

## Can't Win Me Back Chapter 961 - 980

### Chapter 961

Jameson had his back facing them.

Amber pressed her lips tightly together. She handed the envelope to Carl for him to pass it to Jameson.

She used to be the only woman who could get close to Jameson besides Alyssa. She could have sat on his lap and flirted with him like his lover. She could have made harmless jokes with him without angering him.

Everyone who worked for Jameson would naturally assume Jameson loved and cared for her.

Only Amber knew deep down in her heart that she was nothing. She was not worthy to even carry Alyssa's shoes with her.

Jameson only took her as a cheap replacement. When he was happy, he would tease her and satisfy his desires. If he were upset, he would mistreat her. She was putty in his hands.

So, she no longer tried to get close to her. Even looking at him in the eye was terrifying for her.

Carl handed Jameson the envelope with both hands..

Jameson put his wine glass down. He took the envelope from Carl and opened it slowly.

Suddenly, Jameson jumped up from the sofa, his presence so

imposing it felt like a massive storm. It startled Carl and Amber, who frantically retreated, trembling.

The next moment, a loud crash resounded.

With reddened eyes, James roared angrily and kicked the tea set in

A wine bottle worth tens of thousands and the antique crystal wine glass shattered on the ground. The entire place was in disarray.

“That stupid bastard!”

Jameson threw the photos in his hand up in the air. His bloodshot eyes resembled a ferocious beast that had been provoked.

Carl and Amber picked up the photos. Both of them were shocked.

Even with disguises, they could tell the handsome couple hugging and kissing in the photos were Jasper and Alyssa!

“How could this happen? How was this possible?”

Trembling, Jameson clutched his chest, feeling as if an explosive bomb had detonated within his heart. It erupted, shaking his entire world and shattering it into pieces.

“Why Lyse used to hate him. I saw it with my own eyes. Why are they together? Why?”

“Mr. Schmidt, please calm down.

Carl could only do his best to comfort him. “Could it be someone else? Maybe we have mistaken the couple for them. They might n

have ...”

“I-I know Lyse too well.”

Jameson held his forehead, seething with anger. Helplessly, he sank onto the sofa. “If she hates someone, she wouldn’t even let them touch her or look them in the eye. Even if they hadn’t kissed, Jasper hugged her. They had gone shopping together, too.”

As Jameson spoke, he gasped for air. Despite gritting his teeth hard, it failed to prevent tears from streaming down his face.

Carl and Amber were stunned. They had been by Jameson’s side for so many years. This was the first time they saw Jameson cry so hard

over a woman.

Alyssa had wholly smitten him.

However, they couldn’t comprehend why Alyssa would choose to be with someone who had heartlessly abandoned her and inflicted physical harm. Why wasn’t she willing to turn her gaze in Jameson’s direction?

Carl shot Amber a knowing look.

However, Amber only lowered her head and her eyes. She hesitated to approach Jameson.

In the past, she had been a replacement—a mere toy. She would go to him and try to make him happy. However, she knew better now.

She was worthless to Jameson now. Jameson loved Alyssa too deeply. No one was able to replace her in his heart. There was nothing she could do now that would bring him comfort.

Jameson asked Carl to bring a syringe. Only a shot would calm his nerves down now.

## Chapter 962

Otherwise, if Jameson were to act on his rage, he would tear Jasper into shreds right before Alyssa.

“M-Mr. Schimdt, if I may ...”

Carl kept the syringe and wiped his sweat away. “I don’t think you should use this anymore. This may bring you temporary gratification and is an effective pain reliever. However, this is still an illegal substance. This has not been tested through clinical trials in Mosgravia. We don’t know the side effects of it.”

“I know. Just this once, and I won’t use it ever again.”

Jameson closed his eyes. Finally, he sighed a breath of relief. “Why would a drug dealer be caught under the influence of drugs?”

His Achilles heel was drugs. It was Alyssa.

“Send these photos to Winston anonymously.”

A devilish smile suddenly appeared on Jameson’s face. He looked like he was poisoned, bloodthirsty, and crazy. “Winston loves his daughter to bits. He would never watch his precious daughter make the same mistake twice with his own eyes.”

“Okay, Mr. Schmidt.”

As Carl was leaving, Jameson stopped him. “What is the date today?”

“It is March 6, Mr. Schmidt.”

He squinted his eyes. An elusive dark glint flickered in the night.

“It is March 6.”

Then, his phone rang in his hand.

Alyssa was exceptionally understanding. After dinner with Jasper, she returned to her room to rest. She didn't bother him again.

Jasper was alone in the room. He stared at the black suit Xavier left on the sofa for tomorrow's funeral. He kept making calls to Landon and everyone under him to make arrangements for his trip to Tsulu

tomorrow.

"Is Jonah sending people there too?"

"I haven't received any news for now. But I'm sure Jonah knows what I know. He won't take action."

Jasper frowned. Then, he nodded. "Okay, I need to capture Jeffrey first."

"It doesn't matter who captures him first. Jasper, don't be so competitive." Landon was at a loss when it came to Jasper. Jasper had always been a sore loser growing up.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have fought with Alyssa like no tomorrow back then. Landon presumed Jasper regretted his action as he looked at his past self. He had almost lost the love of his life!

"Lyse has everything. I don't have anything else to give her."

Jasper lowered his eyes sadly. He felt extremely insecure. It was difficult for anyone to watch. "What she wants now is revenge. So, not matter what, I want to make sure I get it for her personally. I don't

care how much it will cost me.”

“Sigh, okay. Don’t worry, Jasper. Once you reach Tsulu, my men will do their best to guarantee your safety,” Landon promised.

“You don’t need to worry about me. I was in the army. Just take care of yourself.”

Jasper paused. He said lightly, “What is the matter with you? I’m afraid Lauren will be sad. She had never been loved by someone so passionately before in her life. She never had anything that she could call hers. Do you have any idea how important you are to her?”

Landon took a deep breath and shouted excitedly, “Jasper! W-What are you saying? Are you finally acknowledging me as your brother-in-law?”

Jasper pulled his phone away. He frowned. “Are you a gorilla or a donkey or something? What are you doing screaming in the middle of the night?”

“You’re my dearest brother-in-law, Jasper!” Landon addressed him. His tone was as coy as ever.

Jasper was so awkward that his toe curled on the ground. “Be serious.

“My dearest brother-in-law, when I return, I will head over to your house and propose to your sister. You have to help me!” Landon was so excited that his voice was shaking.

“You are the one and only Mr. Harper. Your family is reputable enough. My father has no reason to turn down this proposal

also.”

Jasper sneered suddenly. “Don’t bother about her. As someone about to lose her power, she has no say in her children’s marital matter

“Hmph, you are right.”

“Oh, right. Please prepare a gun for me.”

## Chapter 963

Landon sucked in a deep breath upon hearing that. Jasper had

requested for a gun so nonchalantly. It was as if he was asking for a set of utensils.

“Tsulu has a nickname-the lawless territory. Jeffrey must be familiar. with the place to choose to escape there. He probably has an

accomplice to intercept him there. So, we can’t let our guard down on this trip. We have to prepare for the worst.”

