

# CAN'T WIN ME BACK

## Chapter 1801



"You should first get past Grandpa Newton."

Upon saying that, Alyssa left without turning back.

Jasper kept Landon company in the rain. Their erect figures looked like timeless and flawless sculptures.

"You should go back and handle the matters in your family. Let Lauren stay here with Grandpa for a while. You can come over again once Grandpa has simmered down a little."

Jasper exhaled heavily. He gave Landon a pat on his stiff shoulder.

Landon's voice was extremely hoarse. "Tonight... I will stay here to keep her company."

"You've got to be kidding me! The temperature is almost going below zero. You'll surely fall sick if you stand here all night!"

Jasper's expression became grim. "Lauren will feel even more terrible if she finds out that you're being like this!"

"Then. just don't let her find out."

Landon forced a bitter smile with his pale lips. "Jasper, this is the only way that I can make myself feel better. Please don't stop me."

Alyssa knitted her brows tightly. She received a phone call from Cyrus the moment she went back into the villa.

"Cyrus."

"Hey, Lyse."

Cyrus paused for a moment. Then, he asked cautiously, "About Lauren. Is she alright?"

Cyrus' voice sounded so warm that Alyssa was almost brought to tears. She always showed the weaker side of herself when she was in front of family and Jasper.

"She's here at Grandpa Newton's place. She's asleep," Alyssa choked.

Cyrus took a deep breath. In a raspy voice, he asked, "Is there anything that I can do for her?"

Alyssa pursed her lips. She answered softly, "You can get a box of teddy bear cakes for Lauren when you're free."

"Sure. I'll get them first thing tomorrow morning and bring them over to Mr. Beckett Senior's place."

"Would you like to meet Lauren?"

Cyrus replied in a tone that contained both a youthful shyness and the consideration of a mature man. "It's alright. She needs good rest. There's no need to tell her that I was the one who bought the cakes either."

Cyrus' words tugged at Alyssa's heartstrings.

Landon and Cyrus were two equally outstanding men. Tonight, they were each watching over the same woman in their own ways.

However, where was Lauren's true happiness?

Angelina accompanied Lauren in the room for a long time before exiting the room reluctantly.

She gave her moist eyes a rub. When she turned around, she spotted Alyssa and Jasper walking toward her.

"Angelina, you've got exceptional skills all these while. You're the best bodyguard in Harper Group."

Jasper frowned. He finally got to the crux of the matter. "How was someone from Harper Group able to harm you to this extent? They incapacitated you such that you didn't even manage to contact Landon in time. Not only that, they managed to bring Lauren to Harper Group without anyone knowing?"

"That was too skillful of them... and too cruel!" Alyssa's eyes reddened with anger. She clung onto Jasper's arm so tightly that his shirt sleeve became crumpled.

At the same time, Angelina broke out in cold sweat as she recalled the incident.

"The man whom I fought with is likely a hitman. His skills showed me that he's merciless and perilous. I was not a match for him at all. Perhaps you are the only one capable enough to go against him, Mr. Beckett."

## Chapter 1802



Jasper and Alyssa looked at one another in shock.

Alyssa probed, "What did that man look like? Do you still remember his face?"

"Of course I do."

Angelina frowned. "He's... very good-looking."

Jasper and Alyssa were speechless. They never expected Angelina to utter those words.

"I'm not kidding. He's genuinely quite good-looking. His face is the type that leaves a lasting impression with just one glance."

"Were there any other attributes he had?" Alyssa pressed on as she was unsatisfied with the answer.

"He looked a bit familiar. I keep getting the nagging feeling that I've seen him somewhere."

Angelina knocked on her head with her fist, attempting to jog her memory.

Immediately, Alyssa rushed forward and grabbed Angelina by her wrist. She said to her soothingly, "It's alright. It's okay. It's alright if you can't recall the details. Don't hurt yourself."

Angelina locked eyes with Alyssa. Suddenly, her face lit up. "I remember now. He looked... somewhat like Mr. Cyrus!"

Alyssa was slightly taken aback. "Oh? He must be quite handsome then," she commented.

Jasper was at a loss for words.

Was this the right time to mention that?

Angelina placed her trembling hand on her injured left leg, still reeling from the shock of the incident.

"I'm certain that the assassin has undergone rigorous combat training. His skills rival those of foreign mercenaries.

