

Marigold “Mary” Jenkins

“It is impossible to love and be wise.”
-Francis Bacon

He doesn't mean it. You know he doesn't. It's just that sometimes he loses control. And when he loses control, he accuses you of all of the things that would destroy his love for you; infidelity, deception, jealousy. And so many times he's right, isn't he? You know he loves you, and you love him. But still you find yourself attracted to others. And while you love him, you care about him, you need him, you worry about him, sometimes your worry comes not from what he's doing to himself but from fear of what he will do to you. But he loves you, and would never hurt you. Sometimes he hits you. But only when you deserve it.

You remember the first time you met him. Your father had died in World War II, one of the first men to lay his blood upon the beaches of Normandy. Your mother passed away when you were six, killed by the man she had sworn she would marry. Sometimes you remember the blood running down the stairs from where she fell; only you and he knew she was pushed. But to tell would bring his anger upon you, so you told the police that she had been drinking, and she slipped. They believed you. They always do.

With no family to care for you, you were sent off to one orphanage after another. Four years ago, you arrived at San Inguon to live at Reverend Hines' orphanage. Hines took care of the girls who had passed the age of regular adoption; those for whom the orphanages would bring to adulthood. It did not bother you much; being unchosen had become a fact of life that you had learned to accept.

School had never really mattered much to you. Edwood High was filled with the kind of people who were full of purpose, simply idling until they could break out into the fields they had chosen. You never had purpose. You saw what kind of life you could expect when your mother was pushed down the stairs. But you played the game well, pretending to be part of the team, showing yourself as a bright young girl filled with spunk, never letting on that you knew how little life would give you.

It was at a pool hall a couple months ago when you first met J.D. You were skipping school, something you did when the futility of it all came crashing down upon you, when you needed to experience fun because of how little enjoyment you expected from the future. The pool hall is a popular place to hang out when skipping class; many of the drop-outs who hang out there could take on the Sheriff in a fair fight, not that any of them ever fought fair. Needless to say, the Sheriff never really came in to check for truants. All of the other girls thought going there was dangerous, but you never really cared. How deadly can danger be to someone like you?

J.D. was there with his pals Robert and Nick. You were nursing a Coke in the corner and just looking around when he came up to you. He looked like Marlon Brando in his T-shirt, blue jeans and leather jacket. He started doing the worst impression of James Dean that you had ever heard. You had to laugh, you couldn't help it, and he smiled at you and asked if he could buy you a Coke. You showed him the one in your hand. He blushed a little, then Robert shouted out that maybe he should ask you to buy J.D. one. J.D. turned around and raised his pool stick above his head like a batter at the plate, as Robert cowered in mock fear. He then turned back to you, smiled, and asked if you'd like to go to a movie.

And you realized then that these people knew their lives were going to turn out like yours, but they just didn't care. Instead of quietly accepting their fates and letting life ram them six feet under, they were out looking for danger, reveling in the fear they caused. It was exciting, and it was bold. Everyone was running from their past. Nick's father is a tyrant who runs the local gas station, Robert simply doesn't talk about his family, and J.D. refuses to even have you come near where he lives. They gave you a reason to live, a hope that things don't work out as planned, and even if they do, you can still have a blast along the way.

You started going steady with J.D. after going to the movies with him that night. He's really a different person from what everyone else thinks. Before you had met him, everyone talked about him like he was some sort of hoodlum. He's not. He's a bit of a prankster, given to jokes, but he's not a hoodlum. He's bright, he's caring, and he's the sweetest person you've known. Until Robert. No, no, don't think about Robert, think about J.D. You love J.D. He loves you. That's why he gets so mad at you.

