

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

## **Chapter 471**

RiverCity, RF Group.

After wrapping up an urgent meeting, Bryant stepped out of the boardroom.

Kevin hurried to catch up, reporting, "That black sheep from the Ford Group just called to confirm our partnership with SZ Technology."

"Uh-huh." Bryant didn't seem too concerned, striding towards his office.

It was just another chapter in the Ford family's ongoing saga of internal strife.

The question was whether Gregory Ford could effectively crush his opposition this time.

Kevin, puzzled, asked, "Why are we partnering with SZ Technology now, of all times?"

On a professional level, RF Group definitely needed SZ Technology's patented tech, but it wasn't necessary to partner up right now.

On a personal level, Mrs. Ferguson had eloped with Gregory, so why would Bryant want to throw a lifeline to his rival?

Bryant, with his distinctively firm grip, adjusted his tie and sat down, glancing up at Kevin, "Do you really think not partnering with him would make his fight any harder?" Palmer, ambitious yet lacking in scope and capability, only resorts to shady tactics.

The Ford Group was destined to be Gregory's, sooner or later.

Kevin, still confused, asked, "But with RF Group's support, he'll have an easier time. Why... would you want to help him?"

"I'm not helping him."

Bryant, massaging his aching stomach, looked out at the neon lights through the floor-to-ceiling window, his voice deep, "I'm just settling a debt."

A debt owed to her.

If Gregory taking over the Ford Group could make her life a bit smoother, a bit happier, then it was worth it.

Bryant chuckled, "Moreover, getting early access to SZ Technology's patents can only benefit our projects. It's all gain and no loss."

Lucius waited in the car, seeing Gregory emerge from the Ford Residence. He signaled his men to withdraw and stepped out of the vehicle. This time, Gregory was almost certain of victory.

But he wasn't willing to bet on the slim chance of failure, not even one in ten thousand.

He had promised Jane Webster he wouldn't let anything happen.

So, he made sure to come fully prepared.

Lucius and his team were ready outside, enough manpower to handle any unforeseen situation.

Opening the car door for Gregory,

Lucius they

idn't ask any questions until

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Werove off, "Mr. Ford, everything

went smoothly?"

Gregory smiled. "What do you think?"

Lucius sighed in relief, "If you ask me, we should've just handed the evidence over to the cops."

"Jail would've been too easy for him."

Gregory's eyes were cold, a thin smile on his lips. "Only if he's free can we dictate his fate."

"That's true!"

Energized by the thought, Lucius

I've

plenty of ways to

wish he was dead." Contena him

Belongs

"Alright." Gregory agreed easily,

at him through the view

"Just one thing, don't

kill him."

Jane was kind-hearted, and unless absolutely necessary, he wanted to avoid bloodshed.

Lucius, "I know, what's the fun in a dead man?"

"Right."

Gregory gave a noncommittal response, checking the time and saying, "Speed it up."

It was nearly 8 PM. If he didn't get home soon, Jane would start to worry.

Just then, a message popped up on his phone, bringing a swift smile to his face.

Mrs. Ford: [Gregory, I'm almost home, how about you?]

As I waited at the last traffic light before home, I sent Gregory the message.

The light turned green, and I pressed the gas pedal, steering the car into our residential complex's underground parking.

Just as I got out, a young but somewhat greasy-looking man blocked my path. "Mrs. Ferguson, right? I'm Alaric."

## Chapter 472

"Alaric?" I furrowed my brow. "I'm not Mrs. Ferguson, nor do I know you. Mind stepping aside?"

"Do you know Mr. Ferguson then?"

Alaric seemed harmless enough, his tone even somewhat conciliatory as he hastened to add, "Don't worry, I mean no harm."

I took a step back, eyeing him with suspicion. "Then who are you...?"

From his words, it sounded like he was pretty tight with Bryant. But his showing up here, his intentions remained a mystery.

Alaric, playing the role of the experienced advisor, went on, "Mrs. Ferguson, I know it's been only a short while since your divorce, but don't you think it's a bit of a pity?"

