

Can't Win Me Back Chapter 311 - 320

Chapter 311

After returning from a management meeting, Jasper rested on the leather chair in the Beckett Group president's office, visibly exhausted.

News of his breakup with Liana must have spread within the company.

Nonetheless, not one employee in the building dared to gossip about him lest they got into trouble.

As the vice chair of the board of directors, Jasper was de facto yielding the most power in the company. Somehow, that did not bring him any happiness at all.

"I'm surprised that Sophia was able to pay off the Gardners' debts. It looks like she has siphoned quite a lot of money. This is the perfect time to pay it all back." Xavier gloated at Sophia's misfortune.

"Henry was her tool to collect wealth, but he's in jail now. The fact that she could afford to pay the tens of millions in debt goes to show that she has other channels of getting the money." Jasper's half-opened eyes gleamed dangerously.

"Could she have made money ... from that luxury store, EV Concepts?" Xavier widened his eyes in disbelief. "It's just an ordinary store selling luxury bags and clothes. Even if their sales are off the roof, it's impossible to make that much in profits!"

"You're still naive after all these years of following me around." Frowning, Jasper launched a paper plane that landed right on Xavier's chest.

"The EV Concepts store is the front of an extensive web of connections that Sophia built over a few years. She might be selling luxury items on the surface, but she is secretly dealing with the exchange of titles, power, and even darker illegal shit."

Xavier shuddered at the thought. "We've underestimated that witch!"

"No, I haven't. I don't take my enemies lightly." Jasper pinched his nose bridge and sneered. "But it's not time to get rid of Sophia yet."

“She is well-connected in the city and is protected by Javier. We don’t have evidence to drag her down, and it’s not the right time. Play with fire, and she’ll get burned. Time is on our side.”

Xavier nodded with resentment. “Right! Sooner or later, we’ll make that witch a sacrifice!”

“How’s things going for Ada Kingsley’s wedding?” Jasper shifted the topic suddenly.

“Our team has amended the wedding planning proposal. We’re ready to meet with her team at any time.”

Xavier paused and prodded tentatively, “On that matter... I thought you wanted to make it up to Madam.

“Why don’t you give up Ada Kingsley’s wedding to KS World? I believe Madam will be...”

“Why should I?” Jasper glared at him coldly. “I’m indebted to Alyssa, not KS. Why would I give the opportunity to Taylor Group?”

Xavier stood dumbfounded. He was bewildered by Jasper’s rationale.

“She once said I must give my best in any business competition against her. I would offend her if I threw the game now.”

Glancing down, Jasper added, “Let’s go with what we planned. I will not break my principles for anyone or anything. I’m not Jameson Schmidt.”

Xavier blinked in confusion. Why did Jasper sound a little begrudging there?

Jasper’s phone vibrated on the table from Landon’s incoming call.

“What’s the matter?” Jasper spoke with a deadpan look.

“Jasper, I got my hands on two VIP tickets for Christina Hammond’s concert! She’s that famous pianist, you know. Let’s go together!” Landon was excited.

“You, at a concert? Do you even appreciate piano music?” Jasper did not hold back at all.

“Tsk, of course I do.” Landon was no stranger to Jasper’s sarcasm and took it well.

“Come on, join me! I’ll pick you up from the lobby, alright?”

“I’m not going.”

“Why? Are you hiding in your room, crying over the breakup? I can’t believe you’re so heartbroken over Liana Gardner. Why? Does it take time to adjust to life after years of being cuckolded?” Landon made fun of Jasper in retaliation. Jasper furrowed his brows in disgust. “Stop putting me and Liana in the same sentence. It’s sickening. I’m

hanging up.”

“H-Hold on!” Landon had no choice but to confess, “It’s Zoe. She’s back from studying in Yorkley. She’ll

be performing as a guest pianist at Christina’s concert tonight.

“I had wanted to surprise you at the concert, but you didn’t want to go. You’re no fun at all!”

Chapter 312

Zoe Harper was Landon’s younger sibling, and her growth into adulthood was a story that unfolded before Jasper’s very eyes. 1

As the eldest brother, Landon doted on Zoe very much, just like how Jonah and the Taylor siblings treated Alyssa.

After some thought, Jasper relented. “Fine, pick me up.”

Night had fallen over the land. Landon had secured a box with the best view on the second floor of the Solana City National

Theater, all set to enjoy Zoe’s performance.

He had also arranged for a camera to be set up in the box. He was excitedly adjusting the camera settings, planning to record Zoe's entire performance.

