

Lost Me, Gained Regret (Jane and Bryant Ferguson)

Chapter 531

Gregory saw her too, his brow creasing silently. He glanced my way and murmured, "Jane, I need to have a quick word with Mr. Ferguson about some business matters. Could you check on Christine, see why she hasn't come up yet?"

"Sure."

I nodded and made my way out, dialing Christine as I waited for the elevator.

The tension between the two was palpable, a silent storm brewing.

Ex-husband, current partner...

No one dared to get in the middle of that; they all steered clear, giving them space.

Gregory bit his cheek, clearly itching for a confrontation but, for the sake of not ruining his mother-in-law's event, he managed a cold laugh, "Mr. Ferguson, care for a private chat?"

"Let's."

Bryant watched Jane's retreating figure, his fingers curling slightly.

He had thought, hoped, that seeing him with another woman would stir some emotion in Jane. But it seemed... she couldn't care less.

As if, to her, he was now just an ex. Nothing more.

Following Gregory to an emergency stairwell, Bryant was caught off guard when Greg's fist connected with his face!

Blood trickled from the corner of his mouth, but he didn't retaliate, tasting the metallic tang.

"Mr. Ferguson!"

The thud alarmed Kevin, who was about to burst in.

"It's nothing!"

Bryant, pain seemingly absent from his features, smirked provocatively, "What's the matter? She doesn't care if I find a replacement. What's it to you?" Before he could finish, another punch landed on his face.

Symmetry.

Gregory grabbed Bryant by the collar, fury blazing in his eyes, "It's because you never appreciated her. And now, you're pulling these stunts?"

It was obvious to Greg; the woman Bryant brought was a stand-in for Jane.

From one man to another, Gregory knew exactly what Bryant was trying to do.

Bryant sneered, breaking free, "That's my choice, Greg. If she has a problem, let her tell me."

Greg's gaze was fierce, the air thick with tension, "You think I'd let your antics soil her view again?" "That's not for you to decide."

Bryant straightened his tie, "Whether I'm finding a stand-in or planning to win her back, it's up to me!"

Outside the emergency door, Kevin looked at his boss, puzzled and concerned about the bruise on his face.

"Boss, should we head to the hospital?"

Bryant replied calmly, "No need."

Nadine clenched her fists at the

sight of his injury. In that moment in the banquet hall, when she saw that woman, she understood why she was Bryant's date for the evening.

She was just... a stand-in for Jane.

And now, Bryant, despite being physically assaulted, seemed unfazed.

The reason...

It was because the man who hit him was Jane's current boyfriend.

Looking deeper, it all somehow connected back to Jane.

So, he chose to keep the peace.

Nadine found herself surprised by the depth of feeling this powerful man harbored.

...

When Christine, Dailey, and I returned to the banquet, Bella was just starting her speech.

Dressed in a sleek black gown, Bella was a natural on stage, her opening remarks effortless and engaging.

But that wasn't the main event. As

she concluded, her gaze found mine, "Lastly, I'm thrilled to share some wonderful news. Jane here, is my newly appointed goddaughter."

"Additionally, she's the mastermind behind the trending Janedream brand, Elena. I hope everyone here will extend their support."

The room buzzed with excitement.

A girl, previously siding with Dorothy,

god.ne?

gasped in disbelief, "Elena? The internationally renowned designer, whose custom designs are booked solid till next year?!"

Chapter 532

The girl beside her said, "Who else? Janedream's Elena, of course! I just didn't expect her to be such a young and beautiful woman in person!"

"Pfft, I didn't see you defending her earlier, and now you're all praises."

"What could I have done?"

The other girl glanced at her, "Did you forget how nasty you, Judie, and Dorothy were talking about her earlier? If I had defended her, you guys would have probably lashed out at me too." Keeping a low profile.

Nothing unusual.

She didn't argue, just mumbled, "My mom was trying so hard to secure a private session with Elena for me, and now, because of my mess... it's probably never going to happen." "It might not be that bad."