I looked at him, a cold laugh escaping me. "Got nothing better to do, huh?"

Meddling where it's not wanted.

Alaric gave an awkward chuckle. "Please, don't be mad. I saw Mr. Ferguson the other day, looking lost and forlorn because of you. I thought you shouldn't miss out on such a great guy." "He didn't send you, did he?" I asked. Bryant wasn't one for beating around the bush.

Alaric shook his head quickly. "Of course not. It's just... It's been a while since the divorce. Regardless of what caused the split, you must've cooled off by now. Have you considered giving it another shot?" "Mr. Ferguson definitely still has feelings for you!"

"Listen, the quality of a woman's life often depends on whether she can find a good man. And a man like Mr. Ferguson, who only has eyes for you, you'd better hold on tight!"

Alaric rambled on, doing his best to

persuade me "A little quarrel here and there is fine, but if you overdo it you might just give some other

woman the chance to sneak in, Mrs. Ferguson, you're smart. Coming back to RiverCity in glory as Mrs. Ferguson surely beats being some secret lover here, right?"

I ignored most of what he said, only catching the last part. "Lover?"

Alaric paused, then asked, "Wait, has Mr. Ford not even acknowledged you as his lover?"

His train of thought caught me off

guard, and I responded coldly, "I think I get it You're trying so hard to play matchmaker between me and Bryant for some favor or project,

right? But let me tell you, you ne

wasting your time here. And what's going on between me and my boyfriend, that's kinda none of your business."

I looked at him squarely. "Get lost!"

"You..."

Seeing his advice fall on deaf ears, Alaric's temper flared. "You really think you're something, huh? Just a manipulator, dangling Mr. Ferguson while keeping things ambiguous with Mr. Ford on the side, and n

now

you act all high and mighty with

me?"

Hearing this, I almost laughed out of sheer irritation. "Seems like you've been around the block, judging others by your own standards, huh? A male manipulator?"

People tend to project their own insecurities. Whatever darkness lurked in their hearts, they assumed the same of others.

With that, I couldn't be bothered to waste another word on him, turning to make my way around to another door.

"Jane!" Alaric called out, "You really think a guy like Mr. Ford will stay interested in you for long?"

He sneered. "Thinking you could actually marry into the Ford family? Funny. I'll be waiting to see you crash and burn..."

## Chapter 473

I was practically racing around the corner when suddenly, a forceful grip latched onto my wrist!

Startled, I whipped around, only to crash into Gregory's deep eyes. I heaved a silent sigh of relief. "You scared the living daylights out of me!"

Gregory's eyebrows quirked up teasingly, "What's the rush? You running from ghosts or something?"

"Yeah, exactly!" I shot him a glare, a mix of annoyance and jest. "Running from the ghost who called me your lover!"

Gregory frowned in confusion, "What do you mean?"

"Some random dude blocked me at the apartment entrance," I explained, slipping my hand into his as we made our way toward the elevator, venting my frustration, "Out of nowhere, he accused me of being your lover, claimed you'd lose interest in me in no time, and warned me not to fantasize about becoming part of the Ford dynasty..."

I decided not to mention what Alaric said about giving Bryant another shot.

Gregory was already up to his ears sorting out family crap at the Ford's place that night, didn't need any extra headache.

In my heart, I knew which path I was meant to take moving forward.

But as I rambled on, Gregory was half-distracted, typing away on his phone. I only caught the tail end of his musing, "So, do you want to?"

"Want what?" I asked reflexively.

Gregory flashed a mischievous smile, "Fantasize about marrying me. Do you want to?"

I gave him a playful glare. "Is that your idea of a proposal?"

"No, it's not," Gregory quickly denied, then ruffled my hair a bit less gently than usual, "Proposals shouldn't be rushed. Besides, it's my place to bring up the subject when the time's right."

His words smoothed over the irritation Alaric had stirred in me. Looking up at Gregory, I couldn't help but smile, "At least you're sensible."

As he pulled me into the elevator, he asked, "So, being sensible, do I get a reward?"

"What do you want? As long as it doesn't bankrupt me, I'm all ears."

