



The Cost of Forgetting Me

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Category: Historical Fiction

Description: While I lay unconscious in the ICU, mourning a miscarriage that shattered my world, my husband was living his best life—jet-setting with the woman he never stopped loving. I faded into the background of his life until he wanted a divorce.

Only then did he bother to ask about me. He didn't even call me—he called my mother, demanding to know when I'd stop being "dramatic." Her voice trembled with fury and heartbreak as she looked at my fragile body.

"Nora won't bother you anymore," she said coldly. "Is that what you wanted?"

Total Pages (Source): 8

Page 1

Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:20 am

I ended up in the ICU after a miscarriage that left me bleeding profusely. My organs were failing, and I was on the verge of death.

Ironically, my husband, Landon Vance, was the one who started it.

It occurred on his birthday. I had spent hours preparing. I prepared a lavish dinner, baked a cake, and gave our home a romantic glow.

I also bought him designer gifts, but the real surprise was far more valuable. I was pregnant.

The baby did not come easily. We'd tried it for five years. His arrival provided an opportunity to mend our fractured marriage.

I chose Landon's birthday to announce the news, hoping that it would bring us closer together. But when he walked in, he hardly noticed my efforts.

He changed clothes quickly, muttering that Clara Reynolds, his former crush, was in the hospital and needed him.

As he approached the door, I grabbed his arm. "I did all of this for you, and I have something important to tell you." Landon shook my hand. "Clara's alone right now. I have to go."

My heart sank when he said those words.

Since Clara re-entered his life, Landon had been consumed by her. She was his

unattainable dream girl, and she has always held a special place in his heart.

I asked him, “Is she really that important? More important than me?”

He sighed, clearly irritated. “Can we not do this right now? Clara saved my life. She’s in trouble, and I’m just repaying her. What’s the big deal?”

Before I could respond, he said, “She and I are just friends now. Stop being so jumpy. Keep this up, and we’re not gonna make it.”

His eyes were full of disdain. Furious, I reached for him again.

He pushed me away, stormed out, and slammed the door. I lost my balance and crashed into the table’s sharp corner, collapsing to the floor.

Pain ripped through my body as it convulsed. Darkness swallowed me whole.

When I woke up, I was not in my body. Instead, I floated next to my hospital bed, staring at myself. Tubes protruded from my arms.

When someone was on the verge of death, their soul would linger, watching the world as a silent ghost. Tears welled up in my eyes as I looked at my broken body.

My mother, Tessa Morgan, was sitting outside.

Her hair had become grey overnight. Her face was etched with grief, and my heart broke.

Rage drew me to Landon, the man responsible for this.

I discovered him in another hospital, holding Clara’s hand. His expression was soft

with concern. “Don’t worry. Just focus on getting better. I’ll take care of everything.”

Clara smiled and rested her head on his shoulder. “I don’t know what I’d do without you.”

Landon soaked up her gratitude.

She drew closer, adding, “But won’t Nora be upset if you spend so much time with me?”

He frowned. “Doesn’t matter. She’s always starting fights, accusing me of things with you. I’m sick of it. If it comes to it, I’ll just divorce her.”

Page 2

Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:20 am

Landon remained with Clara after her IV treatment and drove her home.

She clung to his arm, unwilling to let go, and he was in no hurry to leave.

“Landon,” she said, her voice fragile, “I’ve been so low lately; when I feel better, can we go somewhere?”

“Of course,” he replied eagerly.

Clara’s family had fallen on hard times after her father’s business failed, transforming her from a spoilt heiress into a struggling nobody.

Landon understood her pain, especially since she complained about constant aches. He wanted to be her protector.

“Where do you want to go?” he enquired. “Name the place, and I’ll make it happen. I can take care of you now.”

Clara’s eyes sparkled. “Thank you. You’re so nice.”

I watched them with a bitter smile on my face.

Landon was always too busy for me. We never went on a honeymoon, and in five years of marriage, he rarely made time for a simple date.

I never complained, playing the dutiful wife and meeting all of his needs. His ignoring was all I got.

I tried to rekindle his affection with new makeup and fashionable clothes, but it was futile. Clara appeared, and I vanished from his world.

When he chose her over me, I would argue with him. He'd either respond silently or call me childish.

Alive, I couldn't change it. I was still powerless, teetering on the brink of death.