Another girl chimed in, "I don't think she's the type to hold grudges, especially not against someone who's, no offense, not the sharpest tool in the shed."

The room buzzed with chatter.

Before the dinner even ended, I was swarmed with business cards - some were offers for collaborations, others were trying to secure a private session of their own. But mostly, they were looking to network.

They believed that if they could get on my good side, any project they wanted to tackle would be a breeze.

Herbert also made it clear on the spot that since I was Bella's goddaughter, I was naturally considered his niece as well.

That way, even if I wasn't keen on helping them with anything, just leaving a good impression on me would give them a smooth sailing.

After all, Bella, Gregory, Bryant, Herbert - any one of them was a big fish that nobody at the event could afford to provoke.

To say the least, this was the most kindness I had ever felt in one day.

It's just human nature, I guess.

But it also made me realize I still had a lot to work on.

Janedream, despite its rapid growth, wasn't enough to give me a solid standing in Vista Town, where the elite were a dime a dozen.

As I was handed another business card, Gregory strolled over, casually wrapping an arm around my waist.

"Mr. Ford, Ms. Webster, I've spotted a friend. Please, go ahead without me."

The person handing me the card took the hint and left.

Gregory smirked, teasing, "Getting a lot of business cards, aren't you?"

"Jealous?" I raised an eyebrow at him.

He chuckled, squeezing my waist a bit before whispering in my ear, "I'm not just jealous."

I felt a tickle and couldn't help but laugh, "Oh? And what else?"

Gregory's voice was playful yet suggestive, "I'm also hungry."

My cheeks flushed, and I quickly glanced around, thankful that everyone had made space for this VIP the moment he approached. And naturally, I wasn't foolish enough to ask him what he meant by 'hungry'.

We're adults here, after all.

Bryant returned to the hall, mingling with a few people who came up to converse before nodding to Bella and making his exit.

As he left the hall, he instinctively looked back, immediately spotting the woman who used to have eyes only for him, now in the arms of another man.

It was as if a clear line had been drawn between them.

On the drive back, Nadine felt the tension in the car was palpable, with Bryant's cigarette never seeming to burn out.

She disliked secondhand smoke but endured it all the same.

For a moment, she wondered, if Jane were here instead of her, would he still be smoking like this?

After a long silence, she finally spoke up, her fingers clenched around her dress, Mr. Ferguson, thank you for taking care of my mother's medical expenses."

He seemed distracted, but at her words, he frowned slightly, glancing at her indifferently, his voice devoid of emotion, "You don't need me."

thank

York Carlson had mentioned it to him after handling the matter, but it wasn't something he dwelled on.

His

response was so cold, leaving

no room for further conversation.

Nadine looked at his chiseled profile,
saying, "The doctor told me it was
charged to your account. Don't
worry, I plan to repay you as soon as save up enough money."
"Repay?"

Bryant's lips twisted into a mocking smile, "Then you should contact York and transfer it to his account."

Read Chapter 533

Chapter 533

Nadine was struck with a moment of disbelief.

This was definitely not what she had expected!

Bryant chuckled, his deep-set eyes scanning her without really seeing, effortlessly piercing through her façade.

Just one look was enough for Nadine to awkwardly lower her head, avoiding his gaze!

This man was terrifying!

Playing coy in front of someone like Bryant, who had a deep understanding of human nature, was a grave mistake...

Leisurely, Bryant stubbed out his cigarette, his voice hoarse yet his presence still intimidating, "What did you think I called you here today for?"

Nadine's heart pounded, not from excitement but from fear and anxiety.

Looking down at her, Bryant slowly figured out what was going through her mind. "Thought you could replace Jane, did you?"

She gripped her dress tighter, trying to quell her shaking body, but fear was useless here. She forced herself to look up at Bryant, "So, Mr. Ferguson, can I?"

Bryant scoffed, not giving her a direct answer, only saying, "Park here."

Kevin, picking up on the subtle anger in his boss's tone, slammed the brakes and pulled over.

Bryant leaned towards Nadine.

Her eyes trembled, thinking she might have a chance, but Bryant's hand reached past her, opening the car door on her side.