He ended the call solemnly. Shortly after that, Jasper received a call from Javier.

Jasper’s frown deepened. He ended Landon’s call and answered Javier’s call.

“Jasper, the chairman of Jesselton Incorporated in Mosgravia, wants to go on a video conference with us tomorrow afternoon. He wanted to discuss the strategy for our partnership with them and the Beckett Group’s future advancement in Mosgravia. Both of us need

present for this,” Javier informed him coldly.

Without a second thought, Jasper said, “I have an important m attend to tomorrow. I won’t be able to attend it.”

“What do you mean? What is more important than this? You have do what it takes and cancel everything.” Javier was so angry that he slammed the table.

“Like I said, I can’t attend tomorrow,” Jasper repeated indifferently. Nothing was more important than the things that had to do with Alyssa.

Javier was outraged. “You are the president of the Beckett Group.

How can you be this irresponsible? What is the use of me keeping

Exactly. What is the use?” Jasper laughed perfunctorily.

He might have been on the other end of the line, yet he was intimidating. “Think about it. There is no use. It only sped up your goal to be the richest man in Solana City by a decade.”

“How dare you!” It was as if something had caught in Javier’s throat. He had nothing to say.

If it weren’t for Newton, who was great at recognizing talent and selected the talented Jasper as president, he would still be in an endless battle against the Schmidt Group.

Is there anything else? If not, I have other things to attend to. Goodbye.”

Jasper it’s terrible how you neglect your duties and stay passive. One day, you will have to pay for your actions.”

Jasper stared at his black phone screen. A bold and relieved smile appeared. It was harsh to assume he didn’t care about the Beckett

Group,

It was his career. He worked day and night relentlessly. He was so proud that he fell ill. He had even sacrificed all his time. He lived mechanically clock down to the very second.



Dosa chaat he didn't give it a second thought and chose Alyssa over his career bottoming was more important than the woman he loved.

The next day Jasper and Alyssa washed up and ate breakfast early in the morning they changed into their outfits for the funeral and went

out to the

They stood side by side at the Villa's entrance, glancing at each other

Jasper stared deeply at Alyssa, and Alyssa, too, couldn't keep her eyes off him.

Alyssa donned her usual black suit, a creation of her own design. However, her lips lacked the usual eye-catching red hue. An elegant and solemn white flower replaced the brooch that typically adorned her outfit.

She was beautiful yet solemn. Anyone could tell the grief from her countenance.

Jasper parted his lips slightly. He had always wanted to tell her about the first time he saw her in a black suit at the auction after their

divorce.

His heartstrings tugged when he saw her appearing in the black suit and red lips before him.

"Good morning, Mr. Beckett," Alyssa greeted him.

"Good morning, Lyse," Jasper responded.

"Let us go now."

The word "us" left a tear in Jasper's eyes as his blood boiled with passion.

## Chapter 964

Sean was still in the hospital, so Xavier came to pick them up.

Both of them sat in the back. Jasper took a deep breath. He reached out and held Alyssa's cold hand.

She didn't avoid it and let him hold her hand. She even let him intertwine his fingers with hers, feeling his warmth.

"Landon said he wanted to come, but I didn't let him," Jasper said softly.

"Okay, I understand why you did it. Landon is with Lauren now. He – worried Lauren would feel sad if she saw what happened to Nina."

Alyssa sighed. "After all, Nina had cared for Lauren for a long time. They were more than servants and masters. They were friends."

Her voice dropped as she spoke. She choked on her words slightly.

"Don't cry, Lyse."

it were

twisted. He

Jasper's heart ached intensely, feeling as if twitched slightly, lifting his arm to wrap it around Alyssa's shoulder. He held her in his arms and consoled her. "Nina wouldn't want us to feel sad because of her.

"I'm sure she wants to see the beautiful, sassy, and tough Ms. Taylor. Don't let her down, and don't let the murderer see how vulnerable we

are."

Alyssa nestled her head against his chest, feeling a sense of rejuvenation coursing through her body. She nodded firmly.

The Taylors meticulously arranged Nina's funeral, providing the best reflecting their profound respect for the departed.

The wreath by the door bore the signature of the finest florists in Solana City, not to mention the entire country. The Taylors, Becketts, and Harpers each made a distinctive contribution.

Jameson was noticeably absent, yet he had sent a wreath.

intentionally placed in a prominent position.

“Jameson is such a calculative man.”

Silas was standing by the entrance. He mocked when he saw the Schmidt family's wreath. “People might think that the deceased was someone from the Schmidts. The wreath is so big that you can see it from Mars. Get someone here to bring it to the back. The wreath is blocking ours.”

Jonah patted his shoulder and shook his head. “It's okay. Even if it was given because of other intentions, it's the thought that counts. Don't make the Taylors look so petty as if we can't let others have their way.

Jonah, Silas, Cyrus, and Axel were present today. Sean even came in his wheelchair with Tatiana helping to push him.

When Tatiana learned that Sean had gotten hurt, she went to the hospital and bawled her eyes out.

She requested a leave of absence from the school and has never left Sean's side since. She cared for him, fed him food, cleaned his body, and supported him when he needed to use the toilet. She was practically Mrs. Lynch by now.

Sean was recovering well under Tatjana's care. He would either walk around with a crutch or move in a wheelchair.

"Sean, why are you here?" Jonah went to him hastily. "You need to

100L. Lyoc mini you anyway

Sadness lingered in Sean's eyes. "Ms. Nina saved Ms. Taylor's life. She meant a lot to me. How can I be absent from her funeral? I would crawl my way here if I had to."

Silas came to him, too. He looked at Tatiana angrily. "Tatiana, why did you let your Mr. Lynch roam around like that?"

Sean and Tatiana's faces reddened in embarrassment upon hearing that.

Tatiana couldn't take such teasing. Her face was as red as a tomato. She said softly, "I-I couldn't stop him."

"Sigh, how can this do?"

Axel shook his head as he walked over and joined in the teasing. "You are a Taylor. It didn't matter whether it was the situation or a man. You need to hold them tightly and have control over them. Am I right, Mr. Sean?"

Sean coughed dryly from embarrassment. He answered honestly, "You are right, Mr. Axel."

Just then, they heard someone shouting, "Ms. Alyssa is here!"

Following that, someone exclaimed, “Mr. Jasper Beckett, the president of the Beckett Group, is here!”

## Chapter 965

Everyone present today was from the Taylor family.

Jasper didn't avert his gaze. Instead, he walked confidently alongside Alyssa. The fact that he was the only outsider present didn't faze him; on the contrary, he felt more secure at that moment.

Jasper wanted to be Alyssa's steadfast support and pillar. With him around, Alyssa could let her guard down and relax.

Xavier followed behind Jasper. Seeing all of Alyssa's brothers, his head tingled, and his palms started sweating. He vowed to himself that he wouldn't marry a girl with so many brothers. It was too difficult.

“Lyse!”

The crowd went toward Alyssa hastily and surrounded her.

When the Taylors saw Jasper, their demeanors weren't exactly

friendly. They would have closed the door on him and let the dog out if it were in the past.