"Kiss me," he pointed at his right cheek.

Instinctively, my gaze flicked to the elevator's camera, and I hissed, "There's a camera!"

"Oh."

Gregory sounded reluctantly

resigned, but then, leveraging his

height and long legs, he swiftly covered the camera with his hand

and eyed me, "Can you kiss me now?"

This was just like hiding your head in the sand.

Worried he might do something more outrageous, I tiptoed and

quickly pecked his cheek, then

he

yanked his hand away. "There, happy now?" .

"Eh, it's just okay," Gregory quipped, his eyebrows dancing with playful dissatisfaction.

When the elevator stopped on the fifth floor, he didn't budge. I urged, "This is your stop."

He lived on the fifth floor; I was on the sixth.

Gregory's smile held a hint of mischief, "And you haven't reached yours?"

Before I could fully process his words, he scooped me in his arms and carried me out of the elevator!

As the elevator doors closed behind

us, he pinned

me against the

wall, his gaze intensify

"No cameras here." Content Belongs

"Huh?"

Before I could catch up with his pace, his voice dropped to a whisper, "We can start kissing now."

## Chapter 474

On the way back to RiverCity.

Alaric couldn't help but find it amusing, recalling how Jane had utterly disregarded him earlier.

If playing nice didn't work, he still had other means.

He refused to believe he couldn't handle a single woman. Once Jane returned to Bryant's side, everything would settle down. Bryant, overwhelmed by the joy of having her back, wouldn't care about the methods Alaric used. As for Gregory, he wouldn't risk his friendship with Bryant over a woman. To the Ford family's crown prince, it was just a way to pass the time. Alaric had seen enough to know Gregory wasn't seriously involved with Jane.

Mulling over his plan, Alaric, with his legs crossed, made a call. "Hey, it's me. Whatever it takes, just-Damn!"

The car abruptly screeched to a halt, and since he hadn't bothered with his seatbelt, he was propelled forward into the back of the front seat!

Cursing under his breath from the pain!

The leg he had propped up felt numb from the impact.

After gathering himself, Alaric, still not daring to move his leg and sweating bullets, bitingly cursed the driver, "Damn it, have you been drinking?? What kind of driving is that!"

"No, no..."

The driver, safely buckled in, quickly explained, "Boss, the car in front stopped suddenly. If I hadn't braked, we would've crashed."

Alaric, furious, spat out swear words, "Then you should've just hit them! Can't I cover the damages?"

The driver glanced at the car ahead, silent.



Following his gaze, Alaric saw a gleaming stretch Phantom illuminated by their headlights! Its license plate was a row of sixes. Such audacity made him think of only one person in Vista Town. -The Ford family's crown prince.

With the speed they were going, crashing into them wouldn't just be a matter of compensation, but also a problem far beyond his ability to handle!

A bad feeling washed over Alaric as a man in a black casual suit stepped out of the Phantom and approached, knocking on his window. His fears were confirmed.

Instinctively ready to scramble out, Alaric realized his leg felt as if it was broken, and winced in pain with every movement. He instead rolled down the window, knowing well it was the other's sudden stop that led to his current state. Yet, he couldn't even afford to be angry, instead offering a forced smile, "Hello, hello..."

Lucius remarked, "You were driving pretty fast, almost didn't catch you."

"Do... Do you need something from me?"

Alaric had a hunch but couldn't believe it, hastening to clarify his position. "I'm really sorry, I just injured my leg and can't move..." Lucius glanced down. "Broken?"

Unable to gauge his tone, Alaric was like, "Well... probably not."

Admitting it would be like blaming them for his injury. Alaric had that much sense.

Unexpectedly, Lucius opened the door, pressed a hand on his shoulder, and with a swift, ruthless motion, snapped his leg!

"Crack-" Lucius, satisfied, withdrew his hand and stood up straight, hands back in his pockets. "Now it's broken."

Throughout the brief encounter,

Alaric was too shocked to react, only

feeling the intense pain. Yet, he

dared not show any anger. He

couldn't afford to offend the Ford family's crown prince.

