

# Mr. Edwards' Unraveled Life

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## Chapter 885

Norah stood her ground. "This is your life, not a machine's routine. Even nurses get days off."

"You're thinking adoption, right? But why raise someone else's kid when you could have one of your own?"

Her worries weren't unfounded—adoption bonds can wear thin over time.

Jace smiled. "You've got two kids. Pharaoh's job is to protect you and Cooper. Once he grows up, you think he'll let his uncle stay lonely?"

Just living near Norah was enough for Jace.

Norah groaned. "That's not the same. You need someone to take care of *you*. I'm serious."

She meant it. She printed Jace's info for a dating site but paused—pushing him into something didn't feel right.

So she shredded the paper and tossed it in the trash.

When Kevin came home, he saw her frowning. "What's wrong? Everything seemed fine."

Norah opened up. "I'm worried about Jace. Everyone else has someone, but he's still alone. I thought about signing him up for a dating site, but I didn't want to force it."

"Smart move," Kevin said, pulling her into a hug. "It's his decision. He's in the capital—I'll keep an eye on him."

Norah nodded, feeling a little better.

Jace didn't need a dating site. His office was swarming with interns, patients, and admirers—women chasing his reputation, from students to wealthy elites. His phone never stopped ringing.

He ignored them all—only taking meetings when work required it.

A knock came at the door. "Come in," he said.

His assistant, Everett, burst in. "Dean, there's a problem—Dr. Neufeld's surgery went bad. They need you, stat."

"Why didn't anyone call me?" Jace snapped, face turning cold.

In Belourvinelle, he protected the hospital's reputation fiercely. One mistake could destroy it.

Everett shrugged. "Your lines are jammed. Too many people trying to reach you."

Jace didn't waste another second. He rushed out, startling the interns loitering outside.

"He's so young and good-looking for a dean," one whispered.

"And single, I heard!"

"He does surgeries, publishes, teaches—he's perfect."

"Those hands... imagine him holding you."

A bold one stepped into his path. "Dean, I'll fund your new hospitals—make you a medical tycoon."

Another chimed in. "I'm young—more value for your future."

"Out," Jace barked, the calm gone from his voice. A critical operation was waiting.

They froze, parting as he strode past.

Inside the OR, chaos reigned—blood everywhere. "What happened?" he demanded.

"Cancer spread. Chest cyst ruptured. I can't handle it alone," said a calm, steady female voice.

She'd kept things under control, despite the emergency. Jace stepped in, taking the lead. She assisted without hesitation.

After more than an hour, he stitched the wound perfectly. The tension finally broke.

He turned to her. "Name?"

“Rhea Neufeld,” she answered.

His brow arched. “*The* Rhea Neufeld—the one always topping award lists?”

Rhea nodded, completely composed. “That’s me.”

“Get some rest,” he said. “See me tomorrow—you’ve earned your reward.”

## Chapter 886

Rhea didn’t even have time to respond before Jace walked off.

She’d only seen him in meetings before. But today—up close, dressed for surgery—those cool, sharp eyes behind the mask had left a real impression. His calm in a crisis stood out.

No wonder every woman in the hospital—nurses, interns, even doctors—was obsessed.

She stretched and headed back to her office.

An intern, badge shining, stopped her. “Dr. Neufeld, you just assisted the dean, right?”

Rhea frowned. “What’s going on?”

The intern held up a few fingers. “Help me out. Add him on WhatsApp for me. Or grab a few candid shots. I’ll pay.”

Rhea blinked, laughing. “You want me to sneak photos? That’s illegal.”

“You want me to break the law for pocket money? Are you crazy—or am I?”

The intern panicked. “No, Dr. Neufeld—I’ll pay five thousand—fifty thousand!”

Fifty grand for a WhatsApp add and a picture. Unreal.

Rhea shook her head. “He’s not going to go for that. You’re wasting your money. What’s your salary?”

“For him, I’d spend every dime,” the intern said. “Help me and I’ll make it worth your while.”

She grabbed Rhea’s hand, desperate.

Rhea hesitated. Fifty thousand? Seriously?

Her phone rang. “Rhea, Phillip tried to kill himself again. I was going to take him and leave, but... I can’t,” her mother sobbed.

Rhea's head spun. "Don't worry, Mom. I'm on my way."

"Please hurry," her mother begged.

Rhea turned to leave, but the intern stepped in her path. "Dr. Neufeld, the dean's giving you a reward tomorrow, right? Just ask him for me. I'll pay a hundred thousand."

