

Lost Me, Gained Regret (Jane and Bryant Ferguson)

Chapter 501

Knowing Summer's background would help her know Jane's relationship with her.

Of course, they went through the formalities, getting a DNA test to fully confirm the blood relationship.

During breakfast one morning, Christine suddenly suggested we should consider opening a branch office in Vista Town.

She had mentioned it to me before.

But, until now, there hadn't been a pressing need, as RiverCity was sufficient for Janedream's operations, so I thought we could wait a bit longer.

"Now that Janedream and you are completely in the limelight, our company's size definitely won't cut it anymore."

Christine analyzed over her bowl of oatmeal, "Our first physical store in Vista Town, once you're back with the Myers family, will obviously focus more on this side. So, opening a branch office in Vista Town is a win-win for both you and Janedream."

Without hesitation, I agreed, "Sounds good to me."

Bella Taylor added fuel to the fire, showing us the financial data from last night until now, the cash flow was already in the eight digits.

With Bella's solid base back home, we were just starting to hit the peak of this windfall.

Opening a branch office was definitely the way to go.

Christine was surprised at how quickly I agreed, "You agreed so fast?"

I served Ike some ham, chuckling, "How could I not?"

"No way." Christine's eyes shimmered with joy, and she let out a long sigh of relief. "I never imagined, Jane, that we could come this far!"

So many moments from the past flashed through my mind.

When Christine and I first met, we took on various part-time jobs, handing out flyers, waitressing, tutoring.

We faced countless rejections and were so poor that even getting sick was a luxury.

I smiled, "That's all behind us, Chris. Things will only get better from here."

For both of us, they had to.

"What's going to get better?"

In the midst of this touching moment, Ike suddenly looked up from his bowl of cereal, blinking innocently, "Is it the love story between you and Uncle?"

I couldn't help but laugh, tapping his little head, "What do you know about love?"

"I know! I know!"

Ike nodded vigorously, his eyes

spinning as he tried to articulate his

thoughts, "It's like, I don't like kids who cry, but if she cries, it's okay! I even have to beg her to stop crying!"

Hearing this, I was slightly taken aback by his thought process and ability to express himself.

However, Christine burst into laughter, "Wow, so young and already a romantic, huh? Does the Ford family specialize in romantics?"

"Ms. Jackson, what do you mean? Who else in the Ford family is a romantic?"

Just as Zoe had quietly left, Gregory Ford walked in, catching the tail end of this conversation. He swapped his shoes for slippers, pulled up a

chair, and raised an eyebrow

"What's this now?"

Caught gossiping, Christine felt a bit awkward, "Being a romantic is great. My Jane here loves romantics; she wouldn't have it any other way." I turned to Gregory, "Oatmeal or pancakes?"

Zoe had prepared a lavish breakfast, complete with fruits, vegetables, meats, and eggs.

Gregory grinned, his eyes teasing, "Since I'm a romantic, I'll go with whatever you recommend." "...I'm full."

Christine put down her utensils, picking up Ike to head to the living room, "You're full too, right? Zoe's cooking is always plentiful, yet here we are, being fed dog food on the side."

Ike protested being moved away from the table, clamoring, "I want more milk!"

"Did the dog food get stuck in your throat?"

"

I served Gregory a half bowl of oatmeal, recalling his visit to the Ford Group yesterday, I couldn't help but ask.

"You're not heading to the Ford Group today, are you?"

"It's still the Ford Group."

Gregory took a pancake, dipped it in a bit of syrup, "Unless something unexpected happens, I'll mostly be at the Ford Group from now on."

I tensed up, "Why?"

Him going to the Ford Group always made me nervous!

"Don't worry."

Gregory knew what I feared, "Palmer Ford is no longer at the Ford Group. It won't be so easy for him to come back."

I couldn't help asking, "You drove him away? How did Mr. Ford agree to that?"

"Well..."

Gregory hesitated for a moment, "Speaking of which, your ex played a part in it."

Chapter 502

It was around this time that life seemed to finally be going my way.

Mentioning Bryant Ferguson made me pause-a momentary lapse that felt like a lifetime had passed.

These days, it felt like the struggling, pain-ridden Jane of the past had been cleaved in two, leaving a new me in her place.