“Thank you for your care and support during this time, everyone,” Alyssa said.

Then, she looked tenderly at Tatiana, who was pushing Sean over. She didn't blame Sean for calling the shots. “Thank you for the sacrifice toward Sean and the time spent with him, Taty. You have been such a great help to me.”

“We are a family, Lyse. You’re too kind.” Tatiana felt warm inside her as her sister, Alyssa, praised her.

“Sean, take good care of my sister after you get better.”

Alyssa approached Sean. She held Sean’s hand with her left hand and Tatiana’s with her right hand. Then, she clasped their hands together. I hope you will always do your best to protect Tatiana.”

Tears filled Sean’s eyes. He looked past Alyssa and toward the tall and sturdy man behind her.

Sean thought it was time for him to step back.

Alyssa had found someone willing to do whatever it took to protect her, and this man was significantly stronger and more reliable than he

was.

Jasper silently observed Alyssa. The most tender part of his heart was stirred once again. He yearned to go to her and envelop her in his arms, wanting to proclaim to the world that it was enough as long as she had him.

The funeral service started a few minutes after that.

At his moment, Axel, who was outside, came in hastily to Alyssa. His face was grim.

“Lyse, something bad had happened. I don’t know who blabbered, but there are suddenly many reporters outside.”

“What?” Alyssa’s eyes widened. “Jonah had always been careful

about these things. Everyone present is our people. There is no way someone leaked information about this.”

“Our sources indicated that the individuals in the bodyguard uniforms belonged to the Beckett family,” he mentioned, cautiously casting a glance at Jasper. His gaze carried a formidable intensity.

Jasper frowned deeply. “It wasn’t me.”

“I know,” Alyssa said, looking down and raising her hand. She exuded an intimidating presence as well. “If I doubted you, I wouldn’t have

uncu you won

Jasper was moved upon hearing that.

“I think it must be those snakes, Sophia and Betty. After all, they knew exactly how Nina died. They were eagerly waiting for the day of the funeral.”

Alyssa couldn’t help but scoff. Her eyes were bloodshot. “Sophia and Betty had always liked flaunting in front of the media to maintain a positive image. How dare they trespass into our family’s turf. Those bitches are asking for it!”

Alyssa’s demeanor was incredibly intimidating now. That desire to kill was so strong that Jasper and Axel had goosebumps.

“Ms. Taylor...”

Chapter 966

Nina’s grandmother said tremblingly, “What’s wrong?”

Alyssa turned around and felt a lump in her throat when she saw the worry on the old woman’s face. She quickly approached Nina’s grandmother and held her hand, assuring her. “It’s nothing. You don’t have to worry about anything except for Nina’s wake. We’ll be here for you. You have nothing to fear.”

Reporters swarmed the funeral home and aimed their cameras at Nina's funeral hall. To them, the funeral was excellent news material.

Not only were important figures from the Beckett Group and the Taylor Group in attendance, but the deceased, Nina Carle, was the only witness of the shooting incident.

Would that mean Nina's death had to do with the Becketts and the Taylors? The news would certainly cause an uproar because it implicated the wealthy in the death of a poor, innocent, working-class young woman. Besides, the murderer remained at large.

Alyssa saw the situation coming. Sophia and Betty had leaked the news to the reporters, attracting them to the funeral home.

Meanwhile, the Becketts' bodyguards emerged from luxury cars, formed a line, and pushed the reporters away from the funeral home to protect Sophia and Betty.

Sophia, seated in the car, applied an excessive amount of foundation powder on her lips in an attempt to appear pale.

Betty stared out of the tinted windows and shuddered at the thought of meeting Alyssa and her powerful brothers. She wondered, "Mom,

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ond of her...

Betty cried loudly, “Nina mostly took care of my sister, but frankly, Nina felt more like a sibling to me. We treated her well and met her needs when she was working with us.”

Even at Nina’s funeral, Betty couldn’t resist taking a jab at Lauren.

## Chapter 967

The reporters nodded at Betty’s remark with looks of approval. “Not only was Ms. Betty born to wealth, but she was also a kind and understanding young woman.”

“As Nina’s employer, I should attend her funeral,” Sophia sobbed in front of the cameras.

The reporters questioned, “What will be the post-funeral arrangements?”

“Nina might have died in an accident, but the Beckett Group had a role to play because we failed to monitor the safety of our employees. We will offer compensation to her family. We cannot do anything to have Nina back, but we cherish our memories with her. So, we will do our best to assist her family. Hopefully, she will be at peace.”

The reporters sighed with a newfound admiration for Sophia.

Escorted by their bodyguards, Sophia and Betty entered the funeral home. The reporters followed closely with their cameras, hungry to get a scoop.

Suddenly, Sophia and Betty looked petrified upon seeing the Taylor family members in black. Gripped by fear, their hearts nearly stopped.

Alyssa and Jasper stood side by side, wearing the same furious expression that could kill. Sophia remained composed, but Betty froze under Alyssa's sharp gaze and held her breath.

Sophia's eyes were swollen. With a melancholic look, she said to Alyssa, "Ms. Alyssa, nothing is more important than the deceased today. I know you resent me, but I'm only here to pay my last respects

Alyssa glowered at her and took a step forward. Her family members and her bodyguards followed suit, causing Sophia and the reporters to stumble backward in fear. Alyssa and Jasper's authority was

intimidating.

The Taylor siblings stood behind Alyssa, always ready to support her. Due to the sensitive nature of Axel's work, he hid in a corner and watched on glumly to avoid media exposure. He was ready to tackle anyone who laid a finger on Alyssa.

Alyssa, filled with resentment, hissed, "Anyone is welcome to Nina's funeral except for you two!"

Operating on her last brain cell again, Betty asked loudly, "Why can't we?"

"The audacity to ask that question! You have no right to attend her funeral."

People around them gasped at Alyssa's bold statement.

"Alyssa Taylor, this is bullying! You've crossed a line!" Betty looked enraged and habitually raised her hand to slap Alyssa, only to be held back by Sophia in time.

Sophia reasoned, "Ms. Alyssa, we sincerely wish to pay our last respects to Nina. This is not the right time to settle the conflict between us. This will only hurt our reputation and disrespect the dead.

Sophia sounded like she was schooling Alyssa, effectively labeling Alyssa as an insensible person who made a scene at the wrong time.

Smirking, Alyssa immediately called Sophia out. “You are the ones who disrespect the dead. Even your presence alone is mocking the dead! Sophia, Betty, karma is real. You know what you did to Nina. I’m

Upon hearing Alyssa’s accusation, the crowd gasped in shock.

## Chapter 968

What did Alyssa mean? Did Sophia and Betty play a role in Nina’s death?

Jasper’s chest tightened. He looked at Alyssa’s hateful face from the corner of his eye and quietly placed a hand on her waist. Feeling her body trembling, he held her tighter. The encouraging gesture offered her a boost of confidence.

Jasper kept his silence not because he was concerned about keeping his image. He understood that Alyssa needed to confront Sophia to release her anger.