He withdrew, his voice cold and final, "Get out!"

"I..." Nadine was stunned!

They had exited the highway earlier due to a crash causing severe congestion, and now she didn't even know where they were!

Kevin got out and opened the door for her, "Please, Miss White."

A wave of humiliation almost drowned Nadine!

Her legs wobbled as she stepped out, clinging to her last shred of dignity. "This...this dress belongs to Ms. Webster, right? I'll have it cleaned..."

"No need." Bryant's voice was indifferent, his gaze never meeting hers. "She has many like it. She won't want something someone else has worn." She wasn't wanted by him, let alone the dress.

Watching the Maybach drive off into the night, Nadine's face lost all color, her eyes filled with resentment.

If she had never gotten close, she wouldn't have yearned for more.

But once she thought there was a chance, desire uncontrollably burgeoned within her...

...

When the dinner party ended, I finally relaxed, limping towards the lounge.

Gregory glanced down, asking, "Shoes hurting you?"

"Yeah, probably got blisters."

I hardly wore high heels these past years, and tonight, for the dress, I chose a new pair. It was bound to happen.

Suddenly, Gregory bent down, sweeping me off my feet with a stern face. "Why didn't you say anything about your feet hurting?"

"Put me down!"

I looked back. Several guests hadn't left yet, hoping to catch a word with Bella.

His actions attracted quite a few stares.

Gregory smirked. "What's there to fear? I'm your legitimate boyfriend, not an ex-husband."

He emphasized "ex-husband" a bit too much.

Alright. Settling scores, albeit late, was his style.

I touched my nose, feeling slightly guilty, and flashed him a placating smile, joking, "SZ Technology isn't really a tech company, is it? More like...a vinegar factory?"

"Congratulations, you're right."

He said solemnly, shouldering the lounge door open, carrying me inside, and placing me on the couch before naturally sitting next to me.

Just as I was about to bend down

and remove my shoes, he beat me to it. Holding my ankle with one

hand, he took off the high heel noticing the abrasion on my heel, his brow furrowed, clearly displeased.

"Jane, you're too tolerant of pain. It's bleeding, and you didn't even make a sound."

"It's just a scrape, no big deal."

Seeing him place my foot on his knee made me somewhat uncomfortable. I curled my toes and quickly said, "I brought band-aids, it'll be fine once I put one on."

Chapter 534

Gregory shot me a sidelong glance, not engaging in conversation, his grip on my wrist unyielding, leaving no room for me to pull away.

He pulled out his phone and made a call.

Shortly after, a server came in with antiseptic wipes and a tube of ointment.

Gregory snapped one of the wipes and gently cleaned my wound, his long lashes shadowing his emotions, but his voice was unmistakably muffled, "I can't control what happened to you in the past, but from now on, you need to take better care of yourself."

"The areas where you're careless, I'll cover for you." .

My heart trembled slightly, and tears welled up in my eyes, my lips quivering, almost wanting to cry.

Turns out, it's not just sadness that can bring tears.

Before I could even speak, Gregory, a man who once claimed he was never good at delicate tasks like tending to wounds, was now applying the ointment with such care and precision, a focus I had never seen even when he was signing multimillion-dollar deals.

The cool ointment felt like electricity spreading through my body, making me instinctively shrink back.

Gregory frowned slightly, holding onto my ankle to keep me still, his tone annoyed: "Now you realize it hurts?"

"It's not that, it doesn't hurt."

Truthfully, it wasn't painful.

And the cool ointment felt way better than the constant rubbing of my wound against the inside of my shoe.

Gregory frowned lightly as he finished applying the ointment, swiftly putting it aside. He then scooped me up by my waist and settled me onto his lap.

He rested his forehead against mine, his eyes filled with resignation as he said, "Jane, it hurts, it hurts, okay?"

"I can't stand to see you hurt."

"Not even a little bit."

His possessive yet commanding voice filled my ears, and I suddenly looked up and kissed him.

But unlike before, I didn't close my eyes instinctively; I wanted to engrave this moment of deep affection into my heart forever.