"I doubt Preston has the resources to hire such an expert. But if he wasn't the mastermind, how did the assailant smuggle Madam Lauren into Harper

Group's highly secure building? Moreover, he locked her in the safe room known only to Mr. Harper Senior."

"That's likely because he colluded with someone from Harper Group."  
Jasper's eyes were dim. "Preston has got to be one of them. And perhaps Mr. Harper Senior had a hand in it too."

Tears welled up in Alyssa's eyes, and a chill ran down her spine.

With Landon as the exception, everyone else in Harper Group seemed intent on destroying Lauren.

They were all Lauren's enemies!

Alyssa couldn't discern whether their animosity toward Lauren stemmed from her neuroatypical condition or if they simply didn't want Landon to be happy.

"Mr. Beckett, Ms. Alyssa... I have only one request to ask from you."  
Angelina's badly beaten body trembled as she spoke, choking back tears.  
"Please help Mr. Landon and Madam Lauren.

"Please don't separate them no matter what. Mr. Landon cannot be without Madam Lauren. He won't be able to live without her."

Alyssa reached out to steady Angelina, fearing she might collapse.

In truth, Alyssa had never thought of separating them. To her, Lauren was as dear as her own sister, Tatiana. Moreover, she was Lauren's sister-in-law. She had lashed out at Landon only because her heart went out to Lauren.

If she hadn't been so harsh with her words, would Landon even come to realize the gravity of the situation?

If this happened again, Lauren might very well end up dead!

"Angelina, we will try our best to convince Grandpa Newton from our side. As for the Harpers, Landon has to resolve things on his own. That is not just his responsibility toward Lauren, but also toward Grandpa Newton."

Jasper explained seriously, "The only way for us to convince Grandpa is if Landon shows enough sincerity. Otherwise, we wouldn't be able to do anything even if we wanted to."

"Thank you, Mr. Beckett," Angelina uttered with a gaze full of gratitude.

"Angelina, when you get back, perform a thorough check of the room. It would be best if you're able to acquire a sample of that man's fingerprints."

Alyssa was determined. "I will then hand the fingerprint sample to Cyrus. He is a police officer. He will be able to get his forensic colleagues' help to see if they have any information about that man.

"If he's indeed a hitman, this wouldn't have been his first offense. Criminals like him would never be bothered to clean up their crime scene. So, his fingerprints would definitely be recorded in the fingerprint database. Once a comparison is done, we should be able to find out his identity."

Betty drove the car alone and arrived at Middleton Resort as agreed.

Being a pricey and exclusive members-only resort, Middleton Hot Spring boasted only a handful of customers around.

That night, the place looked as if it had been completely cleared out. There was not a single soul to be seen in the spacious reception area.

Betty had just stepped into the main entrance when she was approached by someone who looked like a secretary.

"May I know if you are Ms. Betty?"

"You are.?" Betty replied, unsure. The man didn't seem like someone who would work with Zoe.

"Ms. Zoe asked me to take you in. Please come with me."

After a short walk, Betty was led to the front of a door.

"Ms. Zoe is right inside. Please enter." Upon saying that, the secretary left.

Betty snorted coldly. She couldn't believe how much Zoe put herself on airs. Meeting her was like meeting royalty.

Betty pushed the door open and entered. She was welcomed by a wave of steaming heat.

Betty followed the sound of flowing water and walked toward it. She could vaguely hear the sounds of a woman moaning over and over.

Her chest tightened. She gulped before pushing the door open.

Amidst the clouds of steam, she spotted a naked Zoe with her back pressed against a rock. A man was holding her by the waist and slamming his hips on her.

Betty let out a scream in shock.

That man was startled. He froze mid-action and looked behind him quickly.

Betty got a good look at Freddy's face. Her jaws dropped!

Zoe was still panting softly. She smiled at Freddy enticingly and wrapped her arms around his neck casually. "Don't stop... Keep going."

#### Chapter 1803



Betty covered her mouth, utterly shaken. Despite being promiscuous herself, she would at least make sure to maintain her modesty in public.

Meanwhile, Zoe displayed no shame whatsoever. Not only was she openly enjoying herself with a man before her, but the sheer ecstasy on her face bordered on smugness!

