

## Chapter 136

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Xavier immediately smacked himself in the cheeks, feeling like he had misspoken,

Jasper stared ahead, the manor's lights reflecting in his eyes. He could faintly hear laughter coming from the building. At that, his heart sank into an icy pit of hopelessness,

It seemed Alice was truly leaving an impression on Jonah Taylor's family

Jasper had considered the Taylor family to be incredibly intricate, Winston Taylor had one wife before. But he had three wives now. None of them got registered at City Hall. They would surely make it tough for Alice to marry into the family. He'd thought she might give up then

and there.

However, it seemed like he had thought wrong. It sounded like Alice was truly getting along with the rest of the Taylor family. He could hear their laughter even from this distance!

How close had they become

Jasper was getting more distraught by the second. He had never felt so tense, so desperate. Even his breaths were becoming uneven.

"Do you have any cigarettes on you? Give me one."

"There you are, Winston!" Alyssa cried when the man walked downstairs, helped by Jonah.

Winston exclaimed, "What took you so long? I'm starving here!"

"Oh, wow! Look at you! Are you trying to set a new trend for the grandpas out there?" Alyssa teased, looking him up and down.

Winston wore a waistcoat with a golden pocket watch at his breast. The outfit suited him well, giving him a classy, refined look.

"A new trend? Ohoho, I wouldn't need to try hard to become the next trendsetter." Winston chuckled heartily. "I could throw on some slacks and easily become the next celebrity superstar of the decade.

"If I were thirty years younger and ventured into the world of those tasteful nude calendars, women would be swooning over me ..."

"Ahem. Dad, it's best not to uh, say it like that. Silas reminded gently from the side.

"What are you talking about? No one would have made a big deal of it if you hadn't mentioned it!" Winston glared at his second son. 1

Meanwhile, everyone else shared Silas' sentiment.

"You didn't tell Miley, Cyrus, or Tatiana I'm home, right?" Alyssa asked kindly.

"We wouldn't dare disobey your orders." Mandy grinned. "Don't worry. They don't know you're back."

"So you kept those brats away on purpose?" Winston demanded. "How could you? They've missed you too!"

With a sigh, the man continued saying, "You should have had them come join us too!"

"Miley's with her husband in Kontina overseas. Do you really want her to fly all the way back just for a couple of nights?"

"Cyrus is busy in the force with all his cases, and Tatiana's occupied with her exams right now, so let's not go bothering them, hm? Aren't we enough already?" Alyssa scowled.

"What about Axel then? He doesn't do anything. He's always lounging around in Solana City. It's just a two-hour drive, so why not have

him over? Is he dead?" Winston fired back.

"Axel's-"

"There's that familiar yelling. Needed it for my grand entrance."

Everyone looked back to see Axel standing at the entrance, pockets in his overcoat and a grin on his charming face.

"Good evening, Mr. Taylor. I'm afraid I'll have to disappoint you if you were hoping I was dead."

The instant he appeared, both Mandy and Colene retreated to blend in with the background. Even their smiles faded somewhat. They

"Why you-! Lome here you!" Colene grabbed at her, tickling her sensitive spots. "What did I say about teasing me, hun?"

"Stop it! Ahahaha!" Alyssa squealed, trying to dodge her tickling. The two littered like long-lost friends.

+15 BONUS

Speaking of Lyla, Alyssa instantly recalled her time as Jasper Beckell's wife. She had spent three years walking on eggshells. She made herself as tiny as possible, lest someone from Jasper's side of the family made a mean jab at her,

Three years and it already felt like she had been pushed to her limit. How did Lyla handle twenty years of this?

Women should never stoop so low for any men. They should be independent, strong, and free, like blossoming flowers in the spring—not cooped up in a house like some prisoner.

As the rest of the family came to greet Alyssa, she was surrounded like she was a celebrity, chatter and laughter followed them as they went into the manor. 1

As night filled the landscape, the Maybach from earlier stopped outside the manor, hidden against the dark background.

Xavier opened the car door for Jasper, who quietly stepped out. He peered at the manor a distance away, observing its structure.

"I've long heard about Winston Taylor's love for Oriental architecture. The man bought countless hectares of land just so he could make his architectural dreams come true. It looks like the rumors were true," he murmured.

Xavier marveled at the old architecture. "It feels like we're in some fairytale, sir.