

CAN'T WIN ME BACK

chapter 2311



Alyssa only stayed in the hospital for two short days before returning to KS Group to oversee the company.

Since Winston had stepped back due to health issues, he only offered Alyssa private advice on major decisions she had to make. Other than that, he left everything to her and refrained from interfering.

The temperature had been dropping for two consecutive weeks, and snow continued to fall. Yet, Alyssa hadn't heard any news about Jasper. She had hoped that their kiss would mark a new beginning, but now it seemed more like a farewell.

On this day, after a strategy meeting with KS Group's top executives, Alyssa returned to her office to review the tender proposal for the Solana City A5 real estate project. Known as Project A5, this was a significant five-year initiative backed by the government, attracting widespread attention for its immense potential.

If executed well, the project would bring tremendous value and offer businessmen a gateway into the political arena, giving them a chance to gain even more power.

Beckett Group was naturally involved since the project was based in Solana City.

Despite being rooted in Belbanks, KS Group, as one of the country's wealthiest corporations, was confident in securing Project A5.

In the past, Alyssa could switch into work mode quickly. Lately, however, her thoughts were constantly drifting, making it hard to focus. Eventually, she couldn't resist and decided to call Julien.

The phone rang for a long time before he finally answered. When he did, Alyssa heard Julien's exhausted, hoarse voice.

"Hey, Lyse."

"Jul!"

Truthfully, Alyssa hadn't expected him to answer. Hearing his familiar voice filled her with relief, and she nearly cried.

"H-How have you been?" she stammered.

"I've been pretty okay," Julien answered icily.

But Alyssa could sense he wasn't okay at all. He was clearly just trying to hold it together. "Jul... we miss you. Jonah, too-

"Why did you call, Lyse?" Julien interrupted, his voice cold. He clearly didn't want to talk about Jonah. "I'm fine. You don't need to worry. If there's nothing else, I've got things to do."

Alyssa felt a sharp pain in her chest. Desperate, she blurted out, "There is!"

"Go ahead."Original from .

"It's about Jasper's headaches... I'd like to talk to you about that." She went on to explain everything Joseph had speculated.

After a long pause, Julien spoke. "If what Jasper consumed was truly a highly concentrated drug, it's likely that even his everyday life will be severely affected in the future. After experiencing euphoria, his brain will fall into

extreme agony. He will begin to exhibit severe withdrawal symptoms, losing control of his nerves and body. The situation will only worsen."

In an urgent voice, Alyssa asked, "How will he get some relief, then?"

Julien's tone was calm but serious. "He'll experience immediate relief if he continues taking the drug."

"Jul, you can't be serious! Jasper is strong, upright... How can you suggest he take drugs?' Alyssa gasped, her eyes wide with shock.

"Even if I told him to stop, wouldn't he eventually seek it out on his own?"

Julien's voice was cold and logical. "If he's already deeply addicted, using may be the only way to cope."

"Another option is for him to quit," Julien continued. "But can Jasper survive the torment and excruciating pain of withdrawal? Even if he could, wouldn't people start to suspect something if he stayed out of the public eye for too long or began to act strangely?"

"Speculation would arise, and those with ill intent might take advantage of the situation. If that happens, what do you think his future will look like?"

Alyssa leaned back against her chair, trembling and devastated. Her eyes filled with tears, and her heart ached.

If the public ever learned that the esteemed president of Beckett Group was a drug addict, the company's stock would plummet, and its reputation would be ruined. Beckett Group would face chaos, and Jasper would lose everything he had worked so hard to build.

"It all depends on what Jasper chooses now," Julien said grimly. "Whether he wants to preserve his career or escape from the clutches of this evil."





Julien paused and sighed. "That said, I feel like Jasper will choose the former- his career. A man who's reached the top in life will never let himself fall back to the bottom. Especially someone as prideful and with such high self -esteem as him."

"Beckett Group is the result of Jasper's sweat and effort. I was his wife for three whole years. I know better than anyone how hard he worked to get where he is today." Alyssa shook her head in anguish. "He will never give up on Beckett Group, no matter how much it drains him."

"There's no cure for drug addiction. The only way to overcome it is through sheer willpower. All I can do is help him find some relief. I'm sorry, Lyse," Julien said, his voice strained with pain.Original from .

"Don't say that, Jul. You've done a lot for Jasper. You've done more than enough..."