A hundred thousand. That kind of money could change things. Rhea sometimes took side jobs to ease the guilt, but if Jace ever found out, she'd be toast.

"I'm busy," she said. "Let's talk tomorrow."

"You're seeing him tomorrow," the intern insisted. "Let's make the deal now."

Her phone rang again. "You should've died, Rhea! You ruined this family!" a voice screamed.

Her chest tightened—she knew that voice too well.

"Calm down," she gasped. "I'm coming. You'll get what you want."

She hung up, heart pounding. She grabbed the intern like a lifeline. "You said a hundred thousand? Pay me now—I'll do it tomorrow."

"Done," the intern said, ecstatic, pulling out a diamond-studded iPhone.

Rhea gave her the card number. The money hit instantly.

"High-res photos," the intern said. "And get him to add me."

"I'll need your WhatsApp login," Rhea replied.

"Take it," the intern snapped. Her voice turned sharp. "But if you screw me, you'll regret it."

Rhea's stomach turned. The money was in. There was no backing out now.

She grabbed the intern's phone and rushed out.

She tried to book a ride, but the app showed her 49th in line. Desperate, she changed locations.

A white Cayenne pulled up.

Jace was behind the wheel.

"Get in," he said. "I'll take you."

Rhea hesitated, then got in. “Dean, sorry for the trouble. I was 49th in line on the app. I’ll pay you—whatever the full fare is.”

Jace smirked. “You think I’m here for cab money?”

“No, of course not,” she said quickly. They barely knew each other—she didn’t want to take advantage.

“Address,” he said, voice low.

## **Chapter 887**

“North of the city,” Rhea said. “I’ll guide you.”

Jace entered the address into the GPS and drove toward the outskirts of Belourvinelle—a maze of aging bungalows he’d never bothered to explore. He usually stuck to the hospital or Kevin’s place. With their lives more settled now, even Kevin’s had become a rare stop.

Without Rhea’s directions, he’d have been completely lost.

They pulled up to a run-down bungalow. Yelling and crashing noises poured out even before she opened the car door.

“You’re still defending that damn girl?” a man roared. “If not for her, would Phillip be like this?”

“It was an accident!” a woman sobbed. “She’s already given us enough money!”

Rhea’s expression was unreadable—numb to the chaos. Jace didn’t get involved in personal drama, but before she got out, he said, “Don’t let your family wreck your work. If it’s too much, take a break. And forget the cab fare.”

His tone was calm but distant, eyes fixed ahead.

Rhea nodded. She planned to pay him back tomorrow, but for now, she had a mess to deal with.

Inside, the house was trashed—broken dishes, papers everywhere. “I’ve got 100,000,” she said, voice steady. “But this is the last time. I’m almost 30—”

“Thirty?” a middle-aged man snapped. “Teresa didn’t even live to 30—because of you!”

Rhea swallowed hard.

“Enough!” the woman cried. “She’s given us more than enough. If not for you, we wouldn’t still be stuck in this dump!”

Rhea scanned the room. No sign of Phillip Seguin. Supposedly suicidal. It was another setup.

She felt drained. “This is it. I’ve given you six million over six years. I’m done.”

Laughter rang out from the back room. “You think you can just walk away?” Phillip rolled in, wild-eyed. “My legs, Teresa’s death—it’s all your fault.”

“It was an accident,” Rhea said, voice shaking. “Teresa didn’t know how to drive. You were drunk. I’ve carried the guilt, but you can’t keep blaming me.”

“Court’s gonna care?” Phillip sneered. “You dragged us to that party. That’s why this all happened.”

“I planned a normal night,” she fired back. “Nobody expected the crash. I’ve paid for years. I deserve to move on.”

The man lunged, jabbing a finger at her. “Teresa was good to you, and this is how you repay her?”

“I loved Teresa,” Rhea said, stepping back. “But I won’t carry this guilt forever.”

The woman broke down. “Phillip’s sick. He needs help. Just one more time, please.”

Rhea looked at her adoptive mother, memories flooding in—her early days here, trying so hard to fit in. Now, it all felt poisoned.

“Mom, I said it before—this is the last time. I didn’t cause the crash. I never wanted Teresa hurt. Or Phillip like this.”

Phillip’s face twisted. “If you had just accepted me, none of this would’ve happened!”

Rhea froze. “What? You caused the crash... because I turned you down?”

He smirked, shameless. “Yeah. You rejected me, so Teresa died. I’m paralyzed. You owe us.”

Her stomach dropped. “That’s a crime.”

Mr. Seguin hesitated, then said, “He was young, in love. Made a mistake. But 100,000 doesn’t cover our loss.”