Jasper sat beside him, crossing his slender legs. He shot a disdainful look at Landon, who was behaving somewhat like a paparazzi.

"The hosting organization will record the performance and present the CD to the performing guest. Quit embarrassing yourself with your amateur skills."

"What do you know, you nitwit? My recording is full of love. It's different from the official video."

Landon narrowed his eyes before cussing in the middle of adjusting the camera angle, "Lyse is here. Am I seeing things? Who's that pale, sickly guy beside her? Is he dying or what?"

Jasper's heart raced, and he jumped up, rushing to the railing. He spotted Alyssa and Jameson conversing and exchanging glances in the box across from them.

Unaware of the envy brewing in the other box, Alyssa felt a chill due to the powerful air conditioning on the relatively empty second floor. She had goosebumps in her thin, dark green maxi dress.

Jameson noticed her discomfort and swiftly removed his jacket. He knelt on one knee, much to her surprise.

"Jameson, what are you..." Alyssa began.

He looked into her shocked eyes and smiled. "I wanted to put my jacket on your body, but I wouldn't want

to hide that lovely dress of yours. You remind me of the mythological Siren in that dress."

She held her breath, her feet squirming uneasily in her heels.

Alyssa thought that the people of Kontina must be very open about expressing their feelings. She concluded that that was

probably how Jeremy Shields won her sister, Miley Taylor's heart.

Meanwhile, Jasper seethed with jealousy as he watched Jameson kneel before Alyssa. The suggestive gesture stoked his

anger, causing him to grip the railing so tightly that his knuckles turned white and his veins bulge.

Jasper couldn't shake the thought of whether Alyssa and Jameson were now an item. He pondered whether she had developed feelings for him.

Jasper was in so much pain that he was scared of drawing another breath.

“Who the hell is that guy?” Despite being rejected by Alyssa, Landon was furious when he saw her with another man.

He continued, “He looks all polished with those glasses, but I bet he's a wolf in sheep's clothing. And why does he have that weird, powdery look on his face? Where's he from?”

Jasper's gaze remained fixed on Alyssa as he explained with an icy tone, “He's Jameson Schmidt, the youngest son of Victor Schmidt from the Schmidt Group.”

“The Schmidts?” Landon was taken aback. “Why haven't I heard of this guy before?”

“He lived in Kontina for years before recently returning to Solana City.”

“Ooh. The Schmidts sound like a formidable bunch. Gosh! Why is it so difficult to fight for Alyssa's affection?”

Landon cast an amused glance at his friend. “Bro, you can do it. You have two choices-to surrender or to fight him. Make your pick.”

Jasper inhaled sharply and clenched his jaw. “You! Shut the hell up!”

The spacious walkway suddenly felt much narrower.

Chapter 313

When the piano concert officially began, Christina Hammond gracefully made her way to the stage,

dressed in a velvety navy gown.

She took her seat at the piano and proceeded to perform her self-composed song, the one that had catapulted her to fame-“Whispers of the Four Seasons.”

The audience sat in silence, captivated by the melody. However, Alyssa couldn't tear her gaze away from Christina's exquisite navy dress.

It was a one-of-a-kind haute couture piece designed by the renowned fashion designer Sharon, who happened to be Alyssa herself.

Sharon's creations were reserved for accomplished and talented celebrities like Christina.

Jasper, too, found himself distracted from the performance. His fists clenched, and he trembled visibly. Throughout the performance, he directed an intense and fiery glare at Alyssa.

Occasionally, Jameson and Alyssa leaned in to whisper to each other. She nodded and smiled, clearly engrossed in their conversation.

Jasper's lips remained tightly pursed. The veins on his fists were close to popping, and his face looked pale as he continued to stare at Alyssa.

He pondered whether they truly had so much to talk about. He recalled that during their three years of marriage, she rarely spoke, even when they saw each other daily.

"Wow, why did it suddenly get so cold in here? I guess the air conditioning must be on full blast," Landon remarked, shivering in confusion.

After performing a few more pieces, Christina welcomed her mentee, Zoe Harper, onto the stage.

The young lady looked youthful and radiant, with her chestnut-colored hair cascading down to her waist. She wore a lavish green chiffon gown adorned with tiny silk flowers, resembling a forest fairy.

"Zoe! Look over here! It's me!" Thrilled at Zoe's appearance, Landon waved at his sister. Annoyed, Jasper had an urge to kick Landon over the railing.

Zoe apparently did not notice her brother's supportive gesture on the second floor. A confident smile bloomed on her moonlike face as she bowed at the audience.