I'm not particularly good at initiating kisses, often just clumsily trying.

But Gregory seemed to enjoy it, and when I noticed his body's reaction, my cheeks flushed, and I moved back, the alcohol finally hitting me, leaving me a bit weak.

His eyes were swirling with desire as he straightened my clothes, his one hand holding me close, the other pinching my cheek, "Alcohol really does give you courage, huh? Getting all flirty with me?"

"Knock, knock-"

Suddenly, there was a knock at the door. Edith stood there, her smile blooming like a flower, her teasing evident: "What's all this flirty talk? Did hear something I shouldn't have?"

I reflexively jumped out of Gregory's embrace, standing up quickly, my face nearly on fire, my body feeling light, yet I forced myself to stabilize, "Edith, you startled me!"

Gregory didn't move, preemptively retorting, "Why didn't you knock?"

Edith, feeling a bit guilty but still defiant, replied, "I did knock, didn't I?" "Who knocks after opening the door?"

Gregory chuckled, pulling me back down to sit, noticing the ointment on my wound had dried. He carefully applied a band-aid over it while lazily

asking Edith, "Do you have any flats in your car? Jane's foot is rubbed raw."

I quickly interjected, "It's really not necessary, the band-aid will do..."

"It's no trouble at all, I always carry a spare pair of shoes."

Chapter 535

Edith whipped out her phone and called Herbert. As she approached, she said, "I've asked Herbert to bring it over for you. Don't sweat it; men are there to be bothered." "You should start bothering Gregory more often. You're the only one who can actually get through to him," Edith added.

When Herbert arrived with the shoes, the party was still in full swing.

Throughout the evening, Herbert was practically glued to Bella, affectionately calling her "big sis" and openly showcasing her close ties with the Taylor family.

This move only made everyone more determined to get on Bella's good side.

After all, Herbert had a reputation for being a tough nut to crack...

By the time Gregory and I got back to Elmwood Villas, it was past ten.

Stepping into the elevator, I pressed for the sixth floor, but he hesitated to choose his, leaving me puzzled. He then pinned me against the elevator wall.

His hands gripped my waist as he pulled me closer, his voice husky. "Has the buzz worn off yet?"

"Not yet..."

I had switched to flats earlier, fearing Bella had overindulged, and ended up drinking a few for her.

The ride back was a bit of a blur, and I still felt lightheaded.

Gregory's lips curved into a sly smile as he lifted me slightly, whispering enticingly, "Then how about another kiss?"

"...There's a camera, surveillance!"

I turned my face away, wishing I could disappear into a blind spot.

Undeterred, Gregory kissed my forehead, "We're almost there." "Ding"

As if on cue with his words, the elevator came to a stop.

As I tried to dash out, he effortlessly grabbed my wrist and followed me out of the elevator. "The wiring at my place is acting up, haven't got around to fixing it yet."

Perhaps emboldened by the alcohol, once inside, I leaned against the entryway cabinet, locking eyes with him, "Gregory, are you trying to sleep with me?"

He didn't flinch, his gaze intense and filled with desire, deeper than the night sky outside, "Yes, I've wanted to for a long time."

"A long time?"

I was taken aback.

Considering how long I've been back, his "long time" didn't quite add up.

Gregory stepped closer, pressing me

against the cabinet, his eyes not hiding the fervor within, "Since recognized you, or rather, before I even found you but knew I was already a man, I've wanted you."

With no time for me to react, his burning kiss landed on my lips, as if to consume me whole, heart and soul.

His urgency was unprecedented, filling the quiet space with the low, trembling tones of his voice.

Whether it was his blunt words or the overwhelming possessiveness, my body responded uncontrollably...

"Greg..."

"Greg... Greg..."

I knew this wouldn't be like before,;

just a simple kiss, yet I didn't think of stopping. All the questions that would normally flood my mind were cast aside.

My consciousness was blurry, yet strikingly vivid.

The drunkenness prevented me from overthinking, but I was acutely aware of whose arms I was in.