Gregory pinched my cheek, "Daydreaming?"

"No, not really."

I shook my head, unable to pin down my feelings, and followed his lead, "Is this about Bryant?"

I knew Bryant's influence had been creeping towards Vista Town again.

But his helping Gregory seemed both unexpected and somehow anticipated.

He wasn't a bad person, not really.

You could even say he was good a great boss, a dutiful grandson, a loving adoptive son, a caring step-brother... just not a great husband.

The world where I was the only one hurt somehow felt justified.

Gregory, having his fill of food and drink, displayed a carefree demeanor that belied his upbringing. Wiping his mouth with a napkin, he said, "It's a bit complicated, but in short, Bryant did me a favor and put a halt to Hanson Ford's plans to push Palmer into a position of power."

"So, that means your dad..."

I caught myself, remembering it was his father we were talking about, and corrected, "He won't be giving you trouble for a while?"

"That's one way to put it."

Gregory raised an eyebrow, a hint of coldness in his eyes, "That man married my mother for her wealth, and suppressed me to maintain his grip on power. He doesn't want a son; he wants a puppet." Hearing this, I felt a pang of sympathy.

But it wasn't surprising. In these powerful families, fights for control often left little room for father-son bonds.

Hanson was the sole heir to the Ford

family, naturally taking over and

indulging in the privileges of wealth

and power. But time waits for no one, and he grew old. The Ford

family needed a new leader

And Gregory, the legitimate heir, was the only choice. His illegitimate siblings didn't even qualify for the family tree, let alone inheritance.

But their relationship had been strained since he betrayed Gregory's mother, and with Gregory in power, Hanson couldn't continue living as before. After all, power dictates the pecking order.

Confronted with fatherly affection,

Gregory could easily list his father's

indiscretions. Hanson's support

Palmer, an illegitimate son,

stemmed from a desire for a compliant heir, a "filial son" who would do his bidding.

I held Gregory's hand, "Regardless, I just want you to be safe. If your father and Palmer make a move, don't confront them head-on. Even without the Ford family's power, we can still have a good life."

I promised, "And your mother, Molly, they'll be fine too."

Paul Ford and Adah had nothing to worry about. Regardless of who was in charge, they could live their remaining years in peace.

Gregory was momentarily taken aback, then smiled, "What's this? Jane offering to take care of me and my family?"

"...If you want to see it that way."

I touched my nose, slightly embarrassed, "It just means... Jane might not compare to the Ford family's wealth. You, your mother, and Molly might have to live more modestly." The days of luxury cars and mansions as playthings were over.

But we could still save up for a comfortable life.

Gregory's gaze deepened, "So, you're offering to support me?"

I shot him a look, "Is that a problem?"

"Not at all."

As Gregory squeezed my cheek, I couldn't help but wonder why he always seemed to enjoy tormenting my face.

Chapter 503

Then, with a nonchalant stretch, he gulped down the last of his coffee, slammed the mug on the table, and declared, "Well, Ms. Webster, you'd better keep that backdoor open for me. If things go south, I'm coming back to crash with you."

"Uncle!" Off to the side, Ike, who was sipping on his hot chocolate, gave him a reproachful look, pouting, "Don't you have work today?"

Gregory's face softened momentarily before shooting Ike a sharp glance, "Little brat, tired of me already?"

Ike huffed, "When you're here, Jane's all yours!"

And with that, Gregory was effectively chased out.

After seeing Gregory into the elevator, the little tyke clambered up to me, planting a wet kiss on my cheek, "Jane, who do you love more, me or Uncle?"

I couldn't help but laugh, "I love you, of course."

But I love your uncle more. I thought.

...

The night was serene, and the top-tier RiverCity Club basked in its tranquility amidst a bustling neighborhood. Membership was exclusive, and a card could set you back a sum in the six figures.

This hefty price tag was just for entry rights; everything else was on the tab. And forget about transferring or cancelling your membership.

This policy alone drew a stark line between the classes, leaving the average Joe to only dream from the outside.

Around a corridor bend, Alaric eyed the woman dressed as one of the club's waitresses, nodding in approval yet double-checking, "You remember what you're here for, right?"

"I do."

Her small face was calm, yet there was a chill in her demeanor, "To stay by Mr. Ferguson's side."