Sophia and Betty looked mortified, and their expressions crumbled. They sensed the reporters’ attention to them. It felt like shooting themselves in the foot.

“Ms. Alyssa, what do you mean? Do you really think we’re responsible for Nina’s death?” Sophia wondered, meeting Alyssa’s hateful glance.

“It was a suggestion. I didn’t accuse you of anything.” Shrugging, Alyssa mocked them, “You seem quite panicked even when I did not accuse you. Are you really behind Nina’s death?”

”

The reporters exchanged looks and started taking photos of Sophia and Betty. Sophia glared at Alyssa with intense hatred, thinking, Damn it! This bitch is getting me into trouble again!”

Alyssa seethed with a quiet rage, “You never treat your maids as humans. In private, you abuse your power, beating, scolding, and torturing the housemaids. It’s disgusting of you to act morally superior at Nina’s funeral. I’m just saying that karma will catch up with you. What’s wrong with that?”

Jasper cast a look of admiration and surprise at Alyssa’s wits. He

Although they knew Sophia and Betty were the masterminds behind Nina’s death, they did not have evidence for now. Accusing Sophia of being the murderer would only get Alyssa sued for slander, which would place her in an unfavorable position.

That was why Alyssa had to be as vague as possible with the accusation to provoke Sophia and play with the media’s imagination. Not only that, she hit Sophia and Betty, where it hurt the most to get back at them and mess up their plans.

Sophia seethed at Alyssa, but she also blamed herself for failing to anticipate Alyssa’s move.

Betty, who was in a panic, immediately jumped out to chastise Alyssa in a bid to save her carefully crafted reputation. “Alyssa Taylor, you are slandering us! That’s nonsense! I know you don’t get along with Sophia and me, but that does not give you the right to slander us. I can sue you for that...”

Her voice trailed off because she was fearful of Jasper’s piercing gaze.

Alyssa coldly stated, “I am simply telling the truth. As to why I understand your true character, it’s because we lived for three years under the same roof.”

The reporters were taken aback. What did Alyssa mean by “living under the same roof for three years? It did not make sense for a Taylor to live with the Becketts.

Sophia, Betty, Jasper, and the Taylor siblings stared agape at Alyssa.

Jasper began, “Lyse, you ...”

She addressed Sophia and Betty sternly, “I knew better than anyone. about the filthy tricks you pulled over the years because I was Jasper

## Chapter 969

Everyone fell into a prolonged silence out of shock. Even Alyssa’s brothers were caught off guard by her sudden move. “Lyse...”

They had never expected Alyssa to admit to her divorce in front of the media after how secretive she had been with the marriage. At that moment, she was fearless and honest.

In the past, she had difficulty addressing her failed marriage because she perceived it as a shameful stain on her life. Now, she had put the feelings behind her and came to terms with the fact that she had met the right person at the wrong time.

In the next second, the camera flashed at Alyssa and Jasper. Frowning, he shielded her from the attack like a fort.

“Ms. Alyssa, is that true? Were you married to Mr. Beckett?”

“Was it a secret marriage? When did you divorce? Any children?”

“What is the reason for the divorce? Was it because of Liana Gardner or another mistress?”

The reporters flooded Alyssa with challenging questions.

Jasper declared, “Lyse was not to be blamed for the divorce. It was me...”

Grappling with heartache, he was ready to assume full responsibility for the divorce when Alyssa grabbed his hand. He turned around and stared into her bright and passionate eyes.

She whispered in his ear, “You do not owe them an explanation. I don’t need an explanation for what’s happened in the past, and I do not want to hear Liana’s name either.”

He held his breath as the pain deepened. It was more painful to be forgiven than to be hated by Alyssa.

Alyssa calmly addressed the reporters, “That is our private matter, which I will not divulge.” She turned her attention to Spohia and Betty, saying, “I brought up my divorce just to prove that I did not make a baseless accusation. I witnessed Mrs. Beckett and Ms. Betty’s behavior at home. I hope that the media isn’t misled by their fake image and focus more on the victims.”

She continued firmly, “I believe that every one of you entered the field of journalism because you were driven by the quest for truth and the pursuit of justice. There are a lot of unreported injustices in this world, and many are suffering because of it. If the media fails to -advocate for them, who else can they turn to?”

Her enthusiastic speech touched the hearts of the reporters, who reflexively lowered their cameras. Indeed, they were once passionate and idealistic, but they were silenced by the corrupted industry, which was controlled by a few conglomerates.

Due to the increasingly short attention span of consumers, the media increasingly reported on easily digestible celebrity gossip and the private lives of the wealthy for easy profits because only those topics stood a chance to go viral.

## Chapter 970

People were more interested in useless celebrity gossip than actual news in this era.

Suddenly, a reporter bravely shoved a microphone in Sophia's face and confronted her, asking, "Mrs. Beckett, have you abused your maids like what Ms. Alyssa said? Was Nina Carle a subject of your abuse?"

Sophia was astonished that the media she invited to the funeral had turned against her.

Jasper held Alyssa's hand tight. He complimented her. "Lyse, you're awesome. You're way better than me. I can never be as good as you

Staring at her, he smiled bitterly. "I feel like I'm out of your league

Then, he tenderly whispered, "You had pursued me in the last 13 years. From now on, I will be the one to do the pursuing."

Touched by his words, she wrapped her fingers against his.

The other reporters flocked to question Sophia and Betty. The two women, sweating profusely, argued, "No, that's not the truth! You shouldn't listen to Alyssa Taylor's nonsense!"

"Madam Sophia, you cannot get out of this," a familiar voice boomed with indignation.

Shocked, Alyssa and Jasper spun around to find Rosie storming toward them.

"Mrs. Rosie!" they exclaimed.



Rosie greeted them, “Ms. Alyssa, Mr. Beckett, sorry for showing up against your wish. I know you hid the truth from me because you didn’t want to upset me, but I was the one who raised Nina. She was like a daughter to me.”

Then, she choked on her tears and grieved. “I can’t send her off after all the time I spent with her.”

“Mrs. Rosie, I’m sorry,” Jasper apologized and sighed, feeling guilty for hiding the truth from her.

Alyssa gave Rosie a hug and a pat on the back without any word.

After the short exchange, Rosie pulled herself together and glared at Sophia. “Ms. Alyssa is right. Many maids, including Nina, have been abused by Madam Sophia. I have worked for them for 30 years and know more than Ms. Alyssa. I swear to God that Ms. Alyssa spoke the truth.”

“Mrs. Rosie, have you gone mad? Did Alyssa pay you to slander us?” Sophia pointed a finger at Rosie. “You’re a longtime employee. We gave you the best treatment a maid could receive in Solana City. How could you turn against your benefactors and spew nonsense about us just because someone paid you to? Where’s your conscience?” “If I did not have a conscience, I wouldn’t have shown up.”

## Chapter 971

Rosie chuckled. “Some are here to pay their last respects, but some, like you, are here to capitalize on others’ death!”

“Mrs. Rosie, that’s too much!”

Rosie added, “You shouldn’t take credit for my treatment in the family. I only have Mr. Javier and Madam Anne to thank. Besides, it is Mr. Javier who pays me, not you! I have nothing to do with you.”