She took her seat before the piano like a graceful swan. A melodious tune flowed from her fingertips,

It was Mozart's "Turkish March".

Alyssa was drawn in by Zoe's dazzling presence onstage with a hint of envy.

Her left hand's fingers started moving on her knee, instinctively playing the same tune from muscle memory. Even her previously paralyzed pinky finger seemed revitalized.

"I remember how great you were at playing the piano when we were young,"

Jameson whispered, finding

her subtle finger movements are endearing.

He added, "If you had pursued a career as a professional pianist, you could have easily outshone Zoe

Harper."

"That's impossible." Alyssa curled her trembling fingers into a fist. "That will never happen."

Years ago, she suffered a severe injury in her left hand fingers when she dragged a badly injured Jasper

back to the camp in Luminara.

Her pinky finger had become irreparably paralyzed. She dedicated days and nights to rehabilitating the

remaining four fingers, eventually restoring them to normal function.

Despite the injury, she never regretted saving Jasper. He might have hurt her, but they once fought for

world peace together.

The man she saved was not a jerk but a soldier in the Peacekeeping Forces. She perceived her finger

injury not as a trauma but as a badge of honor.

The concert concluded flawlessly. Christina brought Zoe back to the stage, and together, they bowed to

the applauding audience.

"Ms. Taylor, would you accompany me backstage?" Jameson asked Alyssa with a smile.

"What's the matter?" she inquired.

“It’s something personal. I’d like to get Madam Christina’s autograph on a CD because my mom is a fan.”

“Christina is known for her arrogance. That might be a difficult task.”

He smiled, undeterred. “It’s alright. I’ll move her with my sincerity. As long as I get to meet her and tell her about the request, she will likely agree to it.”

Landon beamed with pride as he led Jasper backstage, holding a large bouquet of flowers.

Chapter 314

The tension in the air was almost palpable. Caught off guard, Alyssa inadvertently locked eyes with Jasper. She furrowed his brow in annoyance.

Jameson, too, found himself unexpectedly caught up in the situation. He adjusted his gold-rimmed glasses with an unemotional façade that quickly transformed into a sheepish expression.

“I’m sorry, Ms. Taylor. I had no idea he’d be here when I invited you along. I’ll forgo Madam Hammond’s autograph. Let’s go.”

Alyssa, however, remained composed. She flashed a cool smile and stood her ground.

“No need to worry. I’m perfectly fine. There’s no reason to avoid my ex-husband. I want you to get that autograph to fulfill your mother’s wish.”

Jameson widened his eyes at her, seemingly touched by her words. In contrast, her ex-husband’s face fell.

Jasper could hear her reply loud and clear as they stood not far away from each other.

Throughout the concert, he had been seething with anger, and he finally lost it when Alyssa mentioned Jameson’s mother. He had the urge to confront her about the nature of her relationship with Jameson. Yet, he knew deep down that it was none of his business. He even imagined how she might verbally humiliate him. After all, they were divorced.

But why did his heart always overpower his mind, leading him to feel a fatal attraction toward her?

Suddenly, the door to the dressing room swung open.

“Jasper!” A shrill female voice cut through the tense atmosphere. Before Jasper could react, a force pulled him into an embrace by a soft body in a green gown.

Zoe clung to Jasper like a sloth, her face nuzzling against his shirt with adoration.

“Jasper, were you here just to watch my performance? Was this meant to be a surprise for me?”

Jasper’s expression faltered, and his body tensed. He stole glances at Alyssa through the corner of his

eye.

Landon did not see anything wrong with Zoe’s actions. To him, Zoe was acting in the same manner when

she was younger, which was perfectly normal.

However, it didn’t occur to him that Zoe was now 22 years old, a full-fledged adult.

Her conduct toward Jasper was inappropriate, especially considering Jasper wasn’t her brother. What

“Jasper, I want a cheek kiss!” Zoe boldly wrapped her arms around Jasper’s waist, making an unabashed request without concern for the strangers around them.

If anything, their presence seemed to embolden her, as she was eager to flaunt her close relationship with Jasper.

Jasper remained unmoved and refused to respond to her request. He had never given his attention to anyone else since he spotted Alyssa in the theater.

Zoe quickly realized that Jasper’s attention was directed elsewhere. She followed his gaze and saw Alyssa, the ethereal beauty.

Jealousy consumed her as her eyes dimmed.

The rival of a beautiful woman was someone even more beautiful.

“Zoe, have you forgotten about me?” Landon was totally oblivious to the situation.