He lifted me effortlessly to his waist, his breath hot against my ear, "Baby, do you prefer the couch or the bed?"

Chapter 536

The words were too blunt, too direct.

Even through the haze of alcohol, I couldn't help but blush furiously, burying my face in his shoulder and muttering, "I'll listen to you."

"Listen to me?" Gregory's question, whispered against my earlobe in a husky voice, sent shivers down my spine. "Then I want both." Before I could process his words, I found myself pinned beneath him on the couch.

The room's atmosphere thickened, breaths coming short and fast as his tender kisses began their descent.

Soon, my voice melted into a whisper, "Gregory..."

When he looked up, his eyes were laden with desire, leaving no room for retreat. He whispered my name like a prayer, "Jane... Jane..."

A moment of pain brought a brief clarity, swiftly drowned by an overwhelming wave of pleasure.

In that moment, nothing else existed but the two of us, the closest two people could be.

He carried me into the bathroom, my thoughts scattering. Even there, I found no strength to resist, leaning helplessly against the wall, "I can't, Gregory... I'm too tired..." "Alright, let's move to the bed."

Whoever said men lose their edge after thirty was clearly lying.

The next morning, my body ached deliciously, but the man beside me seemed as fresh as if he'd just woken from a restful sleep.

He wrapped his arms around me, seemingly ready for another round.

I jumped out of bed, quickly forgetting my embarrassment, and glared at him, asking, "What do you want?"

His chuckle, full of unspoken desire, was his only reply: "You."

"Huh?"

I hadn't quite caught on, responding instinctively, only to meet his teasing, playful gaze.

The nerve!

I made my way to the bathroom to freshen up, leaving him lounging at the doorway in just his boxers, a tender look in his eyes.

Feeling his gaze, I tried to hide my blush through the mirror, "What are you looking at?"

"You," he said simply, a smile tugging at his lips.

This was never going to end.

I glared at him fiercely, my frustration peaking as I washed my face and made room for him at the sink.

After applying my skincare, I headed to the living room for a drink, only to hear noises from the kitchen.

A sudden realization struck me.

Exhausted from the night before, I'd only wanted a solid sleep, forgetting that Zoe was coming over to cook and clean.

The mess on the couch...

I hadn't had a chance to tidy up.

Hoping against hope, I glanced towards the couch, praying Zoe hadn't started there yet.

But the couch and coffee table were immaculate, with the messy blanket completely gone, leaving no trace of last night's disarray.

I turned, intending to retreat to the

bedroom, when Zoe's cheerful voice

called out, "Jane, slept well?

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Breakfast is ready. I just reheated

everything."

I froze, forcing calmness as I turned around, trying to cover the marks on my neck, only to see Zoe's smile deepen, "And Greg? He's up, right?"

Trust Zoe to understand without words.

Fighting the urge to flee from sheer embarrassment, I nodded, trying to sound casual, "Yeah, he's up. Just getting ready, then we'll eat." "Great."

Zoe, seemingly in high spirits, laid out a lavish breakfast, handing me a glass of warm water instead of the cold one I reached for in the fridge, "Don't start your day with something

coldt's bad for you to v

this."

Drink

"Thanks, Zoe."

Her behavior struck me as odd...

It was as if before, she cared for a friend of Gregory's, but now, she was looking after Mrs. Ferguson-to-be of the Ford family with all her heart.

Zoe ushered me to breakfast,

"You've been busy lately, haven't

you? You've lost weight! Eat up, these dumplings are freshly made with the filling I prepared this morning. Very fresh."

"It's good, really good. Gregory's been on his own for so many years, finally got his wish."

Chapter 537

Zoe was in tears, "Adah has been on his case forever, just wanting him to settle down and start his own chapter. Now, finally, Greg's seen the light at the end of the tunnel!" "Zoe..." Gregory, slipping on a jacket, came out with a helpless expression. "You talk as if I'm some sort of lonely heart no one wants."

"I'm just happy for you, that's all!"

Zoe shot him a look before quickly pouring him a glass of water, "Your grandma and mom would be thrilled..."