In the heat of the moment, Rosie spat in front of Sophia while the onlookers were still reeling from the shock of the drama of a maid speaking out against Sophia.

At that moment, some level-headed reporters said, “She’s not wrong. A funeral for a victim of sudden death should be kept low-profile. Because of that, Ms. Alyssa and Mr. Beckett have not invited the media to the funeral. They care about sending off the victim more than shaping their image.”

“True. I have never seen anyone in Solana City who’s more attention-seeking than Mrs. Beckett.”

“Mrs. Rosie is right. Mrs. Beckett is capitalizing on the victim’s death.”

Sophia fumed when she realized the public opinion had turned against her, but she had to keep her cool in front of the reporters. She decided to keep up the act, playing the victim.

Turning white, she pressed against her chest, looking like she was about to faint. She accused Alyssa, “How could you judge me unfairly? Ms. Alyssa, we did not get along when you were married to Jasper. I admit that we ran into conflicts, but it’s all in the past because you divorced Jasper. Why would you do whatever it takes to

back at me?”

Alyssa’s expression hardened when Sophia brought up the divorce again. Similarly, Jasper’s blood boiled at Sophia’s remark.

Eyes gleaming with malice, Sophia looked close to tears. She added, “You knew Jasper was into Liana. They couldn’t marry because his grandpa disapproved of their relationship. Even then, you chose to marry Jasper.

“Alyssa, the divorce was a matter of time, especially because you insisted on getting married. How could you blame that on me? You’re a bully!”

Sophia attempted to create falsehoods to divert attention from

herself. What a crafty woman!

The reporters were continuously surprised by the revelation of the Becketts' private lives. They had their doubts, wondering if Sophia was unfairly blamed because Alyssa wanted revenge.

Silas and Cyrus could not hold back. Even Axel, who was hiding in a corner, was ready to make a move on Sophia.

Silas offered, "Jonah, I'll send some men to shoo the reporters. We can't let this happen. There will be rumors about Lyse and Jasper's divorce."

Jonah stopped him when he was about to leave. "Silas, you can't."

Silas and Cyrus were puzzled. "Why not?"

"It's too late to stop the media from reporting. I bet some of them are hosting live streams. If we forcefully kick them out, we will only make Lyse appear guilty of the accusation and fall into Sophia's trap."

Jonah took a deep breath and explained sternly, "Sophia is setting Lyse up. If we mishandle the situation, we would appear to be

citing Sophia's accusations."

Silas and Cyrus clenched their fists in a fit of anger. They were willing to risk their careers and beat up Sophia at that moment

Chapter 972

"How shameless of you to speak about Alyssa as her ex-mother-in-law!" Jasper finally stepped forward without hesitation and mocked Sophia, "You're Dad's

second wife, and I'm not your son. You do not have the right to claim you were Lyse's mother-in-law.

"Still, Lyse respected you and tried her best to fulfill your unreasonable demands when she was married to me. She endured you and Betty's bullying. Why did you skip that part?"

Alyssa felt a lump in her throat and wiggled her finger as she was reminded of the bitter past. Jasper did not need to look at her to empathize. He gripped her hand firmly and declared, "Lyse married me because she loved me. Is love a sin?"

"I was the one to blame for the divorce. I did not see through Liana's true colors and continued flirting with her after I was married. I

unknowingly hurt Alyssa, not realizing that all the while, she was the one I loved."

The cameras flashed again in a frenzy to capture Jasper's act of protecting his ex-wife and his confession about his extramarital affair.

Sophia's expression crumbled. Betty stared agape at Jasper's explosive statement. They never expected him to give up everything- his status and reputation-for Alyssa.

They underestimated his feelings for Alyssa. He'd rather sacrifice himself to protect Alyssa. He would rather suffer a blow in his reputation to uphold her innocence.

Trembling, Alyssa watched as Jasper stood firmly in front of her. She choked on her tears, touched by his empathy, which meant more to her than his declaration of "I love you".

Jasper scanned Sophia and Betty's faces before turning to the crowd. "I will make this clear for the last time-I was the one at fault in our divorce. Alyssa was not to be blamed. I will take legal action against any media who wrote a single article demeaning her. Those who start rumors will pay a huge price for doing so."

His words came as a huge shock. Shuddering, Sophia and Betty stumbled backward and gave up on confronting Alyssa.

Cyrus, admiring Jasper's courage, clapped his hands with respect." That was cool."

Jonah and Silas nodded in approval. Axel, who hid in a corner, smiled with satisfaction as he placed a cigarette between his lips, mumbling, "Not bad. You act more like my brother-in-law now."

A reporter suddenly came forward and questioned loudly, "Mr. Beckett, why do you frequently meet up with Ms. Alyssa if you're divorced? I have been following your updates. Whenever Ms. Alyssa gets into trouble, you will show up to help. Are you nice to her because she was your ex-wife, or do you still have feelings for her?"

The other reporters chimed in, "Mr. Beckett, what is your current relationship with Ms. Alyssa?"

Feeling helpless in the onslaught of questions, Alyssa heard Jasper reply, "She was my ex-wife. Now, I'm her man."

While speaking, he looked at her. They both teared up when their eyes

met.

Chapter 973

Alyssa did not shy away from Jasper's passionate gaze this time. She melted inside, wondering how deep his love for her was, seeing how he was close to tears when he looked at her.

Meanwhile, Sophia and Betty were in hot water because they had nowhere to escape. Alyssa stood in their way, and the reporters swarmed behind them.

At that moment, Rosie played a recording on her phone in front of the crowds. Amid the hushed silence, they were shocked to hear Sophia cursing her maids from the recording..

The reporters gasped, “Oh, my God! Quick! Get that on video!”

Another questioned, “Is that how a woman in her position should behave? Even the market vendor I know has better manners!”

“If we air this, we might have to censor it from the beginning till the end!”

All color drained from Betty’s face. She had her fair share of abusing maids at home and worried that Rosie would play a recording of her actions.

Rosie lifted her phone high and yelled, “Look! This is how much Mrs. Beckett cares for her maids!”

“How dare you do this to me, you old bitch! Stop playing it!” Fuming, Sophia charged at Rosie to snatch the phone, but the Taylor family’s bodyguards stopped her from getting any closer to Rosie.

The media recorded the scene, showing Sophia comically clawing at the air when the bodyguards held her back.

Rosie taunted, “Oh, Mrs. Beckett, are you triggered by just one viny:

the tip of the iceberg of your abusive behavior over the years.”

With that, Rosie played another recording. Everyone instantly heard a sound that resembled a slap in the face.

In the recording, Sophia shrieked in an abrasive voice, saying, “Nina Carle, are you dumb? How could you mess this up? We’re not going to keep useless people around!”

Sophia paled and started trembling when she heard the recording. In the recording, Nina replied in a pain-filled voice, much to the dismay of the people at the funeral. “I-I’m sorry, Madam Sophia. I’ll clean it up now. Ah-”

Betty’s voice emerged, and she sounded as horrible as her mother. Nina, did you not hear me? You need to get your ears checked!”