Rhea’s hands clenched into fists, nails digging into her palms. “I’m done. You’re not my family—you’re parasites.”

Phillip wheeled toward her, eyes wild. “You’re not leaving! Pay up or stay and take care of me!”

She glared at him. “Keep dreaming. I’m done with your threats. I’m going to the police.”

He blanched, then snapped, “Call them, and I’ll destroy you with your dirty secrets!”

## Chapter 888

Rhea’s chest tightened, but she stood firm. Giving in meant endless blackmail. “I’ve got nothing to hide. Do your worst. The truth’s on my side.”

Phillip flailed, knocking over a table. Glass shattered.

“You’re not getting away with this!” he screamed.

Then more relatives piled in. A large man shouted, “You lived here free for years, and now you’re walking out? No way!”

He grabbed her collar, lifting her off the ground. Rhea gasped, struggling to breathe. “This is assault! Let me go!”

“It’s family business!” he shouted. “You killed Teresa—now you pay!”

Jace, who had waited outside, walked in with a cold glare. He grabbed the man’s wrist. “Let her go. Or I’m calling the cops.”

The man flinched under Jace’s icy stare. “Who are you?”

“Her dean,” Jace replied. “And I’m not letting you bully one of my staff. You think numbers protect you? The law doesn’t care.”

Mr. Seguin quickly pulled the man back. “Cool it. Let her go.”

The man released Rhea. She stumbled, and Jace caught her.

She gave him a grateful look before turning back to the room. “Teresa’s death wasn’t my fault. It was an accident. Phillip’s confession? I’ll report it. Come at me again, and you’ll regret it.”

She and Jace walked out, ignoring the Seguins’ shouting.

On the road, Rhea’s heart pounded.

“They won’t follow,” Jace said. “You’re safe now.”

She nodded, silently vowing to expose Phillip for good.

Back at the hospital, guilt over the intern’s 100,000 haunted her. When Jace’s surgery reward was announced, she saw an opportunity to fulfill her end of the deal.

Nervous, she approached him. “Dean, about the reward... could I add you on WhatsApp? I have some ideas I’d love to share.”

Jace raised an eyebrow, sensing something was off, but nodded. “Sure. Make it worth my time.”

Relieved, she added him. But the photo task loomed.

One afternoon, spotting him alone in the lounge, she sat nearby, pretending to check her phone. She snapped a quick shot.

Jace didn’t notice, lost in paperwork. She sent the pic to the intern.

“Nice work, Dr. Neufeld!” came the reply.

But then Jace messaged her about their “academic exchange.” Panic set in. She scrambled for a reply.

The intern, nervous too, sent her WhatsApp login. “Get him to add me—it’ll throw him off.”

Cornered, Rhea went to Jace. “Dean, there’s a med student interested in the surgery. She’s got good ideas. This is her WhatsApp.”

Jace’s eyes narrowed, but he added it.

They started discussing the case. Rhea’s insights impressed him. Her sharp thinking stood out despite the earlier weirdness.

“Dr. Neufeld,” he said, “you’re talented. I’m assigning you tougher cases and research projects. Think you can handle it?”

Stunned, Rhea said, “Yes, Dean. Thank you. I won’t let you down.”

She threw herself into the work—early mornings, late nights, meticulous plans. But the intern’s demands still hovered like a dark cloud.

Jace noticed her intensity. Her precision and drive set her apart. When an overseas research trip came up, he selected her to join.

The hospital buzzed with surprise. Rhea was thrilled—but terrified.

## **Chapter 889**

The overseas exchange was a rare shot to prove herself. But the intern had other plans.

She cornered Rhea with a small packet of powder. “Slip this in the dean’s drink on the trip. I’ll pay another 100,000.”

Rhea recoiled. “That’s illegal!”



The intern's voice turned cold. "You already took my money. You owe me."

"Refuse, and I'll tell everyone you sold photos of the dean. Your career? Over. And those Seguins? They'll destroy you if you blow this chance."

Rhea's stomach turned. She thought about everything she'd sacrificed. But betray Jace?

The intern pressed harder. "Just drug him. He'll never know. Snap a few pics while he's out. That's it. We're done."

Rhea bit her lip till it bled. Finally, she nodded.

The intern smiled smugly and walked away.

Rhea stood frozen, fingers clenched around the packet.

Departure day came. She followed Jace through the airport, suitcase in tow. He tried making small talk, but her distracted responses didn't go unnoticed.

At the gate, her palms were slick with sweat. She stole glances at him, guilt eating her alive.