Alyssa blinked, her eyes swollen. "Oh, right. Mandy and I visited Uncle Joseph the other day. He asked me to pass on a message to you. He wanted me to tell you.... that he's sorry."

A long silence befell on Julien's end.

"It's all in the past now. Besides him being dead-set against my relationship with Jonah in the beginning, there was never a time when I truly hated him.'

Julien took a deep breath as though forcing himself to suppress his emotions and let out a small chuckle of relief. "Looking back, maybe I should have listened to Dad. If I hadn't gotten involved with Jonah, I suppose I'd be much, much happier than I am now."

After ending the call, Alyssa felt like her heart had been trampled by a herd of horses. The exhaustion and sorrow she felt were beyond words.

She could tell that Julien still hadn't moved on from Jonah. But how could they possibly heal the deep wounds that separated them?

At that moment, Alyssa's phone vibrated with a WhatsApp notification. Jonah had written, "Lyse, I found out where Julien is. I'll be flying to Mosgravia tonight to see him."

Despite the heaviness in her heart, Alyssa responded with encouragement. "Make sure to bring Jules back. You can do this, Jonah!"

Jonah replied, "Don't push yourself if you're tired. Mandy and the others can help too."

Just then, Sean approached with a cup of coffee. Placing it on her desk, he said, "Ms. Alyssa, the weather's bad today. It's raining and snowing, so the roads are muddy and slippery. It might be better to inspect the project site tomorrow."

"Alright, that sounds good," Alyssa replied, taking the cup. After a moment of thought, she added, "Come with me to visit Grandpa Newton this afternoon."

After lunch, Sean drove Alyssa to the villa at Crescent Bay.

"Grandpa Newton, guess who's here to see you?"

As Alyssa stepped through the door, she was surprised to find Newton dressed sharply, sitting in his wheelchair, which Ben was pushing toward the entrance.

"Welcome, Alyssa. Despite his kind smile, Newton's eyes showed a slight look of panic as though her sudden visit had flustered him.

"Grandpa Newton, were you about to go out?"

"Yeah. I'm off to visit an old friend."

"The weather's pretty bad out there. Let me take you, Grandpa Newton."

But Newton quickly refused. "No need, Alyssa. Ben can take me. It's freezing outside. Why don't you head home. for now and come by tomorrow? Or wait for me at home-we'll have dinner together when I get back." Suspicion stirred within Alyssa as she watched Newton and Ben leave.

Newton always shared everything with her, never keeping secrets. Of all his old friends, only a few were still alive, and Alyssa had met them all.

There was no reason for him to hide anything.

Hearing Newton's car pull away, Alyssa rushed out of the villa. She jumped into her car and ordered, "Sean, follow them!"

Chapter 2313



The sky was gray as freezing rain fell in the midst of the wind and snow, making Alyssa's heart feel even heavier.

An hour later, Newton's car came to a stop at a cemetery in the western suburbs.

The car door opened, and Ben, holding an umbrella, helped the faltering Newton out. Newton chose not to use his wheelchair and instead walked slowly into the cemetery.

"Miss Alyssa, this cemetery isn't considered expensive. It's where commoners are buried. Given Mr. Beckett Senior's family background, could he possibly

have friends among ordinary people?" Sean asked, watching Newton with a perplexed expression. "Who could Mr. Beckett Senior be visiting in this terrible weather? He's not even using his wheelchair. It's making me really curious.

Alyssa stared out the window with a gloomy gaze. After some hesitation, she opened the door, got out, and quietly followed behind them, careful not to be noticed.

After a while, she saw Newton and Ben stop in front of a gravestone. They bowed deeply and placed a bouquet of white daisies they had prepared.

Due to the distance, Alyssa couldn't make out the name or picture on the gravestone.

People typically visited the cemetery at dawn or in the morning. Yet Newton chose to drop by in the afternoon, which was somewhat unusual.

"Mr. Newton, it's so cold out here. Your lungs can't handle this weather. Let's leave," Ben said with concern, taking off his coat and draping it over Newton.

Newton coughed. "I'm fine."

Staring at the bright smile of the woman on the gravestone, Newton was filled with regret. In a hoarse voice, he whispered, "She was such a good person. I was the one who wronged her... Our family wronged her. I don't even know if I'll make it to this time next year. Just let me stay with her a little longer."

Alyssa's heart ached as she overheard Newton's words from where she hid behind a tree.