Once he managed to recover slightly, he forced a smile, trying to appease Lucius, "Bro... brother, could you maybe hint at what I did to upset Mr. Ford?"

Deep down, he had an inkling. His brief visit to Vista Town, only a few hours long, involved going to and. 94

place, doing one thing, meeting one person, and saying some things.

## Chapter 475

There was nothing else, nothing at all. And all of this had to do with Jane, and Jane alone. Apart from her, Gregory had no reason to stir up any trouble elsewhere.

But Alaric, a man who was always proud of his ability to juggle multiple relationships, couldn't believe that Gregory would make such a bold move just for Jane! All those times Alaric spoke to Jane, he was trying to persuade her to patch things up with Bryant. Sure, he did it behind Bryant's back, but to the public eye, he was acting under Bryant's influence. Wouldn't Gregory fear offending Bryant by making such a grand gesture?

Lucius just gave him this blank look. "Mr. Ford instructed me to tell you, if you bother his people again, it won't be as simple as just breaking a leg."

With that, Lucius turned to leave.

Alaric, shocked to his core, quickly asked, "May I ask... what's the relationship between Ms. Webster and your boss, Mr. Ford?"

He had to understand the extent to which he had offended Gregory today. If it was just a matter of defending a lover, then laying low for a while would suffice, and the matter would be forgotten. But if... Lucius turned back, "The kind where marriage is the only option."

Alaric was stunned for a moment, but his mind quickly caught up, stuttering, "But... wasn't there a rumor that Mr. Ford has been looking for Ms. Myers for over twenty years... and now he's going to marry Ms. Webster?"

Lucius replied calmly, "Ms. Webster is Ms. Myers."

Alaric felt like he'd been punched by a shock! How could he have imagined that Jane would be so fortunate? He kept replaying what he had said to her in the underground parking lot!

"Do you really think you're all that?"

"Just another pretty face, huh."

"Acting all high and mighty in front of me?"

"Thinking you could actually become part of the Ford family?"

"I can't wait to see you crash and burn!"

The more he thought about it, the more Alaric wished he could bash his own head in. He had failed to curry favor with Bryant and now had gone and offended Gregory to boot. Considering the rumors about how Gregory valued his fiancée and his ruthless methods, Alaric even doubted if Jane had relayed his words exactly as he had said them. Otherwise, he might have ended up with more than just a broken leg. The only way out of this mess was to grovel before Jane.

Cloud Villas.

Bella was watching a movie with Summer Taylor and had just finished when she saw Ivy waiting for them. Ivy had texted her before coming. Bella gave her a glance and then turned to Summer, "Summer, mom needs to discuss something with Ivy. You're going on a show tomorrow, have your bird's nest soup and get some rest early, no staying up late."

"Okay."

Summer obediently went to the kitchen, took out the bird's nest soup prepared by the maid, and sat at the dining table, happily sipping away. Thinking about her debut in the entertainment industry the next day made her thrilled.

Bella, reassured, went upstairs to

her

study. Ivy followed, shutting the door behind her, and got straight to the point, handing Bella a folder, "The investigation you requested was tampered with, and it took quite an effort to find the truth."

"Jane's original name is Lilliana Myers. There indeed was a conflict between her and Summer two years ago," Ivy said.

As Bella took the folder, she asked, "What kind of conflict?"

"Summer once impersonated Lilliana."

Bella's face turned pale. "What??"

"The evidence is all in there. Take a look."

Ivy pointed at the document, adding, "What's more surprising is that the hospital where Jane was born is also the Vista Town General Hospital."

## Chapter 476

Bella blurted out, "What are the odds?"

Two years ago, Summer had impersonated Jane.

Summer and Jane shared the same birthday. They were also born in the same hospital.

Individually, these coincidences might seem normal, but when piled together like this, they were downright eerie.

Bella began to pore over the documents with increasing focus, and Ivy chimed in at just the right moment, "Right? Don't you think it's all a bit too coincidental?" Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Yes." The more Bella read, the graver her expression became.

Considering Summer's past of assuming another's identity, Bella couldn't help but harbor some doubts.