How could a bitch like Zoe even dare to entertain thoughts of marrying Jasper and becoming the wife of Beckett Group's president? She was far from qualified!

Freddy was someone from a notable family. As such, he retained a sense of decorum despite his burning lust. The realization that they were being observed dampened his ardor.

"Zoe, I can't.."

Zoe harrumphed. "Useless piece of shit!"

In disdain, Zoe shoved Freddy into the water. She emerged from the water completely naked and retrieved a towel from a nearby chair. Then, she wrapped it around herself, covering only the essential parts, leaving little to the imagination.

Freddy was panicking in the water. As Zoe's ultimate lapdog, his first instinct was to immediately appease her.

However, Betty's presence made him reluctant to get out of the water.

"What's with all the screaming? Everyone in Solana City knows you're the most promiscuous, Ms. Betty. No need to act innocent and pure in front of me," Zoe remarked casually, retrieving a cigarette from her box and placing it between her lips. She lit it, taking a deep drag.

Despite her anger, Betty couldn't help but admire Zoe.

Back in their school days, Freddy had been Zoe's loyal follower. Betty couldn't believe he was still fixated on her even after nearly a decade had passed.



Although Harper Group was wealthy, it didn't have a clean background. Hence, officials weren't too keen on associating with them.

If Zoe could establish a connection with the Hodgsons, the Harpers would gain a powerful political ally. This could open doors for them to expand into new sectors, and who knew how far their business empire could reach then?

Betty clicked her tongue. "Don't tell me you summoned me here in the dead of the night just to watch you two go at it." She couldn't be bothered to put on a courteous front. She walked over angrily and sat down.

Zoe blew a cloud of smoke in her direction, causing Betty to cough. "Has that idiotic sister of yours returned to Seaview Manor?"

"Nope. Grandpa took her back with him."

"What's Mr. Beckett Senior's take on this?"

"I heard that he's pissed off. I'm guessing that Landon marrying Lauren will be a tall order," Betty remarked with a cold laugh, finding amusement in their predicament.

"Lauren's condition has been exposed, and her actions are being widely mocked online. None of the prominent families in Solana City would want such a woman in their midst.

"Lauren's a lost cause, and my father can't bear the shame of having his daughter marry beneath her station and become a laughingstock. Since she doesn't meet the expectations of the rich, he will be stuck looking after that useless daughter of his for the rest of his life!"

Betty laughed so hard that she teared up. She couldn't help but be reminded of how Sophia had placed all her hopes on Lauren when she was alive.

Would Sophia rest in peace if she knew Lauren could never have a happy marriage? Or perhaps enraged enough to become a vengeful spirit to haunt them?

Betty dismissed the idea with a scoff. Sophia was never fit to be a mother; Betty and Lauren were just tools in the Beckett family.

"Who says no one wants her? I've arranged a marriage for her," Zoe declared, shooting a pointed look at Freddy. "Be quick with it and make that wedding happen, Freddy."

Betty's eyes widened in astonishment. What did that mean? Freddy was going to marry Lauren?

Freddy was a man with a sturdy family background. He even fancied Zoe that much. Even so, Zoe was willing to give him up to Lauren instead. It seemed like Zoe had lost her mind.

"Zoe... I can't bear to leave you," Freddy whined, approaching Zoe by the pool.

Annoyed, Zoe kicked him on the shoulder. "Didn't I tell you to discuss this with your parents? What did they say?"

"They didn't like that Lauren is a dumbo. They're not keen about the marriage."

"In that case, you need to convince them even more that she's the one you must marry. Show them that a marriage alliance with the Becketts has more advantages than disadvantages."

Regardless, Zoe was from a plutocrat family. Ever the strategist, she continued, "If you were to become Javier's son-in-law, things like securing campaign funds would be a breeze for Mr. Orlander when he wants to advance his career."

"And accepting Lauren, despite her shortcomings, will demonstrate your family's charity and open-mindedness, which will enhance both your and Mr. Orlander's image in the political world."

"You're truly brilliant, Zoe," Freddy said, completely enamored with her. But then, he added reluctantly, "But... it's you whom I truly love."

"She's just an idiot. You can leave her at home as a showpiece after you marry her. How could she ever get in your way?"

Zoe then stooped to his level, pinching his chin playfully as she jeered, "In the future, you and I can do whatever we want and be together whenever we like."