In other words, to become Mr. Ferguson's woman.

Alaric chuckled, "Good. You've got tonight. Pull it off, and I'll cover your mom's medical bills. Or, if Mr. Ferguson takes a liking, you'll want for nothing. But fail, and well, you know the stakes." The woman's hands trembled slightly by her side, aware she had no other choice, "I'm going in."

Growing up in a single-parent home, her mom was all she had, battling heart disease without the funds for treatment.

As her mom's condition worsened

desperation turned her days to tears, but money didn't grow on trees Alaric approached her during these dire times.

Her mission was to seduce the man rumored to shake RiverCity with a mere stomp of his foot....

Initially, she refused, clinging to her morals and doubting her allure to a man of such caliber, surrounded by beauties. Her looks weren't stunning, lacking the capital to seduce.

Yet Alaric seemed confident, urging her to just go for it.

Holding a tray, she knocked and entered the dimly lit private room Alaric had specified.

Unlike the other rooms, this one was subdued. Without seeing faces, she could tell which one was Bryant Mr. Ferguson.

His mere presence, so commanding and sharp, made it clear he was no ordinary rich kid.

Steven frowned, barely acknowledging her, "Just leave the drinks and go."

"Okay."

The moment she spoke, Steven paused, sharply turning to her.

And so did Bryant, silent until now.

The lights suddenly brightened!

As Bryant's gaze fixed on her, a shadow passed through his eyes et is didn't look away, as if t see through her.

There was scrutiny and curiosity, edged with danger.

Forcing herself to remain composed, when she nearly couldn't, Bryant let out a cold laugh, asking, "What's your name?"

"Nadine White."

Chapter 504

"Nadine..."

Bryant's voice lingered over her name, as if tasting the syllables for the first time.

Nadine couldn't bring herself to meet his piercing gaze, fearing that her facade would crumble under the weight of his scrutiny. Then, Bryant chuckled a sound that sent shivers down her spine-and demanded, "Who sent you?"

It was clear to Bryant that she was a pawn, sent by someone with a hidden agenda-a play for profit, because in his world, nobody made a move without an incentive.

Nadine hadn't expected Bryant to be so astute, to see right through her with barely a glance. Her face paled as she took a deep breath and repeated the lie she had prepared.

"I'm just here on a part-time job. Nobody sent me..."

"Miss White."

Bryant's legs were crossed, a cigarette dangling between his lips as he leaned forward, his jawline sharp against the dimly lit room. His voice was a low growl, "Since you're here, you know who I am. Anything your backer can find on me, I can find on them. Anything they can offer you, I can match. Let's just say, I'm known for not playing nice when I'm crossed. So, if you don't start talking, my patience will run thin." Hearing this,

Nadine felt a cold sweat break out. She bit her lip, weighing her options before deciding to betray Alaric.

Under Bryant's intense aura, she felt cornered, with no other choice but to face him and confess, "It was Alaric."

She had no illusions about continuing to hide the truth; someone like Bryant could easily uncover any secret. Rather than futile resistance, she chose to bet everything on Bryant, who seemed infinitely more reliable than Alaric.

Bryant frowned, not immediately placing the name, "Alaric?"

"Brother..."

York Carlson, seething with anger and already plotting revenge on Alaric, reluctantly spoke up, "That's my cousin's boyfriend, the one you met at the bar last week. He's been eyeing our medical project." "I never imagined he'd be bold enough to make a move on it!"

Everyone knew Bryant was a force

to be reckoned with, fiercely protective of those close to him. Crossing him, especially using someone from his past as bait, was a guaranteed path to ruin.

To the astute observer, it was clear Nadine was a stand-in for someone Bryant once held dear, chosen for her natural resemblance and the same aloof demeanor.

Bryant ashed his cigarette, not acknowledging York's input, and turned to Nadine, "Where's Alaric now? Waiting in the car park?"

He wouldn't have set this trap without planning to see it through.

Nadine guessed, "Probably in his car."

York, catching Bryant's silent command, left and returned shortly, dragging Alaric by the collar and tossing him to the floor with a solid kick.

Nadine recoiled at the violence, watching Alaric glare at her with undisguised hatred.