Landon stayed at her place for the night. They did not share a bed, but their growing intimacy was undeniable.

The next day, I followed him to his office.

Instead of concentrating on his demanding job, he was on the phone, arranging first-class flights and luxury hotels for a trip with Clara. He had no idea that I was fighting for my life. It was as though I didn't exist.

While my mother wept at my bedside, Landon was having a dream with another woman. They visited trendy cities, sampled local cuisine, and took stunning photographs.

He kept things proper by booking separate rooms. He treated her with the utmost care. Clara exuded joy, but I felt no jealousy.

I knew their happiness would not last. Landon never appreciated what he had. He had no idea how to hold onto joy.

A month later, their adventure came to an end.

Landon returned home weary. He opened the door to reveal a bleak scene: rotting food on the table and a deep stain on the floor.

The stench hit him, and his face contorted with disgust. He picked up his phone and dialled my number. My phone, which had died on the couch, did not answer.

He called again and again. By the fourth attempt, he was shouting into my voicemail. “If you want a divorce, just say so. Stop these stupid games. This place is a wreck. Come back, and we’ll end this now.”

Landon received only a cold beep from his voicemail.

He seethed for a while. Then he put his phone away and stormed back to Clara’s house.

After a month of travelling with her, he appeared exhausted. When he mentioned being hungry, she replied, “I’ll order takeaway. What do you feel like?”

Page 3

Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:20 am

Landon frowned at the suggestion. Weeks of restaurant food and street food had taken their toll on his stomach.

Clara couldn't detect his reluctance, which he concealed with a smile. "Whatever you want is fine."

But I knew he was craving homemade meals.

He had a fragile stomach and was picky about food. He despised onions, peanut oil, organ meats, and fish with small bones. I'd memorised his preferences and tailored each meal to his liking.

When work dinners made him sick, I'd make light dishes to calm his stomach and lift his spirits.

He never appreciated it. To him, my efforts were simply the responsibility of the wife he provided for.

Clara, however, was his princess.

She was born with a silver spoon in her mouth. Of course, she did not cook. Her hands were unsuitable for that.

When the takeaway arrived, Landon only ate a small portion.

Clara noticed. "Not your thing?"

He shook his head, but I saw disappointment in his eyes.

She enquired; “It seems you don’t quite like these popular dishes. What do you like to eat? I’ll order it next time.”

Landon shrugged. “I’m not fussy. Some salad or a rib soup would do.”

His voice carried a hint of longing, but it quickly faded.

I wanted to tell him that even simple dishes demanded attention and effort. But it didn’t matter any more. My heart was finished with him.

He ate a small meal before clearing the takeaway boxes and going outside to dispose of the trash. Alone, he dialled my number again. Three calls went to a dead phone.

He paced back and forth before scrolling through his contacts. Unfortunately, he did not know my friends, and I had left my job, drifting away from old coworkers.

Out of options, he called my mother.

When she responded, he snapped, “How long is Nora gonna drag this out? Tell her to quit the drama, or we’re through.”

My mother had no idea how much I had sacrificed for Landon.

I would always reassure her to allay her fears. “I’m happy with Landon. He loves me. I’m not struggling, and I’m not the kind to settle for an unhappy marriage either.”

She trusted me. She was devastated by the harsh reality.

“What kind of husband are you?” she exclaimed. “Nora has been in the ICU for a

month. You don't care, and you think she's being dramatic?"

I had never heard her so ferocious. She was always gentle and almost timid. But for me, she was ready to face anyone.

"You ingrate!" she exclaimed. "You don't deserve my daughter."

Landon paused at her outburst before lashing back. "Stop making things up. Nora in the ICU? No way. She acted out alone in the past, and now she has roped you into her act. Come on!"

I saw disbelief in his eyes, but I also saw contempt and irritation. I realised how callous he could be.

Tessa's voice cracked with fury. "Nora will never forgive you, not even in death! And you will pay for this! I'll make sure of it!"

Landon clutched the phone, his veins bulging. "Shut up! Nora's not dead. Tell her to come home. If she wants to die, she can divorce me first."

Tessa hung up, ending his rant.

Landon never imagined that one day he'd lose his temper because of me.

Page 4

Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:20 am

He was still restless when he returned to Clara's place. He was grumbling to himself: "How dare she ghost me like this? She's just avoiding divorce. Nora, I know what you're afraid of. Playing dead? I didn't think you had it in you."