She loved Summer, no question about it. She would do anything for her. But only if Summer was truly her daughter!

Ivy seemed to read her mind, her face paling as her voice grew louder, "You don't think... Ms. Webster is actually..."

"Shh." Bella frowned, cutting her off while glancing towards the door, voicing her concerns, "But, you personally took care of the DNA test through your contacts. There's no way it could be wrong, right?" Finding her biological daughter was a matter of great joy for Bella, but she approached it with extreme caution.

They had done the DNA test thrice. One was submitted normally to the hospital, another was sent abroad, and the most conclusive one was arranged by Ivy through her contacts.

All of them were without error.

That's why she had placed Summer so close to her heart overnight. Whatever Summer asked for, Bella would make it happen.

Ivy hesitated. "But... nothing's foolproof, right?"

She racked her brain, wondering if there was any possibility of a mistake, any chance someone tampered with the DNA report.

But what kinda pull would someone need to tweak the results from three different places? Besides, the contact Ivy used was known only to her, not even Summer knew! Where would they even start?

Seeing Bella's heavy expression, Ivy suggested, "Maybe we should do another DNA test?"

"With Summer?"

Bella remembered the first time she saw Summer last year, all nervous and quiet, but super well-mannered.

Bella had spent a lot of effort to be there for her, caring for her in every possible way.

It was this care that had slowly eased Summer out of her shell.

If it turned out Summer had

assumed someone else's identity, that would be one thing. They could just redo the DNA test, clear things up, and if it wasn't a match, well, they'd part ways.

But what if she was?

How could she face Summer after that?

"We can't..."

Bella shook her head in refusal, then, feeling uneasy, she changed her mind, "No, we should do it."

Ivy was confused. "So, are we doing it or not?"

"We'll do it Bella looked at her

firmly,

aying, "But we can't let

know. You need to feel.

out a way to handle this discreetly." belongs to

That way, they could avoid startling anyone prematurely.

Ivy furrowed her brow, "... You're making this difficult for me." But then an idea struck her, "Okay, leave it to me!"

"You have a plan?"

"Yes, but I'll need your help."

"Tell me."

"Tomorrow, before you leave for the red carpet event, casually pick up a few strands of Summer's hair from her bed and bring them to me." "That's easy." Bella agreed readily.

It was perfect timing since Summer was scheduled to film a TV show the next day. For a mother, entering her daughter's room was perfectly normal. However, after agreeing, Bella felt a wave of nervousness, "Ivy, it couldn't be, right...?"

"Let's hope not."

Ivy, unsure of how to offer comfort, could only speak the truth, "The jade pendant showing up with Summer the DNA tests clear... if we're wrong, it's not because we weren't cautious. It would just mean we were outwitted."

## Chapter 477

They were out in the light, while their enemies lurked in the shadows, sneaky and unpredictable.

The search for her daughter had been a covert operation until Summer was mistakenly acknowledged.

Only a handful knew, each one trusted implicitly. But somehow, a leak had given their foes an opportunity.

Bella thought about her attitude towards Jane, her heart clenched, "What if I was wrong, and my real daughter is Jane... right?"

"Yes."

Ivy's response was crisp, "Don't you see it, the resemblance between Jane and you?"

"In looks?"

"That too."

Ivy nodded, then shifted gears. "But it's the spirit, don't you think? The way she handles breakups, so clean and decisive. Just like you were at her age." Bella frowned, "What do you mean?"

"Remember how you dealt with those lousy boyfriends? Swift and ruthless."

Ivy chuckled, "Jane and Bryant, didn't she end that cleanly?"

Bella disagreed, a bitter smile on her lips, "She's softer than I was. If only I hadn't been so harsh, my real daughter... she might have suffered less." Strangely enough.

The thought that her biological daughter might be Jane brought an unexpected sense of anticipation.

Summer, trembling all over, sat at her vanity, headphones on, unable to believe the turn of events. Bella was close to unraveling the truth, much faster than she had anticipated.