Without blinking, Bryant's cold voice filled the room, "Alaric, correct?"

"Yes, yes!"

Alaric scrambled to his feet, hobbling towards Bryant with a sycophantic smile, "Mr. Ferguson, we've met before."

"And her," Bryant nodded towards Nadine, "you arranged this?"

Regret twisted Alaric's features. Desperate to secure a deal that was slipping through his fingers, he had underestimated Bryant. He scrambled for an explanation, trying to dress up his scheme in a less offensive light, "Mr. Ferguson, Sir, it was when I saw how deeply you felt for Ms. Webster. I've known the pain of unrequited love myself, and I empathized too much, I guess. I thought a stand-in might offer some temporary solace, though it's no real solution, just... a distraction from the loneliness at night."

His laugh was an attempt to lighten the mood, "And who knows? If Ms. Webster still holds any affection for you, seeing another woman by your side might prompt her to reconsider her feelings, perhaps even bring her back to you."

Chapter 505

Alaric believed his reasoning was solid, and for a moment, it seemed Bryant agreed, nodding with an air of neutrality, "Well said."

Just as Alaric began to relax, Bryant's expression darkened, and with a crushing motion, he extinguished his fiery red cigarette butt, "Breaking one of your legs should square us." "Wait, what?"

Alaric was quick to clasp around his leg, pleading, "Mr. Ferguson, I was wrong! I got carried away, please spare me..."

His leg injury from that mishap in Old Creek hadn't fully healed, and now he was risking another!

Realizing pleading with Bryant was futile, he turned to York, "Cousin, please, help me out here..."

"You had it coming."

Without waiting for Bryant to react, York ordered his men to haul Alaric away.

Nadine's face turned ghostly pale as she sensed the stark divisions within this world!

Alaric could easily manipulate her.

But in Bryant's presence, he was less than a dog.

The commotion drained Bryant of any remaining interest, and as he stood to leave, he paused to glance at Nadine in the corner, his expression softening for a moment. He instructed York, "Take care of her."

"Will do."

Knowing each other for years and working together just as long, York knew exactly what he meant.

They had to ensure Nadine was safe from Alaric, the mad dog, should he decide to bite back.

Upon learning Nadine needed funds for her mother's surgery, Bryant had her transferred to the BlessedCare Medical Facility, putting it on the company's tab. After all, that was a promise Bryant intended to keep.

Anything Alaric could offer, they would provide as well.

The next day, as Bryant stepped into his office, Kevin followed closely with an invitation in hand.

"What's this?" Bryant inquired.

"It's an invitation from Bella for a celebration party next Wednesday," Kevin handed it over, "She's waiting at the reception for your reply. Will you attend?" "I'll go."

Bryant didn't even glance at the invitation; the mention of Bella's name was enough for him to decide.

Kevin sighed internally, knowing well what drew the boss's interest, "Mr. Ferguson, maybe we should pass?"

Bryant scoffed, "Are you advising me, or is it the other way around?"

"Right... I'll deliver your response then."

Kevin beat a hasty retreat.

...

Old Creek, Cloud Villas.

Ivy relayed the message that Mr. Ferguson would attend, catching Bella in the midst of her baking frenzy at the kitchen island, "RF got back to us, he'll be there."

"Good."

Bella kneaded cranberries into the dough, "What about Lorna? Did Summer notice anything odd?"

"Nothing."

Ivy shook her head, "She's clueless. Our guys managed to cut the power and sneak into her room while she was out."

The day Summer Taylor left for the show, Bella had entered her bedroom and found it suspiciously clean, not a single hair out of place. Even the maid hadn't cleaned yet.

That sparked Bella's suspicion, thinking Summer might have known something was up. Delving deeper with Ivy, they felt more convinced something was amiss upon discovering a bug under the desk in the study.

To avoid alerting their quarry, they left the bag untouched. But they were extra cautious when sending someone to collect a hair sample from the show, ensuring to cut the power first.

This would ensure no alerts were sent to Summer's phone about the intrusion.

This only made Summer's identity all the more suspicious...

Bella nodded, a hint of frost in her gaze, "Then we're set."

"Why invite Bryant to the celebration?" Ivy was puzzled, "We don't have any current or planned collaborations with him, do we?"

Celebrations usually involved internal staff and key partners.