He was merely envious of Zoe’s treatment of

Jasper. “How about a cheek kiss for me, too? Come on over!”

“Hmph. Why don’t you get your cheek kisses from the women lining up for you?”

Zoe retorted, a mischievous grin on her face as

she continued to run her fingers along Jasper’s chiseled jawline.

She added, “You’re a bit too smooth for my taste. I prefer someone as cool as Jasper! Totally my ideal type!”

Frowning deeply, Jasper turned his face away to avoid her touch. “Zoe, you-”

It was at that moment he spotted Alyssa walking up to him with calmness in her eyes.

He held his breath as his heart jumped in his chest.

Chapter 315

Alyssa raised her chin and confidently strode toward Jasper. He could feel his heart racing as he

watched her approach, his whole body tensing up with anticipation. He desperately wanted to approach her.

Frowning deeply, Zoe tightened her grip on Jasper possessively. She could tell that Jasper knew the beautiful Alyssa. More than

He seemed to care about Alyssa a lot!

Just as Jasper believed Alyssa was headed toward him, she breezed past him.

“Christina!” Alyssa left behind an astonished Jasper and called out to someone with a wide smile.

“Oh! My sweetheart!” Christina strolled over from the far end of the corridor, waving excitedly at Alyssa as though they were long-lost friends. They evidently shared a close bond.

The three men stared agape. Even Zoe was dumbfounded at the scene. Christina had always been distant and aloof.

Throughout their three-year mentorship, she seldom praised Zoe and often appeared annoyed.

What did Alyssa do to elicit a rare smile from Christina?

“Darling, I did not know you were in Solana City! I would have freed up my time to have lunch with you!” Christina exclaimed,

embracing Alyssa with delight.

“You had your rehearsals to attend to. I wouldn’t want to interfere with your commitments,” Alyssa spoke Grunslanish fluently in a singsong voice.

Naturally, she was dealing with Christina as Sharon. They were close to each other because Christina had commissioned more than one gown from her.

Alyssa possessed a charm that allowed her to effortlessly form friendships with those she collaborated with.

Memories flooded Jasper’s mind when he saw Alyssa conversing with a renowned pianist. His shoulders trembled, and he almost blacked out.

When Alyssa was newly married to him, she’d smile at him, bright-eyed. Like any young lady, she’d chatter about anything she deemed interesting. However, he had been too self-absorbed to give her the attention she deserved.

Over time, Alyssa slowly transformed into a taciturn woman, an almost invisible figure who quietly shared her days with him at Seaview Manor.

During the three years, she withdrew from social interactions and did not form any friendships. Instead, she immersed herself in art and music.

Meanwhile, he found her uninteresting and incomparable to Liana in every conceivable way, even regarding her as a blemish on his life. 1

It ultimately became clear that he was the one responsible for nearly breaking Alyssa. His emotional abuse made her subdued and compliant.

Her profound love for him ended in tragedy, like the story of Titanic.

“Jameson, come over!” Alyssa’s eyes shimmered as she looked beyond Jasper in search of Jameson. She beamed and motioned at Jameson.

“Coming.” Jameson hastily adjusted his tie and shirt. There was a hint of nervousness in his eyes as he approached Alyssa in great strides.

Jasper clenched his fists as he wallowed in bitterness. At the same time, Landon ground his teeth in jealousy. The two looked like brothers in trouble.

When Jameson rubbed shoulders with Jasper, he suddenly came to a stop. He adjusted his glasses and gave Jasper a smug and triumphant smile. His razor-sharp gaze cut through Jasper’s heart. Jasper powerlessly watched as Jameson stood beside Alyssa.

He wondered if that was all he could do, watching on as a bystander. Was there no way to halt Alyssa and Jameson’s budding relationship?

“Jameson is a friend of mine. He and his mother are big fans of yours. He’d love to get an autographed

CD for his mom,” Alyssa introduced Jameson warmly to Christina.

“OK! I’m more than willing to do so!” Christina was unusually nice to a stranger for Alyssa’s sake. Not only

did she sign the CD, but she also asked her agent to take a group photo for them.

Everything looked so perfect at the moment. Bitterness coursed through Jasper’s veins.

Chapter 316

As they exited the theater, Zoe clung to Jasper, just like how she did when they were younger. She blabbered about her experiences abroad and professed her longing for him.

The only difference was that she'd hold hands with both Landon and Jasper when she was a kid. Now, she treated Landon like a servant, completely disregarding him. She only had eyes for Jasper.

Landon trailed behind them with a gloomy expression. Even his sister had ditched him after Alyssa rejected him. He started having doubts about his attractiveness.