“Sorry, Ms. Betty. I’ll be there soon…”

Sophia and Betty were speechless when Rosie provided the evidence. Seething, Silas nearly charged at the mother and daughter to scold them but was held back by Jonah and Cyrus.

Silas snapped, “Are you still living in the last century? How could you abuse your maids? Even the royals in history did not treat their servants that way!”

Axel clicked his tongue and shook his head. “Silas can be quite frightening when he’s triggered.”

Alyssa felt resentful when she heard the recording. Her throat went dry.

Jasper held her by the waist, a gesture to calm her down, but he nearly lost his temper as well.

There was a commotion among the reporters after Sophia and Betty were called out. Sophia gritted her teeth and dragged Betty out of the

Alyssa and Jasper felt a sudden chill. They looked up and saw Nina's expressionless grandmother splashing a bowl of hot soup at Sophia.

Sophia screamed at the top of her lungs. Scalded and reeking of the soup's contents, she had never been in such a humiliating situation before.

## Chapter 974

Betty, who could not step aside in time, was also drenched in soup. She nearly heaved from the stench.

The onlookers gasped at the turn of events. They did not expect Nina's bedridden and ill grandmother to take revenge for her granddaughter with a will of steel. The old woman glowered at Sophia.

Her determination won her the respect of everyone present.

"You evil woman! Get lost! I don't want you standing in the way of Nina!" Despite appearing frail, the old woman yelled loudly with rage, "If you don't leave, I will break your head with the bowl!"

"I don't have any purpose in life after losing Nina. I have nothing more to lose, and I am not afraid of going against you!"

Sophia and Betty enjoyed a high-profile arrival at the funeral but ended up escaping from the scene with tails between their legs.

The reporters left after that. They would have a field day writing news articles on Javier and Sophia. Although Nina's funeral started in chaos, it wrapped up smoothly.

Unfortunately, Nina's grandmother fainted out of anger at Sophia and Betty's interruption. The Taylor family rushed her to the hospital, where she would receive the best care.



Alyssa sat on the couch in the lounge, looking dejected. Although she and Jasper had the upper hand, she trembled with heartache and

when she thought of the recording in which Sophia and Betty abused Nina.

anger

Jonah and Silas were busy dealing with the media. Jasper might have

was thoroughly protected, just in case.

Cyrus wanted to keep Alyssa company, but he had to leave because of some work at the police station.

Only Sean, Tatiana, Axel, and Jasper were by Alyssa's side. She crossed her arms in front of her chest, looking confused. "Is the air conditioning turned on? I feel cold."

"No, Lyse," Tatiana replied with worry. "Did you fall sick? I'll get you a blanket."

When Tatiana proceeded to leave, she noticed Jasper putting his jacket around Alyssa. He acted so tenderly as if he was holding a newborn.

Alyssa looked up at Jasper, feeling touched. He knelt in front of her and gazed into her teary eyes, desperate to read her pain and emotions.

"Lyse, I know what you're thinking," he remarked curtly.

Moved by his words, she mumbled tearily, "It's just... I feel... cold

Gripped by a crushing pain, he pulled her into a deep embrace and whispered in her ear, "Are you still cold?"

She bit her lips, her body almost melting under his embrace. She shook her head gently.

He coaxed her affectionately, saying, “You won’t feel cold again if I’m around.”

He knew that Alyssa was affected by the sad memories. She had yet to recover from Nina’s death.

It would take time to heal from trauma. He vowed to treat her with patience and care.

Axel, Sean, and Tatiana felt reassured upon seeing Jasper and Alyssa wrapped up in a quiet hug. Tatiana, always the emotional one, teared up when she saw the touching scene.

Suddenly, she felt a warm sensation in her hand. Sean had gently interlaced his fingers with hers.

## Chapter 975

Tatiana’s breaths became ragged, her cheeks deepening in color. She held Sean’s hand silently, both blushing in embarrassment but not letting go.

When Alyssa gathered herself, she told Jasper, “Mrs. Rosie can no longer work at Seaview Manor after what happened today. If you and Mrs. Rosie don’t mind, I’d like her to work at Heightsnew Villa in Belbanks.

“If she prefers retirement, I will buy her a place in Belbanks so she could retire comfortably. I will be worried for her if she stays in Solana City. Sophia and Betty might give her trouble as payback.”

“Lyse, my sentiments exactly,” he replied, looking content. “I’d prefer Mrs. Rosie to leave Solana City temporarily and return only after I’ve taught Sophia a lesson. But I do not mind if Mrs. Rosie settles down in Belbanks. That sounds good as well.”

“I’m just concerned she won’t want to leave because she’ll miss you, she teased, squinting at him.

Bright-eyed, Jasper rubbed her fingers and responded, “She wo miss me. She once said anywhere is home when I’m around her that doesn’t happen, she’ll at least need her Madam to be with

“I-I’m no longer her Madam!” Blushing, Alyssa panicked and turned he face away, ignoring him.

He chuckled and caressed her head. Axel could not stand watching the lovey-dovey couple and sneaked out of the lounge to smoke.

At that moment, Jasper received a call. He checked the caller ID, and his eyes gleamed. “Lyse, I need to answer the call. I’ll be back soon.”

She watched as he left the lounge, and her chest tightened.

Outside the lounge, Jasper picked up the call. Landon asked, “Jasper, the arrangements are in place. When do we make our move?”

“Let’s leave in my private jet this evening,” replied Jasper with a serious look.

“Just use my jet! Don’t worry about the fuel costs!” Landon graciously offered. “You get the best because you’re Lauren’s brother!”

“Your jet is an older model. It’s too slow,” Jasper explained flatly.

Disheartened, Landon grumbled, “Damn it! You always make me look bad.” Then, he questioned, “Have you told Lyse about it?”

Jasper shut his eyes, clenched his fists, and took a deep breath. “I can’t tell her. I know her well. She is a righteous person who will do anything it takes to take revenge with her own hands.

“If she learns that I’m searching for Jeffrey Snyder, she will definitely want to come with me, and I won’t be able to stop her. Bringing her to Tsulu would be reckless. It’s dangerous there.”

Landon sighed, “You’re the epitome of doting on your spouse.” Then, he added, “I’m the same.”

Jasper teased him, “Don’t go blowing your own trumpet.”

Once they took down the enemy, Jasper hoped his best friend could find happiness with his dear sister. At the same time, he yearned for a fresh start with Alyssa.

After the call, Jasper smoked by the window instead of returning to the lounge. He stood there, trying to organize his thoughts.

Suddenly, he heard gentle footsteps approaching him from behind.

## Chapter 976

Jasper whirled around, drawn in by a pleasant fragrance. Alyssa leaned closer to him, her eyes shining brightly. She placed her arms by his side, her plump lips hovering before him.

He swallowed hard and blushed at the fatal attraction of her moist lips.

Alyssa purred, “Have you forgotten what I said to you?” Her hand traveled down to his chest and traced its way to his abdomen.

His heart raced as he stared intently at her rosy lips. Just when he was about to kiss her, she took the cigarette from between his fingers and placed it between her lips.