Bella, shaping the dough with care and precision, looking effortlessly elegant, replied, "No, but he's Jane's ex-husband."

Realization dawned on Ivy, "You mean to..."

Once the paternity test results were revealed at the party, Bella, as the mother, would deal with Jane's worthless ex. Just a little family clean-up.

Chapter 506

At Vista Town International Airport, Edith stepped out in her striking red heels, making her way confidently towards the waiting Rolls-Royce. As she bent to get in, her dress fluttered slightly, revealing her slender, pale legs for a fleeting moment.

Herbert Taylor's gaze darkened with memories of just two days ago, how those legs were wrapped around his waist in a passionate embrace.

Leaving the freeway behind, they headed straight for the downtown area, with Edith humming a tune, seemingly in a good mood.

Suddenly, Herbert answered a call, his voice laced with seriousness and a hint of excitement, "Are you sure about that? Alright, send me her address on Messenger."

Edith glanced at him curiously, "That excited? Did your uncle finally kick the bucket?"

Herbert's uncle was notorious for his schemes and even kidnapped their son, Ike, once. Edith couldn't hide her disdain for the man, especially when she remembered Ike's injuries.

Herbert's expression softened slightly, "Aaron found out my sister has settled in Vista Town. I'm planning to drop by."

"Your sister?" Edith was confused for a moment before realization hit her, "The one who cut ties with the Taylor family years ago and whom you never talk about?"

Even within the family, her name was rarely mentioned, shrouded in a sort of respectful silence.

Herbert simply nodded.

Upon reaching Cloud Villas, Edith chose to wait in the car to avoid any awkwardness. For the first time, she saw hesitation on Herbert's face.

"If you don't want to wait, the driver can take you home," Herbert offered, his voice unusually gentle.

Edith quickly agreed.

Later that evening, as we were about to start dinner, the doorbell rang. It was Edith.

Ike rushed into his mother's arms, and after their heartfelt reunion, I invited Edith to join us for dinner.

Gregory teased her, "Had enough fun?"

"What fun? I haven't even started with you yet," she retorted, hinting at some advice Gregory gave Herbert that ended up with Herbert bringing her back. Gregory raised an eyebrow, "I only suggested he clear up those rumors."

"We're divorced. Why would I care about his explanations?"

"Did you listen anyway?"

Edith shot him a look, "You're impossible."

"Anyway, that mysterious member of the Taylor family is back in Vista Town," she changed the subject, diving into her meal with gusto. Gregory, feigning indifference, passed me a piece of fried chicken, "Which mysterious member?"

"Herbert's big sister!" Edith revealed with a mix of shock and excitement.

According to Edith, Herbert's reaction to his sister's return was unlike anything she'd seen before. He seemed genuinely intimidated by her. "And guess what? She gave him the cold shoulder. Didn't even let him in the door!" Edith couldn't hide her amusement.

Gregory frowned, "Someone dared to do that to him?"

"In Vista Town, Herbert's influence is unmatched," I mused.

"But yeah," Edith confirmed, sipping her juice, "I always heard rumors about how she left the family in a huff and must be struggling.

she's living in luxury at Gout

Villas."

"Cloud Villas?" I interrupted, suddenly intrigued.

"That's where Bella lives, right? The entertainment mogul connected to our son... his aunt?"

The realization hit us all. The

entertainment industry's

powerhouse, Bella, was part of our

extended family, adding a layer of

intrigue and connection we hadn't anticipated.

"Wait, Bella and Herbert... both have the Taylor surname."

The revelation left us all pondering the intertwining destinies of our families, especially as I remembered the jade pendant inscribed

the

name "Taylor." Content bet

Chapter 507

Gregory noticed my mind wandering and playfully ruffled my hair. "Lost in thought?"

I snapped back to reality, managing a small laugh. "It's nothing."

Imagine if my biological mom was a Taylor. That would've made my life way too sweet.

Born a Myers, dating a Ford, and then finding out my mom's a Taylor?

That's like hitting the jackpot in Vista Town's version of high society, not just locally but nationally.

Bella's influence turned Janedream into an overnight sensation.

Suddenly, we were the hottest fashion brand in the country.