Upon reaching the parking garage, Jasper abruptly came to a stop. He took a deep breath and firmly withdrew his hand from

Zoe's grip.

"Jasper, what's wrong?" She blinked innocently, her hand left suspended in mid-air.

"Zoe." He turned to her, looking cold and distant, a stark contrast to how he acted around her when they were kids.

She froze up in panic.

"You're not a child anymore. Some of your behavior is inappropriate."

"What's inappropriate about it? You're Jasper!" She frantically pressed on,

"What's wrong with holding your hand?"

"You can do that to Landon because he is your brother. You shouldn't do that with me." He stopped there,

not wanting to vocalize the harsh truth.

Zoe wore a pitiful pout that concealed her anger within. Jasper must have changed his attitude because

of that beautiful lady just now!

When Zoe learned that Liana Gardner was no longer in the game, she rushed back to the country to keep

Jasper company at his lowest moments, with the plan of winning his heart.

After years of yearning for him, she was determined not to let another woman take him away.

"Jasper, you're hurting her with your words."

Landon couldn't stand to see Zoe hurt. He hurried up and gave Zoe a hug. "You two grew up playing

games together. There's nothing wrong with holding hands now.

"Besides, you're both single. If you were taken, it would make sense to keep a distance from other

females. We're both bachelors. There's no point making a fuss."

"Zoe will eventually date someone else," Jasper reasoned, taking a deep breath and finding himself oddly reminded of Alyssa.

He added, "She'll hold hands with her future boyfriend. And I'll save my hand-holding for the woman I love.

After parting ways with Jameson, Alyssa left in her Rolls-Royce. She sneezed loudly in the car, likely from the chilly air conditioning in the theater.

“Ms. Alyssa, did you catch a cold? I’ll get you some medications when we get home and make you some soup.” Sean handed her some tissue. She wiped her snot away, her nose as red as Rudolph’s. She joked, “I’m fine. Maybe someone’s been gossiping about me behind my back.” “I never thought we’d run into that bastard at a piano concert!” Sean grumbled unhappily and took the snot-covered tissue from Alyssa without flinching.

Alyssa’s mood darkened at the thought of Zoe’s intimacy with Jasper. She assumed that Jasper was silently enjoying Zoe’s touch because he did not ask her to stop.

While Alyssa had long been aware that Zoe was Landon’s sister, she had no inkling of the close relationship between Zoe and Jasper. She shook her head coldly, thinking that her marriage was a waste of time when she realized how little she truly knew about Jasper. 1

“Jasper, Jasper ...” she mockingly imitated Zoe’s tone. “Hah, it seems Jasper’s not content with just having two sisters at home. Now, he’s getting cozy with Landon’s sister. What a scum!”

“What did you say?” asked Sean, who was confused by her soliloquy.

“Nothing. I was chanting a curse to ward off the bad luck Jasper brought with him.” She crossed her arms and shut her eyes.

Moments later, her phone rang. It was a call from Jonah.

“Jonah?”

“Lyse, please stay put after work, I’ll swing by the hotel, and then we’ll head over to Belbanks.”

“Bellbanks? Did something happen to Dad?” Alyssa’s heart leaped into her throat.

“Don’t worry. Dad’s perfectly fine,” Jonah explained gently. “Uncle Victor is visiting us with his two sons. Dad wants everyone to be there if we can make it. He wants to give his old friend a warm welcome.”

Chapter 317

The night was illuminated only by the solitary presence of the moon. Jasper's Maybach pulled up at the gates of Seaview Manor, and he stepped out alone.

He instructed the chauffeur, "Send Xavier home. I'll head in alone."

"But Mr. Jasper, we heard thunder on our way back. It will rain soon." Xavier's face was full of concern. The distance from the gate to the manor is quite far. I'll send you in."

"I'm fine." Jasper coldly adjusted the knot of his tie. "I feel a little stuffy. A short walk will do me good. You should head back."

"Alright, then," Xavier reluctantly agreed but kept a watchful eye on Jasper until the Maybach disappeared from view..

With a heavy sigh, Jasper continued on his path toward the manor. Just a few steps later, the ominous sound of thunder echoed through the night.

The rain was pouring relentlessly outside. By the time Jasper arrived at the manor, he was thoroughly drenched.

The cold fall winds and rain had assailed him mercilessly, further adding to the bitterness in his heart.

"Good heavens! Mr. Jasper, how did you get into this state? Where's the chauffeur and Xavier?" Mrs.

Rosie rushed up to greet him.

