doubt I can either."

I couldn't bear the thought of making decisions for Gregory under the guise of what was best for him. Whatever he chose, I'd respect it.

Klein's gaze was sharp. "He's head over heels in love now, acting on impulse, ready to give up everything for you. What about later? When the novelty wears off after three, five, ten years?" I caught my breath.

Klein scoffed, "And when he sees his mother, his sister, all paying the price for his love when he regrets, will he blame you, the stumbling block?"

I had to admit that experience spoke louder than words. Every word hit home.

"It doesn't matter if you're Mrs. Ferguson, Ms. Webster, or Ms. Myers." Klein buttoned up his jacket. "I only hope you realize he's waited for you for years. Should he sacrifice his life for you? If so, you don't deserve his love!"

"Or do you not see RF tightening the screws on the Ford Group? Are you trying to bring down Greg and the entire Ford family?"

"I'm giving you two days to think it over. Will Greg continue being Mr. Ford, or will he step away from the Ford family's shadow to be just an ordinary man?"

I sat on the couch, the door shut again, my thoughts in turmoil. Gregory's call came through.

I answered, "Hello?"

His voice sounded normal. "Jane, something's come up. I have to bail today. Can we reschedule once I'm free?"

Paul cared for Gregory. Gregory would probably stay by his side at the hospital, especially since Gregory felt guilty for causing the situation.

I suppressed my emotions, gripping the phone. "Is everything okay? Can I help in any way?"

Gregory replied, "Just some last-minute issues at work."

"Oh..." I slowly walked to the window, gazing at some blooming flowers, feeling heavy-hearted but trying to sound casual. "Are you sure nothing's wrong?" Gregory teased, "Wishing something was wrong? Missing me that much?"

I chuckled. "Not at all."

"Focus on your design sketches at home. And in your free time..." His voice sounded lazy with amusement, "Think about us."

His mood seemed to infect me, and I smiled. "Us? What about us?"

Gregory flirted, "Don't play dumb..."

"Greg, are you done? The international consultant is here for the meeting. Come join."

His voice and an elegant, mature female voice overlapped. That must be his mother.

I quickly said, "Gregory, you better go."

He asked, "You heard?"

I nodded. "Yeah, someone's calling you to a meeting, right?"

"Right, then I should go?"

"Yes."

Gregory reminded me again, "Don't forget to think about us."

"Okay." After hanging up, my vision blurred instantly.

The beautiful flowers became just a smear of pink. I couldn't even make out their shape anymore. As the sun set, I turned toward the kitchen.

Just last night, Gregory was there, bustling around all clumsily. But at the moment, it felt like he was miles away.

Klein's words carried no threat.

The following morning, the headlines blared, [The Ford family's second son returns.]

The Ford family had officially reintegrated a bastard son with the fabricated origin of a long-lost heir.