On the plane, sitting next to him, her heart thundered. When the flight attendant brought water, her fingers brushed the powder in her pocket.

Jace looked over. "You okay, Dr. Neufeld? You're pale."

"I'm fine," she lied. "Just tired."

After landing, she nearly walked off with the wrong bag. Jace corrected her.

At the hotel, a mix-up left them with one double room.

Jace frowned. "You take it, Dr. Neufeld. I'll figure something out."

"No, Dean, I'll handle it," she insisted.

He shook his head. "You're exhausted. I've got it."

Inside, the room had two beds. Rhea sat down, hands gripping her clothes, torn between guilt and panic.

Jace returned, frustrated. "No luck. Everywhere nearby's full. We'll manage tonight. Don't stress."

"Okay," she whispered.

While he showered, she eyed the kettle. Her fingers hovered over the powder.

This was it.

She poured the powder into hot water and stirred fast, her hands trembling.

Just as she set the cup down, Jace walked out, robe loose, damp hair dripping along his jaw. Her eyes caught the sight, and she blushed, quickly looking away.

He didn't notice, toweling off. "You look tense. What's on your mind?"

"Nothing," she mumbled. "Have some water, Dean."

Her voice shook.

He reached for the cup. Rhea held her breath, heart pounding.

He took a sip, then grimaced. "Tastes weird."

Her stomach dropped. "Maybe it's the local water," she offered quickly.

Jace stared at her for a beat, then set the cup down.

Silence thickened. Her ears rang with her pulse. She couldn't meet his eyes—afraid he'd see everything.

He stepped closer, the scent of his shower gel wrapping around her.

## **Chapter 890**

Jace brushed a loose strand of hair from Rhea's forehead, his fingers brushing her cheek with a gentle warmth. Her cheeks flushed, her eyes wide—caught between fear and embarrassment.

"Dr. Neufeld, something's off about you today," he said, his voice low and steady, almost hypnotic.

Rhea's lips trembled. "I... Dean, I..." she stammered, unable to get the words out.

His eyes narrowed. He suddenly grabbed her wrist, his grip firm enough to make her gasp. "You thought I wouldn't notice? You spiked my water."

Her heart dropped. He'd tasted it. "Please, Dean, I had no choice. Let me explain," she begged, tears welling up.

Jace scoffed, betrayal lacing his voice. "No choice? Drugging me? I thought I knew you, Dr. Neufeld."

"It's not what you think!" she cried. But his disgust drowned out her pleas.

As a former field medic, Jace's senses were sharp. His body, hardened to toxins, had reacted instantly—he'd discreetly spat out the tainted water. Still, the betrayal hit hard.

"I trusted you," he said coldly. "And this is what you pull? What happened to your conscience?"

He yanked her toward the door. She struggled, crying. "Please, Dean, just listen to me!"

Ignoring her, he flung the door open and shoved her out into the hallway. The slam echoed. She collapsed to the floor, sobbing, hugging her knees. Guilt and heartbreak crushed her.

She knew she'd crossed a line, but it still felt so unfair. Alone in the cold corridor, all she could see were Jace's furious eyes. Sleep wouldn't come.

Inside, Jace paced. He'd figured she'd leave and find somewhere else to go. But hours later, faint groans pulled him from his thoughts.

He opened the door.

Rhea was still there, slumped against the wall, burning with fever and shivering. His chest tightened. He touched her forehead—she was burning up.

Without a second thought, he picked her up, laid her on the bed, and placed a cold towel on her brow. Watching her weakened state, his emotions twisted—anger, pity, confusion.

He thought about her work ethic at the hospital, her focus in surgery—nothing like the fragile woman before him now. Could there be more to her story?

In her fevered haze, she whispered, "Dean, I'm sorry... I didn't want to..."

Jace leaned in. "Then why did you do it? Tell me the truth."

She only kept apologizing, unable to explain.

Her fever slowly eased under his care. Eventually, her breathing evened out. Exhausted, Jace fell asleep in a chair beside her.

By morning, Rhea was still pale but stable. Jace left a note, telling her to rest—he'd handle the exchange alone—and quietly left.

When she woke, the shame from the night before crashed down. Seeing his note only deepened her guilt. She cleaned up and hurried to the hospital.

At the entrance, a crowd had gathered, waving signs that read, "*Quack Doctors Kill!*" Her stomach sank. Jace was already there, watching the chaos.

As the mob lunged forward, Rhea acted on instinct. "Dean, look out!" she shouted, shoving him aside and taking the hit herself.