We had a flood of requests for custom orders, but after discussing it with Christine, we decided to stick to our original plan and not increase the slots. Slow and steady was the way to go, both for Janedream and for us.

However, we decided to seize the moment and expand our physical stores, not just in Vista Town but also in RiverCity and other major cities.

Suddenly, the whole Janedream team was swamped, with Christine and me running around like headless chickens.

Thank goodness Edith came back just in time, or else we'd have no time to spend with Ike.

With the surge in market demand, our current designs weren't enough. We had to keep coming up with new ones, and Jeff was struggling to keep up. I had to jump back in.

In addition to handling custom orders, I was constantly in meetings or sketching, leading the Design Department in brainstorming sessions.

Christine was in charge of marketing and also oversaw the renovation of our flagship store and the selection of other locations.

We also couldn't neglect the establishment of our Vista Town branch office.

This time, finding a place wasn't as hard. Once we had our location and size requirements sorted, there were only a few options that met our needs.

On the day Christine and I were heading to check out an office space, Bryant called.

"Jane."

His voice came through, clear and soothing, "I heard from York that you're planning to set up a branch office?"

RF was still a major shareholder in Janedream.

Previously, I didn't have enough funds to buy back RF's shares, and now, Janedream's value had skyrocketed.

Asking RF to sell their shares now would seem like biting the hand that fed us, and Bryant was a businessman after all - investment is about making money.

I was driving as I replied, "Yeah, Mr. Carlson has approved it."

After a brief silence, Bryant's voice softened, "Congratulations, I'm happy for you."

I paused, slightly taken aback.

Right. Starting this business was all about not letting my parents' hard work go to waste and making Janedream a household name in fashion. And we were finally there!

I smiled, "Thanks for the initial investment, Mr. Ferguson."

"Jane..." Bryant paused, his voice a

tad

sooarse before he chuckled

"Guess you won't have time to make my suit anytime soon, huh?"

I cleared my throat, replying, "I really can't at the moment. If you can wait, I'll make it for you after this busy period. If not, I can recommend someone else..."

"Wait!"

Bryant cut me off, "Jane, I'm not in a hurry. You focus on your work."

After hanging up, Bryant leaned back in his leather chair, his eyes misting over.

He was flooded with memories of the past three years when Jane had always put him first.

Especially the times she had personally made him suits, her eyes filled with hope and caution, worried he might not like them.

Back a

Fillane was just a b d designers' creatives

renowned designers' cring

while his wardrobe was bespoke suits and

Unfortunately, he had failed to see the emotions hidden in her eyes back then.

Knock-knock-

The sudden knock on his office door snapped Bryant out of his reverie.

With his emotions in check, his voice was detached, "Come in."

"Sir, there's a resume that might need your personal attention."

Kevin entered, holding a document.

Bryant frowned, "Whose is it?"

Kevin wouldn't bring up a resume unless it was important.

Handing it over, Kevin said, "Nadine."

The atmosphere in the room dropped to freezing in an instant.

Without even looking at the resume, Bryant's voice was icy, "Throw it out."

"But, sir, look at the position she's applying for..."

Upon hearing this, Bryant glanced at the resume, then his slender fingers crumpled it into a ball of waste! -Design Department Deputy Director.

Very well.

Before Kevin could excuse himself to avoid his boss's wrath, Bryant added, "Wait."

"Yes, sir?"

"Break Alaric's other leg, too!"

It was time to put an end to his persistent nuisances.

Chapter 508

Nadine, with a solid background in design and six years of experience under her belt, breezed through the preliminary interview without a hitch.

Still, when she received the call from the HR department of The Ferguson Group, she couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief. "Absolutely, I'll be there on time for the second round," she promised. Deep down, she had been worried that Bryant might throw a wrench in her plans.

Applying to The Ferguson Group wasn't her first choice, but it was the top-paying company and a rare match for her skills.

Right now, money was the object of her chase.

Even though Bryant had already arranged for her mother's hospital transfer, surgery, and all related expenses.

Heart disease meant a long recovery period after discharge.

Expenses were piling up everywhere.

She could only hope that Bryant, the esteemed CEO, wouldn't bother with such a position.

"Mum..." Upon returning to the hospital room after the call, Nadine found her mother just waking up, looking at her with tender concern. "I'm sorry to have been such a burden to you..." "Mom, what are you talking about?"