Freddy was completely mesmerized by her. He no longer cared that he was still naked. He got to his feet and got out of the pool. He caught Zoe in an embrace, planting a wet kiss on her lips.

Betty felt uneasy as she watched the scene unfold before her.

Nonetheless, understanding finally dawned on Betty—marrying Lauren off was the key to breaking Landon's spirit. But not just any marriage—it had to be a prestigious one, a family like the Hodgsons that even the Harpers treated with deference.

The cruelty of it all! No wonder Sophia always warned her about Zoe. She was nothing short of diabolical!

Zoe, nestled comfortably in Freddy's arms, cast a knowing glance at Betty's stricken face. "Betty, you also need to put in some effort with Mr. Javier when you get back. Remember, we're in this together. Here's to a fruitful partnership."

The veiled threat hung heavy in the air. Betty bristled. "I don't need you to remind me. I know what to do!"

By orchestrating Lauren's marriage to Freddy, she could exact revenge on Landon and thwart the Harper Group's ambitions simultaneously. And she could prevent Zoe from becoming even more insufferably smug.

It was an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone. So, why not take it?

#### Chapter 1804



Amidst her mental distress, Lauren had also been injected with a high dose of sedative. Hence, she still hadn't stirred when morning came.

Meanwhile, Landon stood resolutely in the freezing courtyard like a lone sentinel. His entire body had gone numb from the freezing cold.

Though his face had paled considerably, he dared not budge. He was close to his limit, yet the hope of Lauren seeing him upon waking kept him rooted to the spot.

Why this cruel twist of fate? Once inseparable, they were now denied even a glimpse of each other.

Lost in thought, Landon was startled by the sound of approaching footsteps—hurried yet firm.

"I'll take you home, Landon," Jasper's voice was low and strained, filled with frustration and deep concern for his friend. "You're being absurd! There's no point in you torturing yourself like this!"

Landon groaned as he lowered his frigid gaze. His face was so stiff he could barely form an expression.

"You once waited outside Heightsnew Villa to beg for Lyse's family's forgiveness. Why can't I do the same?"

A lump formed in Jasper's throat. "Our circumstances are different."

"How are they different? I, too, seek Grandpa Newton's forgiveness... I, too, yearn to see my wife. How is this any different?" Landon's agitation intensified, his frail body swaying precariously forward.

"Landon!"

Jasper's reflexes were lightning-fast. He extended both arms and caught Landon before he could fall. Thankfully, Jasper's superior height and build were crucial in that moment. If he were an average man, he might not have been able to break Landon's fall.

"Jasper. I miss my wife," Landon choked out, his voice thick with emotion. Tears welled up in his red-rimmed eyes. He leaned his forehead against Jasper's broad shoulder, struggling to regain his composure.

In a raspy whisper, he confessed, "Not seeing Lauren feels like someone ripped my heart out."

His fists pounded his chest in a display of raw pain. "It hurts so bad, Jasper. Like. it could kill me."

"Listen to me. Let's go to the hospital first. You need to get checked out."

Landon shivered. Jasper offered a comforting pat on his back in the face of his pain. "After that, come back to Lyse and my place. Mrs. Rosie will take good care of you. You can rest, and when you wake up, I'll arrange for you to see Lauren."

After much persuasion, Jasper and Jordan helped Landon into the car and rushed him to the hospital.

At the hospital, Landon lay in his ward, an IV drip delivering fluids. Occasional coughs wracked his weakened body. The harsh cold had taken its toll; he'd fallen ill.

"Mr. Landon, I've removed all the videos about Madam Lauren online and stopped the negative comments," Jordan reported, his bloodshot eyes betraying his lack of sleep.

Jordan added, "I know it might seem insignificant now, but with time and your unwavering support by her side, things will improve for Madam Lauren."

Landon stared at the ceiling. "Thank you," he murmured.

"Don't thank me. It is my duty to serve you and Madam Lauren!" Jordan insisted, shaking his head vigorously.

At last, Jasper spoke up with a glum expression on his face. "Landon, why did the Harpers suddenly target Lauren? And why focus on her condition? I find this quite bizarre."

"At yesterday's board meeting, Preston presented Lauren's psychological diagnosis report to the board members," Landon explained, his grip tightening on the blanket until his veins were showing.