I hovered beside him, wearing a bitter smile. My greatest fear was losing our home and the marriage I had fought so hard to save. I'd given it my all, only for him to trample it.

Clara attempted to calm him. "Don't get so worked up. Nora is probably mad about us. It's just like when she pushed me down the stairs. I know she didn't mean it. Maybe I should apologise to her..."

She pouted and curled into his arms. Landon grabbed her, still fuming. "Why should she be mad? Her mother told me she was dying. I'd be a fool if I believed that. She'd rather die than let me go."

He became calm after venting his frustration.

He ran his fingers through his hair and began to plan something.

Clara tugged on his sleeve. "Let's not dwell on this. It's late. Why don't you sleep in my bed tonight?"

Her cheeks flushed, and the invitation was clear.

I expected Landon to leap at it. He was prepared to divorce me, after all. But he paused, patted her head, and drew her hand away.

“I’m sorry, but I need to go home,” he said.

Clara bit her lips. “Do you not want me?”

He frowned. “Don’t take it like that. I just remembered something I gotta do.”

She couldn’t stop him.

Curious, I followed him back to our house, where the air remained sour from decay. He wandered through the rooms, eventually stopping at our bedside table, where a photo of us sat. It showed me clinging to his back and beaming with happiness.

He looked at it, as if recalling the past.

After a while, he slammed it down and snarled, “Dead? I know you too well. You just love me too much to die. This is just a stunt to pull me back, right?”

I laughed bitterly.

He sounded certain, but did he really know me?

Landon was my first real friend at work.

Raised by a single mother, I grew up small and poor, making me a prime target for bullies who mocked my size and fatherless home.

I hid my pain to reassure my mother, concentrating on school to lighten her load. By college, the bullying had subsided, but I remained quiet. It was my way of feeling safe.

I graduated smoothly and entered the workforce, but once again, my reserved nature

made me a target for bullying.

I was assigned the most difficult tasks and held accountable for the mistakes of others.

That is when Landon stepped in. He was not imposing or well-connected, but he had a strong sense of justice. When I was unfairly blamed, he would march to the boss and correct the record.

After saving my job, he grinned and handed me a cupcake. “If anyone causes you trouble again, come to me. I’ll handle it.” His eyes were warm, and I fell hard for him.

Page 5

Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:20 am

I knew he only saw me as a friend, so I buried my feelings and remained close as his confidante.

With his encouragement, I began working out and became stronger. Knowing his picky tastes, I learnt to cook and would pack him homemade lunches while we tackled work challenges together.

He introduced me to hiking and running, encouraging me to look after myself. He brought light into my dark world and gave my life meaning.

How could I not love him?

Clara appeared just as I was about to confess my feelings for him. She was a wealthy heiress who tried out work for fun.

She was every man's dream, both beautiful and entitled. She and Landon got along well after being assigned to our team.

I watched them get closer, my heart aching from jealousy and self-loathing for being so ordinary.

During a company retreat, a sudden storm broke. People slipped and scattered as they descended the mountain. Landon vanished, but I knew about his hiking habits. I was concerned that he was in danger.

Despite the darkness and danger, I searched alone until I discovered him collapsed down a slope. He was exhausted from helping others.

I tried calling for help, but the signal was poor in the mountains.

The storm was worsening, and my heart was boiling. I quickly hoisted him onto my back and carried him to safety.

I wasn't sure where I got that strength. Perhaps it was love.

Instead of catching my breath, I went in search of assistance. But when I returned with the rescuers, Clara was already there, sobbing alongside him.

When Landon awoke, she threw herself at him. "I kept looking for you. Thank God you're okay."

Everyone, including Landon, thought she was his saviour.

I stood alone, swallowing my grief and silently wiping away my bitter tears.

I was helpless back then. So was I now.

Drifting into his dream from our memories, Landon slept soundly in our bed, more at ease than during his restless hotel nights.

The next morning, he hired a cleaning service.

The cleaner was chatty and efficient. After removing the spoilt food, she began cleaning the house.

On the balcony, she saw a pot of wilted plants and sighed, "Your wife must've loved life. These flowers and plants were well cared for. Such a pity they're gone."

My chest tightened as I watched her delicately caress the withered leaves. Those

carefully nurtured plants meant more to me than Landon.