She took a long drag but started coughing violently. Her face reddened.

He pinched her flushed cheeks and teased her, “Oh, you silly thing! Don’t force yourself if you don’t know how to smoke.”

“I don’t understand... Cough... What’s so appealing about smoking?” She tossed the cigarette on the floor and stomped on it. “You and Axel smoke all the time. What are you, a chimney? I should play the documentary about lung cancer on a loop to scare you out of it!”

She blushed after her minor outburst.

Jasper fixed his eyes on her and tossed his box of cigarettes into the trash can. Hugging her by the waist, he breathed on her face, tickling her skin. He had a look of desire in his eyes. “I’m sorry, Lyse. I’ll try my best to quit smoking. No. I WILL quit smoking.”

“I know it’s hard for a longtime heavy smoker to quit cold turkey. I’m not unreasonable. Just smoke less,” she mumbled with a smirk.

‘No. I must quit smoking,’ Jasper insisted. He was pulled back to memories of old and felt a pang of pain. “You advised me to quit smoking many times, but I never listened to you. I’ll do whatever you ask me to. It’s just that

She blinked. “What?”

Blushing, he asked a question like a naive schoolboy, “Can I watch TV all day at your place if I quit smoking?”

In his 30s, he seemed to have just learned how to love a woman.

Alyssa chortled and teased him, “What a foolish question.”

He loved seeing Alyssa smile and wouldn’t mind playing a fool forever to make her smile.

Suddenly, she asked, “When are you leaving?”

He checked his wristwatch and replied, “It’s about time now.”

“Shall I see you off?”

“It’s fine. You need to rest after a busy day.”

“Jasper Beckett,” she blurted out without warning, and soon, she gave him a tender kiss on tiptoe.

The kiss was much better than their last awkward kiss. She intended for it to be a quick peck, but she underestimated his feelings for her.

Pinching her chin, he kissed her deeply, their tongues dancing with each other.

Finally, Alyssa pushed against his chest. As they moved away, strands of saliva lingered between their lips.

He licked his lips and savored the sweet kiss, complimenting her, Lyse, you’re getting better.”

She initially wanted to punch his chest out of shyness, but she settled with straightening his tie and smoothing the wrinkles on his suit like a caring wife

She reminded him, “Come home soon. If you’re late, I won’t keep the door open for you”

## Chapter 977

The video capturing Sophia and Betty at Nina’s funeral went viral online. One wondered if Jonah influenced the narrative or if the reporters had ganged up against Sophia because of the absence of scenes featuring Alyssa and Jasper.

Instead, the footage showcased Rosie’s accusations against Sophia and Nina’s grandmother’s soup attack.

Alyssa and Jasper’s divorce should have been more sensational news than maid abuse allegations against Sophia. Still, cowed by the pressures exerted by Jonah

and Jasper, no reporter dared broach the subject of the divorce to protect their career.

Despite brief online gossip regarding Alyssa and Jasper's secret marriage, the discussion soon died down after all the media attention on Sophia's behavior.

The netizens turned the photo of Sophia drenched in soup into a gif and shared it online. Not only that, but it was also transformed into various jokes and puns. The situation spiraled beyond the control of the Beckett Group's PR team.

“ROFL! I can't wait for more Sophia Kirkman scandals! Living for it!”

“She deserves jail for exploiting someone's death and mistreating her staff.”

“Like mother, like daughters. Bet her two girls are no better.”

“Eldest daughter's a real piece of work, but the second one keeps a low profile. She might be alright.”

“A woman like Sophia Kirkman can't raise a decent daughter. They're all cut from the same cloth!”

reputation plummeted, and Betty, who had her fair share of scandals, suffered a blow to her standing, all due to her mother's actions.

However, Sophia and Betty's reputational damage failed to satisfy Alyssa and Jasper. They wanted to utterly ruin Sophia and Betty's lives.

After Landon was done with work and making arrangements for Jasper, he headed home to say goodbye to Lauren.

In the car, he scrolled through the comments on Twitter and even created an alternative account to argue with the netizens who had involved Lauren in the scandal.

It was amusing to see the arrogant Landon Harper engaging in petty arguments for the sake of his beloved wife.

Trembling, the driver wiped away his sweat and tried to focus on driving. Suddenly, Landon yelled, “Angie!”

The driver paled and responded with fear, “M-Mr. Landon, you made Angie look after Madam Lauren at the villa. She’s not here.”

“Oh, fuck. I forgot,” Landon replied, rubbing his forehead and sighing.

Those who worked for Landon had been instructed to address Lauren as “Madam”.

Landon had even planned to transfer half of his stock ownership and all his properties in Solana City under Lauren’s name. It was a plan he had thought about for a while but had yet to carry out.

He planned to formally propose the idea after seeking Lauren’s family’s blessing for their marriage, which he intended to do after his Teulu trip. Before proposing the marriage, he needed to lend a hand

It was not purely out of his loyalty to Jasper; he made the decision for his benefit because he refused to have a bitch for a mother-in-law. Why would he want a ticking time bomb in his marriage?

Unable to contain his impatience, Landon called Angelina. “Angie, monitor online comments! Catch anyone speaking ill of Lauren, and I’ll beat them to a pulp. I’ll sue those netizens gossiping about her, too!

“I have been on it without you mentioning it. Just like you, I do not wish to see Madam Lauren harmed by the scandal,” Angelina replied.

Having worked under Landon for many years, she knew his character and thoughts well.



“Excellent work! I’ll increase your bonus later.” Landon nodded with satisfaction.

## Chapter 978

Angelina, burdened with guilt, sighed as she admitted, “There’s another problem. Madam Lauren found out about Nina’s death through the news about the funeral.”

Landon’s chest tightened. His worst fear had become a reality. Angelina continued, “It was my fault. I didn’t anticipate the news reporting on the funeral so soon because there was an embargo.

“Anyway, that’s not an excuse. I didn’t do my job well. So, instead of the bonus, you should be giving me a penalty,” Angelina willingly offered to be punished.

“That’s not your fault, Angie. You are busy taking care of Lauren while handling work matters for me. It’s tough for you,” Landon replied with worry. “How is Lauren holding up?”

“Madam Lauren is not doing well. She’s been crying. Please come home now and check on her.”

“Sure. I’ll be back soon.

After hanging up, Landon felt increasingly agitated and concerned at the thought of Lauren alone crying. He kicked the back of the driver’s seat and snapped, “Go faster if you want to get paid this month.”

“Sure!” The driver stepped on the accelerator urgently.

When Landon rushed home, he immediately went to the bedroom to check on Lauren without changing.

Angelina greeted him by the door. “Mr. Landon.”

“Is she in there?” Landon’s heart raced.

“Yes. She isn’t eating or drinking, and she refuses to leave the room,” Angelina reported.

She bit her lower lip with a troubled expression, saying, “I dare not enter the room. You know that she needs you the most.”

Landon gently pushed the door open. Despite the daylight outside, the curtains were drawn, and the lights were off. It was a depressing sight to see.