"What did you just say?" Jasper's frown deepened. The news struck him like a physical blow. This situation was far more serious, complex, and brutal than he initially thought.

"Now that I think about it... something has been off from the very beginning."

Landon pushed himself upright. He spoke through pale lips, "When Preston presented the diagnosis report, there wasn't a flicker of surprise on Grandpa's face. He didn't even touch the documents. It's clear he knew about Lauren's condition beforehand and played along with Preston's scheme.

"But this information is top secret within the Becketts. How did Preston get it? Grandpa Newton and Mr. Javier would never reveal it, and Sophia's dead."

"Who else could it be besides Betty?" Jasper's eyes flashed with anger.

"While Sophia was alive, they were thick as thieves. Sophia wouldn't hesitate to betray anyone for her own gain.

"Even though Betty is a Beckett, she wouldn't have normal access to such confidential documents. Sophia must have given it to her."

"Betty and Preston are working together?" Landon's eyes widened in surprise.

"Don't forget your troublemaking sister," Jasper added with a chilling sneer.

"Zoe has always been close to Betty. She's probably the middleman in this."

If Jameson was the one responsible for the misfortunes in the Schmidt family, then Zoe played the same role for the Harpers.

What a perfect pair!

Just then, Xavier's call came in. Jasper answered, putting it on loudspeaker.

"Go ahead, Xavier."


"Mr. Beckett, I have news from our bodyguards who were keeping watch at Seaview Manor. Last night, Betty drove out on her own to Middleton Resort in the West."

Jasper exchanged a grim look with Landon. "Who did she meet?"

"Our men waited in hiding. Shortly after Betty left, Zoe and Mr. Hodgson's son came out. However, they didn't leave together. They went in separate ways in separate cars."

## Chapter 1805





"Got it," Jasper muttered, ending the call. His expression was so grim it seemed like a storm cloud loomed over him.

"This timing is suspicious! Betty sneaks out to meet Zoe in the middle of the night? It practically screams conspiracy. They're clearly in cahoots over the leaked report." Landon's eyes widened with anger. He clenched his fists, slamming them onto the bed with such force it felt like he might break it.

"I fear your sister, Zoe, has allied with Preston in secret. She may have also informed Mr. Harper Senior privately. Otherwise, their plan wouldn't have gone so smoothly. They've likely been planning this for some time."

A memory flickered in Landon's mind. It was the night he delivered the engagement invitation to Cornelius and bumped into Zoe bringing him chicken soup. She had never been so caring before. In hindsight, her sudden kindness was obviously a calculated move.

"She's not my sister!" Landon repeated, his eyes ablaze with hatred. With each repetition, he cursed Zoe in his heart.

"But she's your grandfather and mother's favorite, and according to family records, she's Bill's biological daughter," Jasper reminded him, his hands firmly on Landon's trembling shoulders.

Jasper continued, "Even if our suspicions are correct, we can't act without concrete evidence. Otherwise, they'll have leverage over you in the future."

It was advice Alyssa often gave him, and now Jasper was echoing it to his best friend.

Jasper solemnly cautioned, "Don't think that becoming president will make you immune. They'll still find ways to undermine you, and they could even



prevent you from managing Harper Group's affairs. You can't give them that chance.

"Revenge isn't something achieved overnight. Besides, what Zoe did this time pleased Mr. Harper Senior. If you retaliate against her, you'll likely only bring trouble upon yourself."

"As for Betty, I will handle her," Jasper continued, his voice determined.

"But what's the difference between Betty and Zoe?" Landon gripped Jasper's arm, anxiety etching his features. "Mr. Javier might see removing Betty as a slight on the Becketts, giving him leverage to make things difficult for you!"

"Don't worry. I have a plan." Jasper pressed his lips together slightly. "And I believe my wife will have an even better one."

It was already nighttime by the time Jasper returned to Crescent Bay.

Ben and Alyssa went up to him the moment he entered, updating him that Lauren had stirred.

"Is Lauren alright?" Jasper put his arms around Alyssa's waist. He had a concerned look in his eyes.

Alyssa sighed and shook her head. She caressed his icy hands. "She's not doing great. Grandpa kept her company for a while. He wasn't feeling too well, so he went back to his room to rest. Angelina is with Lauren right now. How about Landon? How is he?"