The thought that Bella's daughter might once again be Jane made her drop her moisturizer in shock. The black, round container rolled across the floor, taking a turn before halting with a thud against the wall. Why Jane again?! Why did Jane always get the good fortune, being Ms. Myers and now Bella's daughter?

And what about her? Was she

doomed to be nothing, not even a placeholder in someone's life? Was she meant to wallow in the mire forever?

No, she refused to accept it! She wouldn't stand for it!

Let

Summer frantically searched her bed for

her hair, despite

the

meticulous cleaning by the staff, she found a few.

After searching the bed, she moved to the floor, wishing she had a magnifying glass not to miss a single one.

As she searched, her shoulders shook violently, and she collapsed, sobbing silently on the floor, trying not to make a sound.

If only Bella had taken longer to discover the truth, she could have finished recording the reality show, leveraging the massive attention being Bella's daughter brought.

She could have become a familiar face to the audience.

Even if later it turned out she wasn't Bella's daughter, she could have used the fame to stay in the limelight.

But now, what was she to do?

Paternity tests take only a few days; she hadn't even finished filming when Bella had intercepted her!

What now....

After a while, as her emotions stabilized, she heard her phone vibrating incessantly on the bed.

It was from Mark.

Suddenly, seeing a glimmer of hope and a sense of direction, she scrambled to answer, "Hello, there's been a problem!"

## **Chapter 478**

Summer was on pins and needles, hoping Mark could come up with a solution. Even if it was just to buy some time.

Over the phone, Mark's voice turned icy, "What's the trouble?"

His gut was telling him this was no small matter. It was rare for Summer to be this rattled.

Taking a deep breath to steady herself, Summer double-checked the door was locked before she started piecing her story together, "Bella's getting suspicious of me!" "No,



wait..." She paused, shaking her head in confusion. "It's not just suspicion. She's planning to do a DNA test again!"

Thinking about it, she couldn't help but admire the man on the other end of the line.

After Bella started getting suspicious, Summer thought she had everything under control.

But it was Mark who reminded her to always stay on her toes.

He even suggested installing bugs in the study and Bella's bedroom when they moved into the mansion.

Just in case something came up and they were caught off guard.

She had just installed a bug under the desk in the study that morning while the maid was out for groceries and Bella was out for her morning jog.

Listening in was just a test to check the bug's effectiveness.

And now, it seemed like a stroke of luck, a desperate chance to turn things around.

Mark's frustration was palpable, "Why would she start doubting you out of the blue? Don't tell me you did something foolish to tip her off!"

"Impossible!"

Summer was confident it wasn't her fault. After a moment of mulling it over, it hit her. "It's Jane! She visited once and must have talked about something with Bella!" Mark's voice darkened. "Has Bella taken any of your hair yet?"

"Not yet." Summer shook her head. "She's probably worried that if I really am her daughter, going through with a DNA test openly might hurt me. They plan to sneak into my room to get my hair while I'm away

Hearing this, Mark slightly relaxed. That was indeed a workaround.

Even the hair used for the DNA test last year, Mark had personally flown to France under the pretext of visiting Jane, and brought it back

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from her house.

Despite Jane keeping her distance, making him feel frustrated and annoyed, he couldn't deny that Jane's trust in him was unique.

After a moment of contemplation, Mark's voice was ice-cold, "Then you better keep your eyes peeled and clean up any traces of your hair."

"...You're making it way too simple!" Summer objected, "Even if I clean up all my hair before I leave tomorrow what about when I'm at the studio? You know better than I do that Bella could easily get the studio staff to snag a couple of strands of my hair. This won't buy us much time!"

Everyone in the industry wanted to curry favor with Bella.

It was as simple as making a phone call.

And Summer couldn't possibly pick up after herself every moment; something was bound to slip through the cracks.

Mark's laugh was cold, "Buying a few days is all we need."

"Really?"

Summer felt a bit calmer, reassured by his confidence, but then she changed the subject, "Is Jane really Bella's daughter?"

She hoped not! She couldn't believe all the luck could fall to one person.