His face was pale, and his eyes were hidden behind his drenched front bangs. His lips quivered as water dripped from his arms.

He resembled a water deity that had emerged from the ocean.

"Mrs. Rosie," he stammered, his voice choked with tears, "Do we have any alcohol? I need a drink."

"Are you out of your mind? You can't be thinking about drinking when you're completely soaked! Go take a bath and change, now!" Mrs. Rosie felt sorry for him and wanted to make him hot soup, but he stopped her.

“I just need a drink. Please, let me be.”

“Mr. Jasper, what’s wrong?” Mrs. Rosie sensed that something was amiss.

Unable to hold back his emotions any longer, he blurted out with tears welling in his eyes, “I ran into

Alyssa tonight.”

“Oh, you met Madam!” Mrs. Rosie was glad to hear that, only to frown at his next remark. He added, “She was with another man.”

“Who?”

“She has a boyfriend,” he croaked.

Mrs. Rosie’s eyes widened as she took a sharp breath. “That fast? Well, it’s not all that surprising when you think about it.

“Madam is a lovely and kind lady. I’m sure she has plenty of admirers even after her divorce. She won’t ever have to worry about the prospect of remarriage!”

The mention of remarriage fueled his anger. His heart thumped wildly.

“So, did you drag yourself through the rain and beg for drinks all because she’s seeing someone else?” She stared him in the face.

“I’m not sure...” He shook his head blankly.

“If you’re feeling upset because someone who used to be yours now belongs to another man, my advice is to change that mindset and move forward. This is for your own good and in her best interest.

“However, if you really want her back, I hope you’ll listen to your heart and go after her, even if it seems challenging because of the divorce.” 1

She placed her warm hands on his drenched shoulders and stared at him fixedly.

“Even if you don’t succeed, at least you know that you’ve tried. She is worth all the effort.”

Listen to his heart? He shook his head, seemingly rejecting some unfamiliar notion that was swirling in his mind.

Each time he did so, the pain within him seemed to intensify.

Zoe Harper was chosen to join the royal orchestra upon graduating from the Royal Academy of Music in Yoarkley.

However, she declined the offer and returned to Solana City, a place known for its economic prowess but lacking in cultural richness.

Some might have considered her return unwise. Nevertheless, Zoe had her own hidden agenda,

unbeknownst even to Landon

She heard from Landon that Jasper had broken up with Liana and could never get back together.

Feeling reenergized upon hearing that, she hurried back to Solana City, determined to set her plan in motion to win Jasper's heart.

One day, overcome with boredom, Zoe invited Betty to her home.

Zoe was born to wealth and grew up sheltered.

She also took pride in her good looks. She believed herself to be superior to the other women of her social standing in Solana City.

Chapter 318

Betty was one of Zoe's few friends. Zoe had befriended Betty primarily because Betty hailed from the esteemed Beckett family.

Zoe deemed Betty worthy of her friendship.

"Gosh, Betty, you look gorgeous today! And you've even brought gifts. You really didn't have to do that," Zoe smiled brightly and welcomed Betty at the entrance. They held hands like best friends.

"Zoe, I missed you so! You look prettier than when we last met!" Betty complimented Zoe with a hidden agenda.

Knowing that Landon adored his sister, Betty believed that forming a strong friendship with Zoe would give her a valid reason to

visit the Harper Residence.

Her plan involved playing the long game by winning over Penelope Harper's affection and eventually getting Zoe to speak highly of her to Landon.

It was only a matter of time before she and Landon talked about marriage. She couldn't help but gloat over her clever plan.

"I came back from my Sedona trip a few days ago and picked up some souvenirs. I bought some for you and your mother.

They're nothing much, though. I hope you don't mind."

Zoe smiled knowingly at the stack of luxury brand boxes. "Is the gift for Landon somewhere in there?"

"O-Of course ... I'm just worried that he might not like it and won't accept it."

Betty blushed and lowered her head.

"Look at you! How badly are you crushing on him? You turned red at the mention of his name," teased

Zoe, who beckoned to Betty. "Give it to me. He will take the gift if I hand it to him."

"Thank you, Zoe! Love you!" Betty quickly picked out the gift for Landon in excitement.

Zoe opened the exquisite box and found a platinum lapel pin encrusted with blue diamonds. She could tell that it was pricey from a look.

At that moment, Landon descended from the swirling staircase in his haute couture purple YSL suit,

which he paired with a rose-patterned black shirt. He looked regal and seductive as usual. (1)

Betty stared at her Mr. McDreamy with her mouth wide open, almost unable to contain her admiration.