"I sent him to the hospital. He ended up getting a fever after being out in the cold. Fortunately, he's quite fit, so he's hanging in there."

Alyssa lowered her head.

Jasper and Landon were both hopeless romantics.

"Come with me, Lyse."



Jasper squeezed Alyssa's hand, his gaze holding a somber weight. "There's something I need to discuss with you."

In the room, Lauren clung tightly to Angelina, her warm tears soaking Angelina's black suit.

"Look, Madam Lauren. I'm right here with you. I'm completely fine," Angelina reassured her, returning the embrace. Though her voice was steady, tears welled in her eyes. "Those people only wanted to scare you. You're alright now. It's all over..."

"Such a thing won't happen again. Nothing but happiness awaits you and Mr. Landon."

"Landon and I. do we even have a future?" Lauren's voice was barely a whisper.

Angelina's chest clenched at that question. She promptly answered, "Don't think like that, Madam Lauren. What happened wasn't as big a deal as it seems. Mr. Landon, Mr. Jasper, and Ms. Alyssa will handle everything. Things will return to normal!"

"Angie. I'm not stupid. I know why this happened. It's because of the Harpers. They don't want us together." Lauren's lashes fluttered with tears.

It was a heartbreaking sight.

"This time, they were merely trying to scare you—only hurting your left leg and kidnapping you. But next time, they might take your life. The Harpers won't accept me, and if Landon insists on being with me, it will only endanger him."

"No, Madam Lauren! Don't think that way!" Angelina panicked, shaking her head frantically. Tears welled up in her reddened eyes. "You're Mr. Landon's reason for living! He wouldn't survive without you.

Fighting for power and position would mean nothing to him without you by his side."

"But I'll only be a burden," Lauren insisted, her voice filled with despair. "He'll have to use all his energy to take care of me. He's already stretched thin."

At that moment, Lauren appeared different from her usual childlike and naive self. Instead, she seemed clear-headed and rational, as if this incident had forced her to mature.

"I'm not like Alyssa, who can be Jasper's partner in every way," Lauren said. "I can't offer Landon that kind of support. I'll only be a burden.

"And I'll also cause you to face even greater dangers, Angie. You're not just a subordinate or a bodyguard to me. You're like a sister. You're incredibly important to me.

"I've always felt this way. I don't deserve his love. Landon is more suited to be with someone better."

"Madam Lauren, please don't give up on Mr. Landon. I beg of you..." Angelina pleaded, her voice trembling with anxiety, on the verge of tears.

Perhaps Lauren had long understood the Harper family's stance. She might have been aware of how difficult it was for Landon to protect her from all the dangers. Perhaps the crisis that day was the final straw for her.

"I know all that Landon has done for me. If we continue like this, there will come a day when he'll lose control," Lauren said, her eyes swollen.

She slowly closed her eyes as she recalled the time at Newton's birthday party—her first time alone with Landon; it was in the garden, under the moonlit

sky. His eyes had twinkled like stars then, filled with joy. Now, a veil of sadness seemed to cloud those once-bright eyes.

A bittersweet smile touched her lips as she relived the memory. Tears welled up again. "I want Landon to be himself again. I want him to move forward bravely, without any worries."

## Chapter 1807



Back in their room, Jasper confided in Alyssa about Zoe and Betty.

He could have kept it secret, but respecting Alyssa's wishes for transparency, he opted for honesty. Keeping secrets would land him in trouble, and the thought of facing Alyssa's wrath was enough to deter him.

After all, appeasing an angry Alyssa wouldn't be an easy feat. She might not even let him touch her for days or even weeks, and no words could describe this sort of misery.

Alyssa listened intently, her eyes narrowing dangerously. The look in her eyes was so intense that it would make anyone's heart race.

"Lauren has endured so much unfair treatment, and it's all because of her sister, Betty."

In the next second, Alyssa snatched up her teacup in a fit of anger and flung it across the room, shattering it into pieces.

Jasper's chest tightened. He took Alyssa's hand and examined it carefully. He then cradled it gently between his palms and comforted her. "Getting so worked up like this isn't good for your health. And hurting yourself over a piece of trash isn't worth it at all."

"I understand that every child is different, but it's as if Betty has some sort of genetic mutation. She's an abomination."

