• Chapter 9

The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights by Brick Moving Ant

Chapter 19

• The only time Celeste had ever encountered a swing in her childhood was watching her father push her younger brother at the park. • When her brother grew bored and hopped off, Celeste had eagerly approached, only to be kicked down by her father. • "Even if your brother doesn't want it anymore, that doesn't mean you can take it." • Her brother, seeing her sprawled and bleeding on the ground, had picked up stones to throw at her while laughing and clapping. "Servants belong on the ground! Crawl where you belong!" • He'd learned that from some TV show. But at home, Celeste was treated little better than a servant-Even moving to the city were solely so she could take care of her brother. • Sitting on the swing now, that memory remained painfully vivid. • Celeste was acutely aware that all this happiness she was experiencing rightfully belonged to Ophelia Belmont. • She clenched her jaw and forced herself to keep smiling. • Lysander remained oblivious, continuing to push her without noticing her discomfort. • Eventually, when he was convinced she'd had enough of the swing, he finally stopped. • He showed her around the entire villa, ending outside the master bedroom, where he pushed open the door. • "Ophelia, are you tired? Let's have a break." • Then he pulled her close, attempting to kiss her. Inhaling the rich lily fragrance on her skin, desire darkened his eyes. • He trailed kisses up her neck, carefully lifting her onto the bed. • Just as he was about to proceed further, Celeste turned her face away. Her complexion paled as she pressed her slender hand against his chest. • 21:51 • The Ruined Bride of Velvet Nights. • 15.4% Chapter a • "I just got back, and I'm not feeling great. Not tonight, okay? I'm just not ready" • She feigned shyness, her face flushing as her fingers clutched the bedsheet, • The subtle scent of Navier's perfume still lingered in the air, as if she were somehow still present. • Celeste couldn't give herself to him now it would feel like a betrayal of Navier. • Without Navier, Celeste would likely have already died in the bed of the old man she'd been sold to, • Lysander embraced Celeste tenderly, breathing heavily but making no further advances. • "Okay, whatever you want. We'll wait until you're ready, I just want you to be happy," • Celeste nodded. As she got up to freshen herself, she deliberately picked up one of Navier's garments, asking curiously. • "Lysander, whose clothes are these? They're not really my style." • "And the makeup... I wouldn't use these brands. Did another woman stay in this room?" • "Did we enter the wrong bedroom? Maybe we should find another room." • Hearing this, Lysander's heart skipped a beat before he quickly explained. "Oh, right. This is actually • a guest room. I mixed up. My cousin stayed here for a few weeks before you came back." • "If you don't like it, I'll throw everything out." • He reached for Navier's clothes and makeup, ready to dump them in the trash. • Celeste stopped his hand, smiling understandingly.

• "No need. Let's just leave it. If she ever visits again, she'll have something to wear."

• She led Lysander out, but glanced back at Navier's belongings one last time.

'Let these remain as a memorial to Navier. We might never see her again.'

He had instinctively concealed Navier's existence, not wanting Celeste to know about his seven—year

For some reason, he felt vaguely uneasy as if he'd lost something profoundly important.

Lysander glanced at the bathroom where Celeste was freshening up, then found himself inexplicably

But weren't all his important lover and possessions right here with him now?

He carefully replaced each of Navier's belongings exactly where they used to be.

Sometimes sacrifices had to be made-and Navier should understood that she came second.

drawn back to the master bedroom where Navier had lived.

Ophelia had finally returned to him—he couldn't bear to lose her.

Lysander seemed distracted, failing to notice Celeste's gesture.

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Chapter 9

marriage.

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