"Landon!" Zoe called out to him sweetly. Landon's face lit up at the sight of her, but froze when he noticed

Betty.

"Ms. Betty, what brings you here?"

"I ... I..." Betty swallowed hard and cowered in his presence.

“I invited her to our place.” Zoe gave Betty a hug and leaned on Betty’s shoulders.

“Betty and I get along well. Don’t you know she’s my best friend in Solana City?”

“Is that so? I had no idea.” He narrowed his eyes and snickered. “Zoe, I am not against you making new friends, but you have to be careful.

“Some friends are good for you and helpful to your future. The same cannot be said for the calculative ones, who are a bad influence.”

Zoe quietly glanced at Betty, who appeared pale and ashamed.

“I know, Landon. I’m 22 now. I can tell the good people from the bad.”

“I know you don’t have many friends in Solana City because you were away. If you’re interested in meeting new people, I can introduce you to Alyssa Taylor, the lovely lady you met on the night of the concert.”

Landon’s demeanor softened at the mention of Alyssa. “As it happens, she’s a close friend of Christina. I believe you two will have plenty to talk about and become friends.”

Befriending that beautiful woman? Zoe secretly scoffed at the suggestion. She would never befriend her love rival.

Landon went up to Zoe and gave her a soft pinch on the cheek. Before he left, Zoe snuck Betty’s gift into his hand. “Betty carefully picked out this gift from Furancia for you. Treasure it, will you?” Zoe whispered.

He accepted the box without a word and left.

“See? I knew it. Landon will take anything I give him.” Zoe puffed her chest while Betty cast her a grateful look.

Landon left the room glumly. He did not have the urge to check out the contents of the exquisite box. He

was about to thrust it away when he was reminded of Zoe’s words.

He spotted his secretary standing by the side and tossed her the box. She caught it and asked blankly,”

What's this?"

"It's a gift for you."

She opened the box and looked stunned. "It's a lapel pin, though. I don't have a boyfriend, so I have no use

He glared at her impatiently. "Tsk, just give it to your dad or do whatever you like with it!"

Chapter 319

As Landon was away and Penelope was recovering abroad, Betty's plan of sucking up to her future mother -in-law was on pause.

Still, she was overjoyed when Landon accepted her gift.

The girls enjoyed the fall scenery in the afternoon with high tea under the sprawling sycamore tree in the Harper Residence's backyard.

"Zoe, when did you first meet Alyssa?" Betty felt an alarm bell ringing within her. She resented and feared Alyssa.

"I bumped into her backstage at Christina's performance by accident," Zoe replied, casually crossing her legs and taking a sip of black tea.

She glanced at Betty and remarked, "You seem to hold some kind of grudge against her."

"A grudge? More like a long feud!"

"Oh, that sounds serious."

"You've been away for years and missed out on the drama," Betty ground her teeth. "Alyssa Taylor is a master manipulator who has been toying with Jasper and Landon! She's made our family into a circus!"

Betty realized that she might have inadvertently likened herself to a clown and quickly rephrased, "She's turned our family upside down!"

"Why is that? Is Landon in love with her?" Zoe's eyes darkened.

"Landon has fallen under her spell! That bitch is a natural at the art of seduction-a sly vixen!" Betty

almost exploded in rage. Her cheeks flushed.

She added, “Thank goodness they’re not as close as they used to be. I bet that slut has found a new target.”

“Landon is choosy. He’s the one who plays women like a fiddle, not the other way around.

“Alyssa Taylor slept with Landon, didn’t she? He will not sleep with the same woman twice. He won’t catch feelings over a mere fling. I know him well.”

Noticing Betty’s crumbling expression, Zoe hurriedly tried to comfort her. “But remember, you’re different. Our families are friends, and I’ll be here to help you win him over.”

“My dear Zoe!” Betty exclaimed in tears as she excitedly pictured herself sailing toward happiness.

“Speaking of which, what’s going on with Alyssa Taylor and Jasper?” That was Zoe’s main concern.

“Hah! Just the thought of it makes me furious!” Betty rolled her fists. “She’s his ex-wife!”

“What did you just say?” Zoe sprung up and accidentally shattered the expensive teacup.

She continued, “Ex-wife? How could that be? I thought Jasper broke up with Liana Gardner. He wasn’t married, so where did where does his ex-wife come from?”

“Oh, that you don’t know. They married in secret and were recently divorced. Guess what? My grandfather arranged the marriage!”