Gregory cut her off, "Let's not tell them just yet."

"You're not planning on telling the family?"

Zoe blinked, taken aback, "Jane's a wonderful girl, from a good family. Don't you go pulling a Clarence on us now!"

Setting down his glass, Gregory reassured her, "You've got it all wrong. It's just not the right time. You know the kind of mess the Ford family's in right now."

Zoe exhaled in relief, "That's true. I mean, you were raised by your grandfather, you're not about to pull a stunt like Clarence."

Zoe offered a few more words of advice before briskly tidying up the kitchen, ready to leave.

Before she left, she pulled me aside at the entryway, a bit sheepishly, "Don't mind Zoe prying too much. I know you're practically family, and seeing as you don't have an elder close by, I couldn't help but remind you, if you didn't take precautions last night, make sure to take care of it."

"The rhythm method's not reliable. Though if you were to get pregnant, Timothy and the rest would only be overjoyed, the Ford family's tongues wag, and it's easy to fall prey to gossip."

I was slightly stunned and a bit embarrassed but also felt cared for, nodding, "Okay, thanks for looking out for me."

Last night had been unexpected, and we hadn't taken precautions.

After breakfast, with the chip issue still unresolved, Gregory went back home to change before heading straight to the Ford Group.

Before leaving, he didn't forget to drop off a suitcase at my place, "Darling, house my luggage for a bit."

"...Sure."

I could already imagine the shameless ease with which he'd make himself at home in my place.

But far from feeling burdened by the prospect of an extra person in the house, my heart was full.

Later, I had plans to check out the office building with Christine and, incidentally, to pick up some birth control.

Unexpectedly, just as I reached the parking garage, I received a call from the nursing home.

"Ms. Webster, did you pick up Ramona?"

"No, I didn't."

My heart tightened. "Is Ramona missing?"

"Yes, we've already contacted the Myers family, and they hadn't picked her up either."

The nurse explained, "She was still in

her room when we did our morning rounds. It was only after Dr.

Andrews visited that we noticed she was missing."

"Have you searched the entire facility?"

"We've searched everywhere!"

The nurse urged, "You should come over, see if we need to call the police or what to do next."

"I'm on my way."

I hurried to my car, racing towards the nursing home. My mind was in turmoil.

It felt like someone had orchestrated this.

Ramona had wandered off a few

years back when her toxins hadn't cleared and her nerves were damaged, but this time, Dr. Andrews had said she was nearly ready to be discharged.

Arriving at the nursing home, I barely got out of the car when I saw another car's driver approaching me, "Jane, are you okay?" Surprised, I recognized him, "Mark, what are you doing here?"

"I was in Vista Town for work."

Mark Larson, with a gentle smile, looked at me concernedly, "I saw your car speeding on Starlight Path and followed, worried you might get into trouble. Is something wrong?"

Chapter 538

My heart was racing, and I blurted out without a second thought, "Something terrible has happened, Ramona's gone missing."

"Hey, hey, take a breath. I'll help you look for her," Mark reassured me, placing a comforting hand on my shoulder.

"But weren't you here on some business? You should probably get that sorted first..."

"No worries, finding Ramona is way more important. Let's not waste any more time, let's go!"

With that, Mark joined me as we rushed into the nursing home.

The room was quiet, save for Dr. Andrews and his assistant.

Dr. Andrews furrowed his brows upon seeing me. "Ms. Webster, what in the world is going on? Ramona was on the verge of recovery, how could she just disappear at a time like this?" "Dr. Andrews, I'm sorry, I only just got the news myself."

I scanned the room, finding no signs of disarray, which only added to my anxiety.

Before jumping to any conclusions, I sought confirmation from Dr. Andrews, "Doctor, given Ramona's current recovery state, is it possible she became confused again and wandered off?" "That's unlikely."

Dr. Andrews was firm in his answer, confident. "Ramona was nearly fully recovered. With the treatment planned for today and tomorrow, she was supposed to be discharged. Even without these last sessions, it's improbable she would relapse so suddenly; her nervous system has pretty much healed."