In her anger, Alyssa's sweet voice began to crack. "They share the same mother. How could siblings be so different? When Sophia forced her way into the family with her pregnancy, I'm sure Mr. Javier had a paternity test done. Is Betty really his daughter?"

Jasper's eyes clouded over. He replied softly, "Grandpa did order a paternity test that year. The results showed that Betty is indeed Javier's child."

"Haven't you seen it on TV shows? Paternity test results can be tampered with, and doctors can be bribed. Sophia getting away with murder for 20 years proves she's capable of hiding secrets about a paternity test."

Once Alyssa's mind started racing, it was hard to stop. Each thought seemed more horrifying than the last.

Maintaining a serious expression, Jasper slipped his fingers between Alyssa's collar and the back of her neck, massaging her gently.

It helped him to calm down.

He wasn't impatient or dismissive of her theory. In fact, he harbored a similar suspicion himself. He'd just been too busy with other issues to address it.

"Right now," he began, "we need to focus on how Betty teamed up with Harper Group to hurt Lauren." He wrapped his arm around her waist, caressing her gently. "What do you think, darling?"

"Taking care of Betty shouldn't be difficult, especially now that she doesn't have Sophia backing her up anymore," Alyssa said confidently. "The more trouble she makes, the quicker she'll meet her demise."

A small, menacing smile played on Alyssa's lips as she nestled closer to Jasper. "But we need a plan that safeguards us while we deal her a fatal blow."

"Just go ahead and execute your plan, Lyse. You don't have to take us Becketts into consideration. I'll deal with them." Jasper fixed his fiery gaze on her.

Alyssa shook her head slowly. "If Betty's dirt is revealed, the same thing that happened to the Schmidts will happen to your family.

"Even if I don't take you into consideration, I would still need to consider Grandpa Newton's feelings. After all, she is his granddaughter. Despite his disappointment, she's still family."

Family meant everything to Newton. Furthermore, he was of advanced age, and after witnessing Lauren's ordeal, he wouldn't be able to handle another blow.

"The ideal scenario is if she confesses on her own. But that won't happen without bait." Alyssa chuckled softly, a cold gleam in her eyes. "Right now, she thinks she's won. She's probably reveling in her victory. Let's give her a little surprise."

## Chapter 1808



The more one knew their enemy, the higher their chances of victory.

Just like Alyssa predicted Jameson's rash move against David, she also knew Betty would be brimming with pride right now.

While the rest of the Becketts reeled from Lauren's ordeal, Betty reveled in worldly pleasures. She barhopped and indulged in excessive drinking.

Fueled by alcohol, she even gossiped about her autistic sister with her unsavory friends. She exploited her family's pain for entertainment, releasing years of pent-up hatred.

Since Sophia's death, Betty had kept a low profile. She didn't dare to make any rash moves either. However, after joining forces with Zoe, a realization dawned on her—even without Sophia, she could still hold her own against those people. She could manipulate them as she pleased.

That night, chaos reigned in the private room. Betty was engaged in frenzied dancing with a charming male model, egged on by the surrounding crowd. Intoxicated by alcohol, she shamelessly struck various embarrassing poses with the man she barely knew.

In the chaos, the male model dragged her into the washroom within the private room. A violent kiss escalated as he ripped at her clothes.

Initially resistant, she used her arms to shield her chest—her half-cup bra could be seen. Then, her eyes widened in shock.

The model, with practiced ease, used his tongue to slip a pill into her mouth. Before she could react, she swallowed it.

"What... What did you just give me?" Betty shoved him away, her breath coming in heavy pants.

"Something to make you feel good."

The man smiled at her with an unfocused gaze. He licked her earlobe and murmured, "It's not your first time trying this anyway, isn't it?"

Soon, Betty was enveloped in waves of desire. Her thoughts became hazy, but her body soared on cloud nine.

An unknown amount of time passed. Everyone else had left the private room. The man pulled up his pants and pushed open the washroom door.

Betty, a woman of noble status, slumped over the filthy toilet bowl. Her clothes were disheveled, and a single strand of drool escaped her slack jaw. But the worst part was her smile. Wide and vacant, it stretched across her face like a simpleton's glee.

A man in a crisp, clean suit pushed open the private room door. Disgust contorted his face, yet his posture remained controlled as he settled onto the couch, an air of elegance clinging to him.