When Landon heard her words, his expression was unreadable. I prepared for his rage, but he muttered, “Yeah, she liked that stuff.”

The cleaner noticed his bad mood and stopped talking. After cleaning the balcony, she moved to the wardrobe and exclaimed, “This is the tidiest wardrobe I’ve ever seen.”

The clothes were meticulously organised by colour, season, and Landon’s habits. I made sure he never had to look for an outfit.

He examined the wardrobe and then his dishevelled appearance. His lips parted, but no words emerged.

Finally, he left the room.

In the kitchen, the cleaner opened the refrigerator. “Your wife’s quite the baker. These cakes could be from a fancy shop.”

Page 6

Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:20 am

She threw out the cupcakes I made from his birthday cake scraps, which were low in sugar to suit his tastes. They were already mouldy.

Landon disliked overly sweet foods, but he still craved cake. So I learnt how to bake and used only the best ingredients to provide him with the cleanest, healthiest desserts possible.

He lingered in the doorway, silent. As the cleaner discarded them, he bent down to pick one up and examine it carefully. "It's been a while since I've tasted your cakes," he said softly, as if I'd imagined it.

Then he dropped it, as if it had burned him, and fled the kitchen.

"What an odd guy." The cleaner shook her head and resumed her work.

The house gleamed after she left, but Landon was uneasy, pacing and murmuring, "Something's off. What's missing? What is it?"

I silently observed him wandering through our home like a trapped whelp, tormented from within.

He snatched his phone and dialled Tessa, shouting before she could respond. "I'm done with this! Where the hell is Nora? Tell her to stop hiding and face me!"

Tessa's feelings for him went beyond words. "You don't deserve to see her."

Landon's face was contorted with rage. "Stop the nonsense! Tell Nora to come out!"

She's not dead. She can't be."

Tessa's temper flared. "Can't be? She is suffering right before my eyes, and you think she's pretending? I won't let you disturb her peace. You won't get to see her ever again."

She hung up and blocked his number.

Landon felt exhausted and conflicted. He clenched his fists and bolted outside.

I followed, expecting him to seek Clara. Instead, he drove to a nearby hospital and looked for me in the ICUS.

"I am Nora Vance's husband," he explained. "Is she here?"

The nurse gave him a wary look. "And you don't know where your wife is?"

She called security, who chased him out.

Back in his car, Landon pounded the steering wheel in frustration. His persistence was pointless.

I expected him to give up after the hospital farce, but he did not.

He called the cops. "Officer, my wife's missing."

His voice was tinged with concern, but I found it funny. I was done with him, and now he cares.

The officer asked him to go to the nearest police station and recount everything that had happened.

He revealed our fight but overlooked Clara's role. The cops were not fooled.

"You didn't see or contact her for a month?" asked one officer. "What were you doing all that time?"

Landon shifted uncomfortably. "I was helping a friend."

The officers exchanged glances, noticing holes in his story. They stepped aside and discussed, "We should hold him. His statement is suspicious; this could be a homicide. Let's look into his and his wife's backgrounds."

I was astounded by their keen instincts. But after Landon reported the case, they began looking for me.

They returned several minutes later with my records, looking serious and sceptical. "Your wife's been in the ICU for a month. You didn't know? She was admitted the day you fought."

"ICU? She's really dying?" Landon froze before slamming the table and shooting up. "No way. She's paying you to lie, isn't she? Drop the act!"

Page 7

Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:20 am

The officers screamed: “Sit down! We’ve verified it. Your wife had massive bleeding because of a miscarriage, and we checked your footprints in the past months. You were touring around with your friend while she was fighting for her life?”

Their eyes blazed with contempt. “Mr. Vance, you should start cooperating.”

Landon was not hearing it.

His face twitched, and he jumped up. “I need to see Nora. She is not dying. Miscarriage? We couldn’t have children for five years. “She is faking it.”

He lunged for the door, but the officers tackled him and cuffed him as he thrashed. “Let me see her!” She is alive! She must be.” I shook my head as I saw his bloodshot eyes and twisted expression.

My death was supposed to make him happy because it would allow him to be with Clara, but his reaction was quite different.

His screams echoed throughout the station until he collapsed, banging his head on the floor: “Let me see her. No, I don’t believe she’s dying. Nora, do not be so cruel. I’m sorry; I messed up. Get back to me.”