"So, you're saying Ramona was definitely lucid?"

Dr. Andrews nodded. "Yes, that seems to be the case."

I clenched my hands nervously.

The absence of chaos in the room suggested Ramona might have been taken away quietly while asleep.

Mark frowned, asking, "Could Dorothy and her crew be behind this?"

"It's not out of the question."

I was about to call the police on my cell when an unknown number suddenly called.

Under normal circumstances, I'd dismiss it as spam and hang up. But now, I had to answer, "Hello?"

"Should I address you as Ms. Webster, or perhaps Ms. Myers, or... Ms. Taylor?" The man's voice on the other end was chillingly eerie.

With just a few words, he made it clear he had dug deep into my background, while I knew nothing about him!

I shivered involuntarily as I asked, "Who are you?"

"My identity isn't important." He dodged the question, "But what is important, for you, is that I have Ramona."

"Who exactly are you?!"

I took a deep breath, trying to suppress the panic rising within me, and focused on the crucial matter, "What do you want?"

"Talking to someone smart sure makes things easier."

He let out a sinister chuckle, "I'll text you an address. Don't call the cops, and come alone."

I frowned. "Alone?"

Hearing this, Mark's expression

turned serious as he took the phone from me and spoke firmly, "I don't care who you are, but there's no way I'm letting her go alone. Either I go with her, or we involve the police."

"Mark..."

I was worried this might provoke the caller, but Mark shook his head at me and continued, "You're not doing this for a ransom, or you wouldn't be doing this at all. I'm going to ensure her safety, that's all."

"Fine!" The caller pondered for a

moment before agreeing, "But you've

only have half an hour, or I can't guarantee Ramona's safety anymore!"

With that, he hung up.

My heart was in turmoil as I glanced at the address he had sent, and we sprinted towards the parking lot.

It was an abandoned factory on the outskirts of town.

Even at our fastest, it would take nearly half an hour to get there from the nursing home, leaving no time to spare.

Chapter 539

As I reached for the driver's side door, Mark stopped me. "Take the passenger seat, I'll drive."

"Thanks, Mark. I appreciate it."

I shot him a grateful look, not bothering to argue.

My mind was preoccupied with Ramona's safety, driving distracted wasn't an option.

On the way to the abandoned factory, I quickly texted Christine to let her know I couldn't make it, telling her to decide on her own.

Then, I dialed Gregory's number.

But all I got was the endless ring, eventually leading to the robotic voice, "Sorry, the person you are calling is not available. Please try again later..."

This sent a wave of unease through me. Could something have happened to Gregory as well?

Mark, with both hands on the wheel, gave me a quick glance. "Tried calling Gregory but got no answer?"

"Yeah..." I nodded, absent-mindedly.

Mark seemed to understand, "Don't worry too much. Try giving him another call."

"Alright."

I dialed again but still got no answer.

Seeing my worried expression, Mark tried to reassure me, "With the whole Ford Group copyright infringement mess blowing up, he's probably just tied up with that. Not hearing his phone wouldn't be odd." That didn't do much to ease my mind.

But there was nothing more I could do for now, except head towards the outskirts of the city to find out who was on the other end of that mysterious call.

Changing gears, I called the Myers family.

Dorothy answered, "Hello? Who is this?"

"Did you guys take Ramona?"

They were the only ones I could think of who might do such a thing.

Dorothy quickly recognized my voice and chuckled, "Jane, you should speak with evidence."

"You better have a clean conscience!"

I took a deep breath, my voice cold, "If this is about the Myers' estate, and something happens to Ramona, don't expect to see a dime!" With that, I hung up.

I was pretty sure now that the Myers family was involved.

Dorothy, hearing the call end abruptly, flashed a moment of anger, then worry, turning to Pearl sitting beside her.

"Mom, are you sure this won't backfire?"

"Relax." Pearl lifted her chin, her eyes full of confidence. "What belongs to the Myers will be yours. No one else should even dream about it."