Unexpectedly, Mark didn't bother hiding the truth. "Yes. So, if you can't hold the fort for these few days, then Jane will be recognized as her daughter." "No way!" Summer suddenly lost it, her voice a mix of rage and desperation as she stormed into the bathroom to splash water on her face. Envy twisted her further, pushing her to say something drastic, "Can't we make her leave, just like before... Keep her away from Bella's sight."

## Chapter 479

Mark was more consumed by the thought than she ever was.

Just like the last couple of years, Jane was off studying and getting treatment in France, far away from any rivals. In his eyes, no one could ever come close to replacing him by her side.

He had no worries about anyone snatching Jane away.

How perfect.

But deep down, he knew, Jane would never return.

Mark exhaled a heavy breath, trying to dispel the thought, "No way."

"There's got to be something you can do... you must..."

Summer knew Mark was ruthless. If he wanted, Jane could disappear without a trace!

At her words, Mark looked slightly taken aback. "What can I do?"

"Just... just keep her locked away! Or somehow tie her down..."

"Impossible!" Mark's veins were popping with fury as he shot back, "I'm warning you, drop these petty schemes. As long as she's in Vista Town, you better make sure she's safe. If anything like the incident at the dinner happens again, whether it was you or not, I'll be the first to take you down."

His voice was cold and menacing, like a demon from hell.

Summer shivered, genuinely frightened of Mark, but for her own sake, she couldn't give up, "Don't you want her to be yours? If you tie her down, she'll belong only to you..."

Mark suddenly clenched his fists, cutting her off sharply, "One more word, and I can make you disappear just as easily as I made you Bella's daughter."

"...I spoke out of turn!"

Summer took a deep breath. She hadn't really expected Mark to agree now. But planting a seed was all it took; there could still be a day it would sprout.

After all, Mark was never one to be trifled with!

Summer got back on track, "Are you sure you can handle it in a few days?"

"If you don't trust me, find your own way!"

Mark, running out of patience, hung up the phone.

He

phone onto his desk

and walked over to the floor-to-ceiling windows,

RiverCity under the night

Summer's words had unsettled him.

If he went through with it, Jane would only belong to him.

But from then on, she would never trust him again. She might even despise him.

He couldn't rush this.

Suppressing his emotions, he turned back to his desk, opened a drawer, and from  
rately pulled out a photo

a diary. Content bere

In the photo, a little girl with a bun smiled brightly and radiantly.

The edges were yellowed but had been laminated for preservation, showing how much  
it was treasured.

Mark gently caressed her cheek in the photo, murmuring, "You'd want me to fake my  
time, right? I'm not afraid of anything except the day you might come to hate me."

"Knock, knock-"

His assistant entered.

Mark, a beat too slow, slipped the photo back into its place and looked up, "Haven't left  
yet?"

"I was about to, but I got some news and thought I should report to you first."

"What is it?"

"Ms. Webster and Gregory are together now."

The diary fell to the floor with a thud.

It was rare for the assistant to see Mark lose his composure. After a moment, Mark  
collected himself. "Got it."

He no longer had the luxury of time.

## Chapter 480

The next morning dawned bright and early.

Half-asleep, I turned over, and my hand brushed against something unexpected. No, not something-someone.

I jolted awake to find myself wrapped in someone's arms, and the owner of those arms was gazing at me with such tenderness, as if trying to pour all his gentleness into the look. "Awake?" he asked, his voice slightly hoarse, raspy from sleep.

Memories of last night slowly pieced together, and I felt a flush of embarrassment. Yet, I boldly wrapped my arms around him, snuggling closer into his embrace with a defiant whimper, "Nope, still wanna sleep."

That sleep was the deepest slumber I had had in ages. Completely peaceful, without a single dream.

Gregory raised an eyebrow, his tone lazy. "A sleepyhead, huh?"

"I'm all yours," I replied, nuzzling against his chest. The crisp scent of mint somehow felt revitalizing.

He chuckled softly, "Calling me a sleepy pig?"

"Not at all." I looked up to place a kiss on his chiseled jawline. "I meant, I belong to you."

I was totally, completely his.