His reaction shocked me, and I crouched down to see his face, which was soaked in tears.

He sobbed, pleading for just one look. She is madly in love with me. “She cannot die.”

My mother was contacted, security footage was reviewed, and I was confirmed to have collapsed after Landon left. During interrogation, he appeared unhinged and desperate, repeatedly saying, "Please, let me see Nora." He burst into tears again, but his request was denied.

The police summoned Clara, and I expected Landon to scream and demand that they leave her alone, but he didn't. His mind was elsewhere, and all he did was mumble, "Let me see Nora." "One look is sufficient."

Landon got his wish, but not because Tessa was sympathetic.

She suspected he was to blame for my condition and demanded an explanation.

"Did you push her?" She cried, pointing to me in the ICU. "Did you do this? Look at her and tell me."

Landon, hands cuffed, broke down at my frail form.

In just one day, I had seen too many of his tears; I had no idea he was so sentimental.

He strained towards the glass, desperate to get closer, but the officers stopped him.

"Nora!" he roared at the sight of my fragile figure. "Wake up! Tell me you're faking. You cannot get away from me like this. I will not divorce you, even if you die."

His words were frantic and unhinged; it had to be because of the custody; he had always been the one to bring up divorce, but now he clung to me.

Tessa was enraged, believing he was faking affection. "You killed your child and fled with Clara. You are a monster. Nora risked her life to save you years ago. Is this how you will repay her?"

She knew the truth; I had told her how I saved Landon to persuade her that he was worth marrying, and now it was pouring out as I died.

Landon staggered and reeled. “What? No, it was Clara!” He roared, eyes bulging.

Tessa slapped him hard: “You are delusional. Who looked for you all night? Who carried you down the mountain? Do you think Clara could do that?”

Page 8

Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:20 am

Clara was frail and pristine when she found him; many saw her safe at the base that night, but Landon never questioned her story because he was too enamoured to care. Now, the truth struck like lightning.

“No, it was Clara,” he muttered, but his legs buckled.

Tessa closed her eyes. “After Nora discovered you, she made emergency calls from the mountains.” Check the records if you doubt me.”

The police confirmed Tessa’s account.

Landon was devastated, muttering endlessly, “I want to see Nora. I miss her so much. If I just hold her, the pain will subside. That’s always been the case when she got sick.”

Nobody believed his remorse; everyone assumed he was faking guilt to avoid justice.

Clara dropped her mask when she was brought in.

“Yeah, Nora carried you down,” she sneered. “I just passed by and claimed credit. I flirted with her because she was so into you. It was a game, and you were overly easy.”

Her tone became venomous: “If my family hadn’t gone bankrupt and you weren’t wealthy, I wouldn’t have bothered with you.” I even staged a fall to frame her. “It hurt like hell, but it worked.”

Landon's hollow eyes blazed with cold fury, but it was ineffective.

Clara scoffed, "Enjoy prison for the rest of your life."

Landon was enraged, and for a brief moment, I could feel it radiating from him.

I wanted to laugh as they turned on each other, but Mom's sobs prevented me.

The hospital staff encouraged her to share my story online, so she created videos about me, Landon, and Clara.

Our neighbours, former colleagues, and hospital workers all confirmed her account, and the story went viral.

The public demanded Landon's punishment, and Clara was vilified.

After being ignored in the ICU, I became a symbol of injustice, and strangers sent flowers and gifts to help Tessa.

I thought seeing Landon and Clara pay would ease my pain and allow me to escape, but strangers' love and Tessa's unwavering devotion held me back.

I realised my mistake: I had built my life around Landon, oblivious to the greater love that surrounded me.

Instead of watching Landon in custody, I stayed with Tessa and monitored my body in the ICU.

I wanted to fight, get back in that body, live, and love the world again.

I would never let Tessa or myself down again. It was easy to die, but it took courage to live.

My soul dissolved one bright morning, and I awoke in that hospital bed.

That same day, shocking news broke: Landon attacked police during a transfer, fled, and went to Clara's place.

When officers found Landon, they discovered two bodies: Clara had been strangled and his wrists had been cut.

At the scene, his note read: [Nora, I gave you my life; please never forgive me].

When the police informed me, I only gave a faint smile.

I no longer loved or hated Landon; he was simply gone from my life.

My journey to a new future began with letting go of the past.