Dorothy breathed a sigh of relief, curiosity getting the better of her "Who did you find this time? They managed to take that old lady from the nursing home without a trace! Why didn't we do this sooner?"

Doing this earlier would have ensured her place as the Myers' heiress, avoiding being overshadowed by Jane at last night's dinner.

She couldn't stand to see that woman soaking up all the glory, especially after Bella called her a goddaughter, like she had luck on her side! Pearl smiled at her question. "He only returned to the country last night."

"International contacts?"

"You could say that." Patting her head affectionately, Pearl added, "I'll introduce you to him someday."

"Why would I need to meet him?"

Dorothy looked puzzled, "He's just a thug for hire. We pay him, he does the job."

She was a Myers heiress, after all, why would she need any dealings with the underworld?

Seeing the disdain on her face, Pearl paused, then softly said, "We might have to rely on him for Myers'

matters from now on✓ght

him

wouldn't hurt."

"...Fine." Dorothy replied, with a touch of impatience and a hint of maliceAre you sure we can pull this off? Gregory will definitely intervene the moment he finds out."

"This time, he'll be too late to do anything!"

Chapter 540

Approaching the outskirts of town near the abandoned factory, Christine's call came through.

She was frantic, "Jane, you said Ramona's in trouble, what happened? Isn't she supposed to be in the nursing home?"

"Ramona's been kidnapped." My heart was pounding as I tried to keep it simple. "Looks like it's Dorothy and Pearl's scheme. They've told me to head to an abandoned factory on the outskirts of town." "That's despicable! How could they keep targeting an elderly woman like this!"

Christine was livid, then quickly asked, "Where are you now? Does Gregory know about this? I'm coming to meet you right away!"

"Gregory's clueless, caught up in some patent issue, hasn't even checked his phone."

As the car neared the location sent by the kidnappers, I spoke in brief, "I'm almost at the abandoned factory on the outskirts. You don't need to come; I'm not alone, ran into Mark on the way here. He's coming with me."

"Mark? He's in Vista Town?"

"Yes."

The car slowly came to a stop, and glancing at the time, we were almost exactly on schedule, couldn't afford another minute's delay, "Chris, we're here, gotta go!"

As Christine listened to the dial tone, she grabbed her car keys while hurriedly dialing another number.

After no luck getting through to Dailey for a while, she decided to call Gregory's friend, Clarence. It didn't matter if it was through Clarence or Dailey, as long as she could get the message to Gregory. Clarence picked up quickly, not holding any grudge for being previously brushed off, and with his usual carefree tone, "Ah, little Chris, finally remembered me? Realized Dailey can't compete with me, huh..." With no time to waste, Christine cut straight to the chase, "Someone's kidnapped Ramona Myers! They've informed Jane to head to an abandoned factory on the outskirts to rescue her, and Gregory's not answering his phone. Can you find a way to reach him?!"

The Myers duo, mother and

Daughter

were notoriously ruthless of poisoning their own for

inheritance; what wouldn't they do?

Even with Mark by her side, Christine couldn't shake off the feeling that it wasn't enough.

"We need to get the message to Gregory!"

Hearing this, Clarence immediately became serious, "You mean Jane has already gone to the outskirts alone?"

"What else?!" Christine retorted, then added a reminder, "Oh, not alone, she's got your family's Gregory's top rival with her."

In Christine's eyes, Bryant was at

best a

past

former brother-in-law, hardly

especially cons

actions, he was no

his

But Mark, always supportive of Jane and with his gentle demeanor, was a different story.

Hearing this, Clarence wa

"I, I gotta go tell Greg! Don't do

anything rash, we don't need 'Seven Dwarfs Save the Princess' situation."

"Don't worry, I'm not that foolish!"

"That's good."

Clarence ended the call efficiently, initially considering calling Gregory but then, realizing the urgency, dialed Lucius directly.

Lucius, always on standby for Gregory's orders, seldom missed a call.

Lucius answered, his tone serious, "Hey, bro."

Relieved to have him pick up, Clarence got straight to the point, "Are you with Greg?"

"Yeah."

"Is he busy?"