The male model approached Sean respectfully. "Mr. Lynch, the job's done."

"Thanks for your hard work. Sorry that you had to touch such a filthy thing." Sean looked up and smiled slightly.

"Not at all... It was a simple task."

"I've received the photographs and video clip."

Sean slowly pushed a bank card toward him. "Here's the one million dollars we agreed upon, plus an additional 500,000. I wish you a speedy recovery."

The man hesitated, then pocketed the card with a chuckle. "It would be a miracle if I could be cured of my illness. Don't worry. I will be leaving Solana City on an early flight tomorrow. I won't be coming back."

#### Chapter 1809



Landon spent a single, sleepless night at the hospital. He worked tirelessly, making phone calls to arrange a press conference and contacting renowned



psychiatrists and psychologists worldwide, all to secure the best treatment for Lauren.

Cornelius, however, seemed determined to overwhelm Landon. He disregarded Landon's well-being and dumped nearly all the company's affairs on him. Jordan could only watch helplessly, on the verge of tears.

The next morning, while receiving an IV drip, Landon received a call from Angelina. Upon hearing that Lauren was more stable, he yanked the needle out immediately. Then, he got up and headed out the door as he threw on his black coat.

"Jordan, get the car!"

"Mr. Landon, waiting for the medication to finish wouldn't delay your visit!" Jordan exclaimed.

Landon's suffering was evident. He'd lost a significant amount of weight in just two or three days, and it pained Jordan to see him like that.

"I'll be fine," Landon replied tersely, already stepping out the door. His demeanor was resolute yet desolate. In a hoarse and desperate voice, he added, "Nothing is more important than seeing my wife."

Landon's luxury car once again pulled into the Crescent Bay courtyard. However, following Newton's instructions, he was denied entry.

Ben, polite and gentle, emerged to greet him. "Mr. Landon, Ms. Lauren is much better. She even enjoyed her breakfast."

Ben's tone was gentle. There wasn't a single hint of resentment in his voice.

Joy radiated from Landon's eyes, his lashes fluttering with emotion. A brief reminder of the past was enough to immerse him in fond memories. "Really? My wife... Lauren enjoyed her breakfast? That's wonderful.

"Lauren isn't much of a breakfast person. I have to coax her out of bed to have breakfast. I'd keep her company until she finished before heading out."

"That's very thoughtful of you, Mr. Landon. Thank you for looking after Ms. Lauren all this time," Ben expressed his gratitude.

A sharp pang of fear suddenly struck Landon. Ben's words felt like a farewell.

"Ms. Lauren has Mr. Beckett and Ms. Angelina by her side, looking after her. She's doing very well now, so you needn't worry. The weather has turned colder lately. Do remember to keep warm. You may leave now.

"Mr. Gorham!" Landon grabbed Ben's arm and looked at him anxiously. His lips were dry. He opened his mouth to speak, but in his anxiousness, he couldn't make a sound.

After some hesitation, he said in a hoarse voice, "May I see Lauren? I just for a moment. I miss her terribly..."

"Mr. Landon, Mr. Newton has forbidden Ms. Lauren from receiving any guests while she recuperates. Please leave," Ben repeated monotonously.

"Guests?" The word felt foreign to Landon, causing him to shudder. He coughed deeply. "Lauren is my fiancée. I'm her partner, her family! What do you mean by 'guest'?"

"I understand your frustration," Ben, who had witnessed Landon's growth, softened his tone—no longer able to keep up with his cold act, he advised, "But you must know Mr. Newton is upset after what happened. And Mr. Cornelius—"

"What has he done now?" Landon interjected, his distress evident.

"On the night of the incident, he called and had a heated argument with Mr. Newton. Ms. Alyssa was there at the time, too."

Ben sighed helplessly. "Both Mr. Newton and Mr. Cornelius made their feelings clear. I'm afraid your marriage with Ms. Lauren might be off the table."

Landon was stunned, feeling as if the world was collapsing around him. He felt the weight of it all crushing him, a bitter lump forming in his throat.

## Chapter 1810



Landon spent a single, sleepless night at the hospital. He worked tirelessly, making phone calls to arrange a press conference and contacting renowned psychiatrists and psychologists worldwide, all to secure the best treatment for Lauren.

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