Before she could process what she had heard, a plain-looking woman with white hair stormed up to Newton, her eyes bloodshot with anger. "It's you! How dare you... How dare you come here to visit my daughter?"

Ben quickly stepped forward, shielding Newton, but Newton gently pushed him aside.

Alyssa's heart raced as she watched the scene unfold.

"Ms. Rollins, I've been deeply sorry for your daughter's death all these years. When Millie worked with the Beckett family, she was dedicated, hardworking, capable, and smart. We all liked her very much," Newton said with deep coughs, stepping forward with regret etched across his face.

"Our family is responsible for that accident. I've never forgotten about Millie." His voice softened further as he bowed deeply. "Please let me apologize again. I'm so sorry."

With a trembling body, Newton bowed deeply to Esther Rollins.

Mildred Hayes' mother, Esther, laughed bitterly through her tears. "That accident? If it was just an accident, why are you sneaking around to visit my daughter? You know very well how Millie died! It was Mr. Justin who caused her death!"

Those words came to Alyssa like a lightning bolt. She widened her eyes in shock.

This woman's daughter was probably once a helper who worked with the Beckett family. However, she ended up dying in a so-called 'accident'.

And this woman was accusing Justin of being the man behind her daughter's death?

Ben stepped forward, looking distressed. "Ms. Rollins, Mr. Beckett Senior sympathizes with your loss, but you

can't make such accusations without evidence. We could sue you for defamation!"

Yet Newton remained silent, sorrow weighing heavily on his face.

Esther's bitter laugh echoed in the cold air. "It's been 20 years. Your family even cremated my daughter's body by force. What evidence could I possibly have left?"

"You people deceived everyone to protect that twisted grandson of yours. You bribed and threatened us, took my husband and son hostage, and forced me to stop investigating Millie's death. From .

"Out of concern for my family, I've kept my hatred hidden for years. But living with this secret has been a living hell. For 20 years, I've been plagued by nightmares of Millie, crying, asking why I haven't avenged her death.'

Esther was crying so hard that her words faltered. She cried out in anguish, "I failed my daughter. I don't deserve to be her mother. If I don't seek justice for Millie, I'll never be able to face her in the afterlife!"

A gust of icy wind sent a shiver down Alyssa's spine, and her expression darkened.

Esther was overcome with a mix of tears and laughter, her emotions teetering on the edge of a breakdown as she faced her enemy's family.

"My husband is gravely ill, nearing the end of his life. And just last month, I lost my son in a tragic accident. There's nothing else that truly matters to me now.

"I'm clinging to life for one reason only-to see justice done for Millie. I want Mr. Justin to confess his crimes and face the consequences."

Deep down, Alyssa felt extremely sorrowful.

Esther watched her loved ones slip away, one by one. It seemed like fate was particularly cruel to those who didn't deserve such hardship.

But what truly troubled Alyssa was how a 14-year-old like Justin could have been responsible for the death of an adult woman.

"Ms. Rollins... I understand... how you feel..." Newton pressed a hand to his aching chest. Taking a deep breath, he continued with difficulty, "But I assure you, your daughter's death was an accident. It had nothing... to do... with my oldest grandson."

Chapter 2314



As soon as Newton spoke, Esther flew into a rage, her bloodshot eyes glaring at him as she charged forward.

Alyssa's heart raced, and she prepared to intervene. But before she could act, Ben stepped forward, grabbing Esther's wrists with a firm grip, preventing her from moving or harming Newton.

"Bastards! Demons! All of you Becketts are ruthless demons!" Esther's eyes bulged with fury as she struggled and shouted, "I won't give up! Your grandson will pay for his crime, or you can get rid of me right now!"

The heated confrontation quickly attracted the attention of the cemetery's security guards. Two of them rushed over and restrained Esther, pulling her away.

"Mr. Newton, this is a serious issue. We can't just ignore her," Ben said, his usual tenderness replaced with a sharp, determined gaze. "If she goes out and spreads rumors, it could cause a public uproar and severely damage Beckett Group's reputation. Do you want me to take care of her?"

"What are you talking about?" Newton, clutching his chest in pain, his face pale and twisted, replied weakly. "Their family has suffered enough... because

of me! What else are you going to do? Do you want me to push her to her death?"

Before he could finish speaking, his brows drew together in a tight frown. Then, his weak body gave way, and he collapsed to the ground.