Gregory paused for a moment, then leaned in for a deep kiss, overpowering me until my body went limp, and I playfully protested, "Stop, stop, stop..."

My protest was cut short as I felt something hard and hot press against me. Just like last night. Yet, my face instantly flamed up, and I scrambled out of his embrace, "I-I should check on Ike! He must be awake by now!"

Last night, he wouldn't let me leave. Ike was left in the care of Christine Jackson. They got along surprisingly well. When I called, Ike assured me right next to her, "Auntie, don't worry! Ike will listen to Christine, you go enjoy your couple's time!"

Now, Gregory's brown eyes watched me, a laugh in his voice, "Just lighting fires, huh?"

"What else!" I dashed into the walk-in closet to change quickly, "I'm heading back first."

"Wait for me a few minutes."

Gregory, resigned, grabbed a T-shirt and cargo pants, dressed quickly after a swift wash, and then pulled me along upstairs.

In the elevator, I couldn't help but stare at his face. Just a splash of water, and his skin looked flawless?

Gregory's eyes crinkled, "What's with the look, planning to kiss me in broad daylight?"

Rogue. My gaze flickered to the camera above, remembering his antics from the night before, and I glared at him. "Who's kissing you?"

Before I could finish, he planted a kiss on my forehead, "Grump, if you won't kiss me, then I'll kiss you."

Wasn't he just talking about broad daylight? Heat rushed to my face again, and I raised my hand to hit him, but just then the elevator doors opened, and he dodged out swiftly. "Gregory!!!" Annoyed, I chased after him.

The front door was ajar, indicating Christine and Ike were already up. Gregory dashed inside, then suddenly halted, causing me to crash into his back. I cried out, "Ow!"

"Where did it hurt?" His tone distracted, Gregory turned to check on me.

I randomly covered my nose, "Here."

He checked briefly, then teased, "It's fine, as long as it's not your brain."

While he was off guard, I tickled his waist, having discovered his ticklish spot the night before. Sure enough, he jerked away, capturing my hand, his lips curving, "Resorting to self-harm now?"

"Being your girlfriend, I need to be smart," I retorted, "Otherwise, one day you'll sell me off, and I'll still be counting the money for you..."

"Jane!" Christine's voice suddenly called out, and following it, I noticed an additional presence in the living room.

Mark looked at me with a gentle smile and said, "Jane, Dave asked me to check on you."

"...Mark." The unexpected guest

made me feel awkward. I

straightened up, trying to regain my

composure, "You shouldn't have bothered, he just video-called me yesterday. Now you've had to come all the way from RiverCity

Dave was always overly concerned, even reminding me to dress warmly for a forecasted cold snap in F country. So, adjusting back home, he still hasn't quite gotten used to it. After sending me reminders, he'd suddenly remember I'm no longer in Fcountry and would hastily add, "No. matter where you are, take care of yourself!"

Mark glanced at Gregory beside me, still smiling, "Not just Dave, I'm a bit worried about you too."

"What'll you have?" Gregory's attitude towards him lacked the earlier sharpness, instead offering hospitality, "Coffee or tea?"

Christine, busy dressing Ike, apologized to Mark, "Look at me, all caught up with Ike and I haven't even offered you anything."

"It's fine, I'm practically family here, I can get something myself." Mark was about to make himself a coffee when Gregory opened the fridge and tossed him a bottle of water, effectively stopping him.

"Have some water instead." Gregory glanced at his watch, a smirk playing on his lips, "It's only eight, you've not had breakfast, right? Coffee on an empty stomach isn't good for you."

Caring for someone? And that someone was Mark? Confused, I glanced at Gregory, sensing something off, then back at Mark, who seemed as relaxed as ever.

Taking the water, Mark joked, "Didn't realize Mr. Ford was into health."

"Have to be," Gregory cheekily pulled me closer, "Not alone anymore, need to stick around a bit longer."

It dawned on me what was off. He

was marking his territory. Following his lead, didn't pull away, instead turning to Mark with a bright smile, "Almost forgot, Mark, let me introduce him. Gregory, my boyfriend."

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