Hearing this, Nadine felt a lump in her throat, blinked back tears, and choked out, "You worked so hard to raise me, and I never felt like I was a burden. Why would you say that now?"

Georgiana White took her hand, hesitated for a moment, and finally asked, "Tell me the truth... where did the money for the surgery come from? How did you suddenly come into such a large sum?"

"Mom!" Nadine could tell what her mother was implying and quickly lifted her head to explain, "Don't worry, I haven't done anything wrong! I just... came across a benefactor willing to lend us a hand." In a way, Bryant was indeed that benefactor.

Otherwise, she wouldn't even have the means to argue with her mother now!

"Really?"

"Really!"

Nadine nodded vigorously, adding, "What were you thinking?"

"That's a relief..."

Georgiana sighed, "So... who is this person?" [Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

"Well..." As Nadine tucked her mother in, she smiled slightly, "He's someone very influential."

A world apart from her.

After settling into the office, I dove

to my design drafts

blending into one another in a of activity.

21.get

Gregory made it a routine to have breakfast with me every day, and he'd swing by my place first thing after work.

Christine, fed up with our constant

lovey-dovey behavior,

one morning, "Just so you

I'm moving out the now,

"Moving out?"

I was taken aback, "To where?"

"I bought a place."

Christine glanced at Gregory, "It's in the neighborhood next door. I wanted to surprise you with it, show you around, but Mr. Ford here

e

seems to have taken a dislike to

me"

I shot Gregory a look before turning back to Christine, "Don't mind him... Chris, I can't live without you..."

"So, who do you choose?"

Christine, putting down her sandwich and crossing her arms, teased, "Me or your man? If you pick me, I won't move..."

"Why put my sweetheart in such a spot?"

Gregory chuckled, catching my glare and then playfully taunting, "How much for the place? I'll buy it."

Christine's eyes sparkled, "A gentleman's word is his bond?"

Gregory lifted his chin, "Ask my sweetheart, when have I ever lied?"

Chapter 509

"Moving out, moving out!"

Abandoning her breakfast, Christine sprung to her feet, eager to please. "Mr. Ford, your generosity knows no bounds. I'm forever grateful..."

"No thanks needed."

Gregory chimed in with a meaningful tone, "Consider it an early wedding gift for you and Dailey."

Christine was speechless, "..."

I was bewildered, aware that Gregory wasn't one to speak without reason. I quickly turned to Christine, "You and Dailey? What's going on??"

The prospect of my best friend's major life event being news to me before Gregory was shocking.

Christine cleared her throat, trying to downplay it, "It's not... what you think."

She was clearly out of her league in this chase!

Gregory nodded in understanding, "Dailey's a tough catch, huh?"

Christine was shocked, "He told you??"

Gregory chuckled, "Clarence dropped by my place last night. We ended up talking over a few beers."

The implication was clear; Clarence had spilled the beans.

Christine closed her eyes briefly, resigning herself, "...There's absolutely nothing between us. I've made that clear."

I focused on the crux of the matter, "So, there was something with Dailey?"

Christine ran a hand through her hair, finally sitting back down and confessing, "It's early days. Right now, it's just me hoping for something more." "I'll head to the office."

Gregory left us to chat, kissing my forehead before grabbing his car keys and heading out.

Christine mockingly cursed at his retreating figure, "Stealing my best friend wasn't enough, now I have to deal with your lovey-dovey antics every day!" Once Gregory closed the door, Christine huffed in frustration.

I couldn't help but laugh, not saying much, just looking at her, "So, you've really fallen for Dailey?"

"It's alright."

With Gregory gone, Christine spoke more freely, "It's just a bit of reverse psychology. The more he wants to keep his distance, the more want to see where it could go."

"Anyway..."

Thinking of her past experiences, I sincerely added, "As long as you're happy, that's all that matters."

Christine was curious, "Aren't you worried? If things with Dailey go south, it could affect you and Gregory?" After all, they were as close as brothers.

"Why worry about that?"

I smiled, "Trust me, Gregory would choose me over anyone else, every single time."

No matter the situation, he always put me first.

...

Feeling indebted, Christine didn't wait until the afternoon; right after lunch, she swiftly moved out.