"Mr. Newton!" Ben's face drained of color as he caught Newton's limp body in his arms.

This was a critical moment. Alyssa ran toward them at full speed. She dropped down to one knee beside Newton and immediately began administering CPR.

"Ms. Alyssa! Why are you-" Ben's eyes widened in shock.

Focused, with sweat dripping from her brow, Alyssa commanded, "Get in my car, Mr. Gorham. I'll drive Grandpa Newton to the hospital!"

They reached the hospital in record time, thanks to Alyssa's impeccable driving.

Because they acted quickly, Newton was no longer in a critical condition and could be transferred to a regular ward.

Initially, Ben wanted to notify Javier and the others, but Alyssa stopped him.

With a profound look in her eyes, she said, "Don't call Mr. Javier and the others to come over for now. I'd like to have a private talk with Grandpa."

Ben hesitated, an uneasy expression crossing his face. "But, with Mr. Newton's condition..."

Alyssa deliberated over it for a moment. She pressed her lips together and said, "If you must, call Mr. Jasper."

It wasn't because she was desperate to see Jasper, but Javier's presence could complicate matters further, and Justin was even less trustworthy.

Ben nodded seriously and stepped outside to make the call.

Once alone, Alyssa took a deep breath and quietly approached the hospital bed. Sitting down beside it, she gently held Newton's wrinkled hands.

"Grandpa Newton, how are you feeling? Do you still feel uncomfortable in any way?"

"I feel much better... Thank you, Alyssa..." Newton had his eyes half-closed, and his breathing was shallow. "If you hadn't saved me in time, I'm afraid... I probably wouldn't have made it."

"Don't say that, Grandpa Newton. You're going to live a long life." A hint of sorrow crept into Alyssa's trembling

voice. "I followed you in secret today. I hope that didn't upset you."N

Chapter 2315



Newton's eyes widened as he clenched his fists. "Alyssa... you'

"I saw and heard everything that happened at the cemetery today."

Alyssa took a deep breath, her voice steady, "Grandpa Newton, was what Ms. Rollins said true? Did Justin really cause her daughter's death?"

Newton's pupils constricted. He closed his eyes, as if trying to avoid Alyssa's questions.

Alyssa's gaze sharpened. 'Grandpa Newton, your reaction has already answered my question."

Newton remained silent.

"I know what's on your mind. Justin is Mr. Javier's eldest son, and he grew up right alongside you. Even though you might favor Jasper, you wouldn't want something from the past to tarnish Justin's reputation. After all, he was still a minor back then. No matter what he's done, as a Beckett, you'll do anything to protect him."

Alyssa's words hit the mark, each one piercing with precision. She continued, "But you also believe his actions were unforgivable. You've been angry but too afraid to expose him. Keeping this secret for so many years must have been agonizing.

"Yet, I know you still have a kind heart. You can't bear to hurt anyone. Otherwise, you wouldn't have braved the cold and snow to visit that woman's grave if you didn't care, even though you weren't feeling well.

Suddenly, it all clicked for Alyssa. No wonder Newton had always been so cautious around Justin. With such a terrible secret weighing on him, how could he not be tense and guarded?

Newton gritted his teeth, struggling for words.

Seeing his distress, Alyssa pressed on. "If you won't tell me the truth, the only option I have is to approach the victim's family for answers."

"No! Alyssa, please... don't upset that poor woman again," Newton pleaded, grasping her arms with trembling hands. His eyes filled with tears as he confessed, "Her name was Mildred Hayes. She worked for me as a helper when I lived at Seaview Manor. She looked after my daily needs.

"Her death... it was connected to Justin, but it was unintentional. It was an accident... Justin was crying and panicking when he came to me, begging me to save her."

Alyssa furrowed her brows. Even though she loved and respected Newton, doubts crept into her mind about his story.

"Justin was only 14. His mother's death had already devastated him. If he had been sent to jail for that incident, his life would have been ruined. I watched him grow up. He's my eldest grandson... I couldn't bear to see him imprisoned!"

"So you chose to dispose of Mildred's body on his behalf and make it look like an accident?' Alyssa's voice grew cold.

A chill ran through her as the realization sank in. 'Grandpa Newton, how could you think only of your grandson's life? Someone should have been held accountable for Mildred's life. Did you ever consider that? You erased the incident, but how was her family supposed to heal from it?