You remember when it started. It was two weeks ago. You and J.D. had gone out to see a movie and were sitting around outside the theater afterwards. You saw someone across the street who you vaguely recognized, and you were remembering that Theresa, Nick's younger sister, had been telling you about the time this guy and her had gone up to Lover's Lane, and you were trying to focus on his name when J.D. stood up at started yelling at you that you were a lying little slut who was leading him on and while he loved you, while he was devoted to you, you were giving other boys the eye and wondering how good they were in the back seat of a car and laughing at J.D. behind his back and *wham* he punched you in the eye. And you started to cry, partly because what he did hurt, partly because what he said had hurt, and partly because, well, it was true, wasn't it? Didn't you laugh at J.D. when you first met him? Didn't you simply keep quiet when the other girls joked about what it must be like to go out with him? And weren't you looking at this guy across the street, thinking about what Theresa had said about him, and wondering if it was true? And what it might be like? I mean, you and J.D. have done some things at Lover's Lane, but nothing too serious, nothing below the waist, because you're not sure that it would be right, it might turn the love you two have into lust, which is something you could get with anyone, but here you have something special, right? So wasn't he right?

Enough makeup covered the bruise, and it's gone now. But still, J.D. gets these... these headaches that make him explode and scream at you about what he thinks you're doing behind his back and how you don't really love him and how you're just using him and sleeping around, laughing at him the entire time. And then finally he'll slap you or hit you and then his anger will be gone and he'll be so sorry for what he's done or he'll look at you in horror, the horror of realizing that he's going steady with someone he despises so much, and he'll run off. Leaving you to rub your bruises and cry.

And Robert... Robert does not love you. Remember that. You are the girlfriend of his best friend, so he cares about you only so long as you're going out with J.D. and if, God forbid, the two of you were ever to break up, he would go back to completely ignoring you. He does not love you. J.D. loves you. You love J.D.

But Robert... Robert has helped you out when J.D. has run off. Putting ice on your bruises, driving you home on the nights that J.D. left you stranded, and talking to you. And he can be so sweet and caring, it's almost as if he can see into your soul and find the best way to care for you. Sometimes, sometimes you think that...

You love J.D. He loves you. Now do you see why he has to hit you? God, you're thinking about going off with his best friend! How can you do that to him? After all he's done for you, after all he's been to you, how can you do that?

How?

Stock quote: "Whatever you want, J.D."

Mannerisms: Mary is depressed, confused, and in an abusive relationship that she doesn't want out of. Only Robert and J.D. know this though; everyone else sees her as the cute, perky and spunky kind of girl she pretends to be when people are watching.

People You Know:

J.D. Koln: The love of your life. The person who matters most to you. You really believe that. Honestly.

Robert Sherman: Maybe if you just try not to think about him, things will work out.

Nick Kerensky: A big, lovable sweetheart. A bit slow, but a really nice guy. He's the muscle in J.D.'s gang.

James Daniels: Captain of the football team, star quarterback, valedictorian. Someone who is going to bend life to his own will. Unlike you. He dislikes J.D. and his gang, so you try to avoid him.

Timmy Carroll: Class science geek. Incredibly intelligent. A frequent butt of J.D.'s pranks.

Tony Turrelli: Class clown. Quick with quips and great with jokes. J.D. really dislikes him.

Mark Sturvin: Richest kid at Edwood High. Someone else who will have no problem sailing through life. He's probably as obnoxious as all of the other rich kids you've met.

Theresa Kerensky: Nick's younger sister. She's a bit adventurous, and she's been going up to Lover's Lane with a lot of guys recently.

Catherine Thomas: The other girl at Hines' Orphanage. She stays to herself, but then again, so do you.

Margaret Smith: The class airhead. No brains at all. What makes it even worse is that her figure will let her sail through life without needing any. Sometimes you wish you were all looks and no brains; it would be easier to deal with your situation if you didn't have to think about it.

Laura Fetner: Class cheerleader. Bright, perky, attractive, and all-around the kind of girl you wish you really were instead of pretending to be. She's going out with James, which is all the more reason to avoid her.

Wendy Mitchell: Class reporter. Writes for the Edwood High paper. Not a bad person, although she's a bit nosy.

Reverend Hines: Fair and kind. You're surprised to see someone this competent and honest in charge of an orphanage, given some of the ones you've been through. Like that one in Philadelphia where.... best just not to think about that.

Goals:

1. Stand by your man. Stand by J.D. through thick and thin. Let him know how much you love him. Protect him from those who would like to get him in trouble. Keep him out of harm's way. Stay by him.

2. Avoid your feelings for Robert. He doesn't love you. He doesn't love you. Just keep reminding yourself of that.