I accompanied her, ensuring her new place had everything she needed before rushing back home to dive into my design drafts. RiverCity's headquarters was in the midst of hiring for the new branch.

Once this busy period was over and Jeff had enough staff, I could breathe a little easier and focus solely on custom designs.

As the golden sunset poured in, I

realized my neck was stiff. Just

was

Stretch, I was

in a warm embrace!

His hands, strong and defined, rested on the back of my neck. "Stiff neck?" he asked.

Relaxing into his hold, I tilted my head to look at him, "You're back early?"

Without moving, I let him hold me, enjoying his unskilled but comforting massage.

He nuzzled the top of my head, his voice soft and tender, "Missed you, so I came back early."

He then

pulling

they led me to the couch,

ree onto his lap without a

Elget

further ado, and just held me quietly, patiently massaging my neck.

WY

This intimate and tender gesture was both comforting and filled with unspoken affection.

Chapter 510

Zoe had to take the day off to rush her grandson to the hospital because he had a fever.

The house, bathed in the golden glow of the setting sun, was unusually quiet, so quiet that even the sound of one's heartbeat seemed amplified.

There was this ambiguous atmosphere, creeping up like ivy, making my breathing tense. I nudged him, "Are you... are you hungry? I could make us some dinner..." "Yeah, I'm starved."

Gregory's brown eyes simmered with a fervent glow. In an instant, his strong hand gently cradled the back of my head, his body silently pressing closer.

The intimacy between us grew, the ambiguous tension fermenting and spreading.

My heart pounded like a drum!

The crisp, cool scent of mint lingered at the tip of my nose, followed by his husky voice, "But I'm not in the mood for dinner."

His breathing slowed, and as he lowered his head, his warm lips met mine, electrifying.

His kisses were wild, ravenous, as if he intended to devour me whole, accompanied by soft, almost imperceptible swallowing noises.

Unsatisfied, his hands eagerly slid the zipper of my dress aside, his cool fingertips sending shivers down my spine as they enveloped me suddenly. My senses sharpened instantly. The kissing continued.

Even the air felt thinner.

As he explored further, I instinctively stepped back, along with my entire body.

Almost falling backwards, I heard a low laugh escape his throat as he firmly wrapped his arms around my waist. In a whirl, he flipped our positions, pinning me down on the couch. I could feel his anticipation.

With my eyes sparkling from the kisses, I looked up at him playfully and teased, "Gregory, are you really going to be this bold in broad daylight?"

"It's not being bold."

He kissed the corner of my eye, his fingers weaving through my hair, "I'm just fulfilling my boyfriend duties."

I gazed at him, a light smile on my lips, "But you know, even between boyfriends and girlfriends, it has to be consensual, right?"

He smiled, "Then, may I ask, Mrs. Ford, do you consent?"

"Who's Mrs. Ford here!"

Not even a proposal, and he's already changing titles, no chance!

Gregory, "Then, may I ask, the future Mrs. Ford, do you consent?"

"I..." Just as I was about to say yes, my stomach embarrassingly growled.

Rushing to meet a design deadline had barely munched on an apple for lunch, feeling quite hungry now.

Gregory looked down at me, "Hungry, aren't you?"

...

Getting his teasing, my cheeks burned with embarrassment, and I shot him a glare, "Can't I be hungry?"

He sighed, resigning himself as he picked me up, "Didn't have a proper lunch?"

Knowing he was concerned about

my

made me feel a bit guilty, "Too busy, didn't have time!!!"

time."

Gregory, "Risking your life for money."

I glanced at him, "Aren't you the same?"

Swan

When he's busy, it's to an even greater extent.

He

family's

reclaim the Ford

, to make it possible

for me to legitimately become Mrs. Ford.

To protect me and look after his family.

And me...

I wanted to do everything in my power to offer him a safety net.

Even though my Janedream is far from matching the Ford Group, I'm trying.

Gregory watched me intently, as if he understood my unspoken words, then stood up, chuckling, "Silly."

"I'll cook."

"I should do it."

I quickly grabbed him, "After being hungry all day, I don't want to be forced to take another shower."

I still vividly remembered the last time he cooked.

He had sneakily ordered takeout while I was showering!