Betty picked up on Zoe’s jealousy and fanned the flames. “They were still entangled after the divorce. Liana made a scene at Alyssa’s place twice, but that didn’t stop Jasper at all.

“Sure, Liana deserved her fate. But think of it, he must have ditched Liana partly because of Alyssa!”

This time, it was Zoe’s turn to see red. That explained Jasper’s longing stare at Alyssa when they met!

If Liana had failed to win Jasper over for years, what made Alyssa believe she could succeed?

Feeling envious, she clenched her jaw. “Betty, you don’t mind me as your sister-in-law, right?”

Betty’s expression shifted to one of surprise as she thought that Zoe was quite upfront and open.

“O-Of course I don’t! I’d prefer you over that heartless Gardner bitch any day!”

Betty grabbed the chance to express her support for Zoe.

“Since we share the same goal, shall we work together and fight off our enemies? How does that sound?”

Zoe bent over and placed her hands on Betty’s shoulders. “I’ll help you win Landon over, and you’ll lend me a hand to marry Jasper. What do you think?”

“Zoe, you’re aware of the dynamics within my family. Jasper is my half-sibling. We’re not as close as you and Landon. I’m afraid I wouldn’t be much help,” Betty admitted honestly. The idea was mission impossible.

Chapter 320

“But Mr. Javier and Madam Sophia adore you! You can be my spy and send me intel. We’ll win against Alyssa if we team up!”

Zoe’s eyes shimmered with desire.

Betty perked up at the mention of taking down Alyssa. “Okay! Deal. Let’s see if that will put a dent in her arrogance!”

Zoe crossed her arms on her chest with a smug smile. She had been raised in affluence and showered with love from her mother and brother.

She even attended school alongside members of the royal family and received numerous international awards.

Her life in the limelight was filled with a continuous stream of applause.

She had never lost to anyone and always got what she desired.

“And I’ll save my hand-holding for the woman I love.” Jasper’s words echoed in her head.

She silently vowed, “Jasper, I won’t let you slip away, not this time. I will marry you no matter what. I’ll be the one to hold your hands!”

Soon, it was time to go home to Bel Banks. She had been diligently managing her work, attending meetings, and working on the wedding event proposal to ensure she could make it back home in the evening.

Her efforts paid off when, after ten days of intense work, her team successfully completed Ada Kingsley’s wedding event proposal.

Everyone on the team cheered exuberantly when they received Alyssa’s approval. One had to be mentally and physically strong to work under Alyssa or risk breaking down in the process.

Still, no one on the team complained or pulled out.

Alyssa tended to everything and never made a fuss despite being a Taylor. She worked as hard as her

team members and treated them well with a constant supply of refreshments.

She might be a strict perfectionist, but she was witty and creative. Whenever the team was stuck, she

would promptly come up with solutions, earning her the respect and admiration of her colleagues.

“Ladies and gentlemen, you’ve been through a lot. Take a well-deserved three-day break, and make sure schedule, so I won’t be able to treat you all to dinner.”

Standing at the head of the oval meeting table, she clutched its edge and flashed a wide smile at her team. “Once we secure

Ada Kingsley’s deal, you can start planning your overseas trips.

“There are more rewards than just bonuses and vacations in store for everyone! I’ll personally sponsor your trips, and I always keep my promises!”

“Hooray!” Her team erupted in cheers. Even though they hadn’t secured the deal yet, Alyssa’s promise filled them with

anticipation.

It was 5:00 pm when she left the meeting room. Sean followed behind her and reminded her gently, “Ms. Alyssa, I’ve prepared the outfit for the dinner. It’s in the dressing room. Would you like to change into it?”

“Nah, I’m lazy. Uncle Victor is Dad’s good friend. He has seen all sides of me since I was a child.” Alyssa entered the private elevator when she saw that the time was near.

As the elevator descended, she glanced at her reflection and delicately applied lipstick to her soft lips, giving her a refreshed appearance.

Sean watched as she touched up her makeup. He felt something stirring in him. He couldn’t help but smile, realizing that beneath Alyssa’s sassy and intelligent exterior, there was a softer, more ladylike side to her.

The two of them were lost in their thoughts. They did not realize that the elevator had reached the first floor.

As the doors slid open, they were greeted by a warm, elegant, and mysterious lavender leaf fragrance. Alyssa couldn’t help but think that the scent should be named after Jameson if it hadn’t been already. In an instant, her gaze met Jameson’s deep eyes. Her hands trembled, and she smudged lipstick on her face.

Jameson smiled at her startled expression. “Ms. Taylor, I’m here to escort you home.”