“Darling? Darling?” Landon searched every corner-study, bedroom, changing room, bathroom-but found no sign of Lauren.

Panic set in, and he sweated profusely. “Lauren? Lauren?”

Hearing his distraught calls, Angelina entered the room to join the search. He exclaimed, “She’s missing!”

“How could that happen?” Angelina looked shocked. “I was standing by the door all the time. She did not leave the room at all!”

Her words struck Landon like lightning. His face turned white, and his heart nearly jumped out of his mouth. He rushed over to the window, drawing the curtains open while imagining morbid worst-case

scenarios.

Fighting his fear, he finally gathered his courage and looked down. He was instantly relieved to find nothing unusual.

Sighing, he felt drained and sweaty. Angelina shared his fear. Lauren’s psychological issues made them worry she might harm herself if triggered.

Chapter 979

“Search for Lauren,” Landon yelled, slamming a fist onto the window sill with rage. “... even if you have to turn the place upside down!”

“Roger that! I’ll get a few people to look for her,” Angelina answered and immediately went into action.

Silence encapsulated the room, which soothed Landon’s nerves. After calming down, he heard a vague sobbing from somewhere in the

room that tugged at his heartstrings.

“Lauren!” Elated, he ran into the bedroom, where the sobbing grew louder. His heart shattered with each cry.

Finally, he stopped in front of the closet. The sobbing was loud and clear, accompanied by the ruffling of clothes.

Slowly, he opened the doors, only to hold his breath at what he saw next.

Lauren’s frail body curled in a damp corner like a stray with no home.

She hugged her knees, her dark bangs clinging to her sweaty forehead. After hiding in the closet for a while, she looked a little out of breath, and her cheeks were flushed.

“L-Landon ...” She burst into tears when she saw him. “Is Nina dead?”

Is it true?”

Landon could not bear to see teardrops rolling down her cheeks. He opened his arms and lifted her out of the closet.

He was surprised when he touched her skin. Her skin was hot to the touch, probably because she hid in the closet for too long.

Teary-eyed, he choked when he comforted her, “I’m sorry. Lauren, I’m really only.

At loss for words, he could only repeatedly apologize to her as he tried to navigate his messy thoughts.

“Is Nina ... dead? Is it real...” Lauren repeated the question.

He patiently coaxed her, “Nina went to a better place. She’ll be happier there.”

Soon after, Lauren fell into a deep sleep, perhaps due to exhaustion, the lack of air, and the extreme sadness.

Landon quickly called the Harpers’ family doctor to check on her. After confirming that she was suffering from grief and low blood sugar, the doctor gave her an IV drip and prescribed bed rest, much to

Landon’s relief.

Kneeling by the bed, Landon held Lauren’s hand throughout the checkup. His lips brushed against her arm anxiously.

Angelina appeared and informed Landon, “Mr. Landon, your car is ready. It’s time to go.”

After a pause, she whispered, “If you don’t feel like leaving Madam Lauren, I can go on your behalf. Looking for a criminal in Tsulu is a dangerous mission. Unlike in the past, you have commitments now. It’s better to stay out of risky missions.”

He insisted, “No, I have to go.” He pressed Lauren’s hand on his chest and spoke with affection and determination, “I made a promise to my only friend, Jasper, and I have to keep my word.

“Besides, things wouldn’t have turned out this way if that bastard had not killed Nina. Lauren wouldn’t have fainted from crying. Once I get my hands on that motherfucker, I will make life hell for him!”

Given the influence and capability of the Harpers, Jeffrey Snyder would not leave Tsulu alive. It was too bad that Jasper insisted on

the mission's difficulty had increased, and he had to tag along to help Jasper.

Angelina reminded him, “If so, please be extra careful. I prepared bulletproof vests for you and Mr. Beckett. Make sure to wear it...”

## Chapter 980

“Gosh, Angie, you nag me more than my mom! I hired you because you were quiet, but why are you getting more talkative over the years?”

Landon teased Angelina.

Angelina pressed her lips and took a step backward with an awkward expression. Over the years, Landon had cycled through numerous partners, but she was the one constant presence at his side.

She had assumed various roles for Landon in the past-secretary, bodyguard, dance partner, and confidant. She had even posed as his significant other to fend off persistent admirers when necessary.

Being by Landon’s side felt as natural as breathing to her. She was accustomed to being indispensable to him, never having been with another man.

They weren't lovers, but they knew each other better than lovers. Now that Landon had found his true love, Angelina decided to stay out of his private life to avoid annoying him.

“Angie, I think the next few days might be more challenging for you.” After kissing Lauren, Landon grimly reminded Angelina. “Please stay by Lauren’s side. From tonight, you will share a room with her. Lock the doors and windows at night. Do not let down your guard.”

“Understood, Mr. Landon. I’ll do just that,” Angelina nodded with determination. “I’ll keep a vigilant eye on Madam Lauren. I swear in my life she’ll be safe and sound when you return.”

Meanwhile, the Beckett Group employees were swamped by work as they tried their best to clean the mess for Sophia.

Javier had issued the orders not because he wanted to save Sophia. He did it to salvage the reputation of the Beckett Group, which the scandal had marred.

Since Jasper assumed the presidency, the Beckett Group underwent sweeping changes, rapidly expanding its business in Solana City and across the continent of Andgalbia. This success drew the ire of rivals who sought any opportunity to attack.

As the Beckett Group aimed for a partnership with the second wealthiest company in Mosgravia, any PR scandal could jeopardize their réputation, leading to stock price plummeting and the potential collapse of the partnership negotiation. Their adversaries were poised to seize such an opportunity.

“Javier Beckett, what excuse do you have? Until when are you going to defend your wife?”

Several top leaders stood in two rows outside Javier’s office, sweating profusely and remaining silent.

The office was in disarray. Newton, who was in a wheelchair, flung all the items on the desk at Javier. A pencil holder hit the corner of Javier's forehead and formed a bump.

Despite the aggression, Javier stood there in silence and stared at the floor. Throwing things in a fit of anger seemed to be a culture of the Beckett family.

"I was blinded by the red on the charts when the stock market opened this morning! You should also check out how the media portrayed our family!"

Enraged, Newton pointed a finger at Javier and chastised him, "They said we were a family of devils who would do anything for money! Because of your wife, our family's reputation suffered!"

Javier clenched his jaw and his fists as he was consumed by rage. He had witnessed everything Newton mentioned and felt just as infuriated.

Many times, he warned Sophia to keep a low profile, but she did not seem to listen at all. She acted as she pleased and caused significant trouble for the family. His indulgence over the years was the root of her brazen attitude.

Despite feeling guilty, Javier could not bring himself to admit his mistake in front of Newton. He refused to acknowledge that he made a wrong decision in the past.

Taking a deep breath, he gritted his teeth and explained, "Sophia has been reflecting on her actions at home. I grounded her in Seaview Manor. She can't leave without my permission.

"Dad, I believe she attended the funeral for our family's sake. Whether she truly intended to pay her respects to the maid was another matter altogether, but I assume she showed up to protect the Beckett

Group's reputation. Things would have gone smoothly had it not been for Alyssa's interruption."