"Justin may be Mr. Javier's son, someone you care for deeply, but Mildred was also someone's precious daughter. Are you saying that in your eyes, some lives matter more than others?'

Newton's voice trembled with pain. "Alyssa..."




"Grandpa Newton, don't you realize what you've done? By covering for a criminal, you've become an accomplice!"

With tears in her eyes, Alyssa's voice flared with intensity. "If you won't stand up for that mother, then I will. I'll get justice for Mildred."

"No... No, you can't!" Newton struggled to sit up. "Alyssa, I'll do everything I can to make amends to Millie's family. But please, don't provoke Justin. I beg you, stay out of this!"

Alyssa had a feeling that there was more to the story. She pushed, "Why?"

Newton hesitated, his pale lips trembling as if he was about to reveal something, when suddenly, the door to his hospital room swung open. And in strode Jasper, his posture stiff, carrying an air of coldness with him.



"Grandpa." Jasper's breaths were heavy, and his eyes were dark as the night, concealing deep concern within. Unfortunately, his amygdala had been damaged by drugs, sealing off his intense emotions. Despite the turmoil within, there was no way for those feelings to escape. As a result, Jasper appeared completely cold and heartless.

Newton and Alyssa exchanged knowing glances, seemingly able to read each other's minds. Newton quickly wiped his tears and forced a kind smile. "Hey, Jasper... Thankfully, Alyssa was here to look after me, so I'm fine now. Don't worry."

Alyssa's thoughts were still fixed on Newton's earlier advice. Her eyelashes fluttered slightly as she spaced out. It wasn't until she sensed a cold, masculine presence beside her that she lifted her head, only to find Jasper's intense gaze locked on hers. He pursed his lips slightly, lowering his eyes.

In that instant, it was as if someone had pressed the pause button on her heart. Her cheeks flushed pink as she panicked and quickly looked away.

She felt utterly useless. Deep down, she was still deeply in love with him. Whether his beautiful eyes sparkled like stars or were as dark as night, she would always lose herself in them again and again...

"You brat, why are you just standing there? You should be thanking Alyssa." Newton grunted angrily, "If it hadn't been for her, you would've lost me!"

Jasper was about to speak when Alyssa shot to her feet. She didn't look at Jasper at all. Instead, she smiled meekly at Newton. "Grandpa Newton, I'm

glad you're fine now. I still have work to do, so I'll be heading back. I'll visit you another day."

"Alyssa, wait!" Newton called out, wanting to stop her, but she had already left the hospital room, almost as if fleeing.

Jasper gazed at the empty doorway, a deep look in his eyes.

"You jerk, why are you spacing out? Go after her, quick!" Newton gathered all his strength and shakily lifted his leg to kick Jasper.

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Alyssa pressed her hands to her reddened cheeks as she hurried toward the parking lot.

"Oof!"

Lost in her thoughts, she hadn't noticed Jasper standing just a few feet away. When she bumped into him, her face collided with his muscular chest, causing the tip of her nose to sting.

Jasper's lips parted slightly, and he narrowed his eyes, gazing down at her head. In a deep voice, he asked, "Ms. Alyssa, why are you so careless? Didn't you look where you were going?" Alyssa had teared up from the pain. Rubbing her nose, she frowned and retorted, "It's your fault for popping out of nowhere! Don't you have anything better to do?"

With that, Alyssa stepped to her left to storm away.

Narrowing his eyes, Jasper mirrored her movements.

Alyssa then moved to the right, only to find him mirroring her actions once again as if he were determined to block her path.

Frustrated, she bit her lip and turned to leave. Suddenly, Jasper grabbed her arm. With a gentle tug, he pulled her into his arms.

"W-What are you doing? We've broken up!" Alyssa shrieked, a mix of embarrassment and frustration flooding her. Her eyes were slightly bloodshot.

With a cold look in his eyes, Jasper answered in an emotionless voice, "Yes, we have. I was the one who wanted to break up."

Alyssa felt a sharp pain pierce her heart and struggled against him. "What the hell are you trying to do now?"

Jasper said, "Thank you for saving Grandpa today."

"It was Grandpa Newton who told you to say that, wasn't it?" Alyssa scoffed, her eyes reddening. "I don't care about getting forced expressions of gratitude." Agitated, Jasper furrowed his brow. "What do you want, then?"

Alyssa's gaze met Jasper's vacant eyes, her heart heavy with sorrow. Once, those eyes had held warmth and affection, always patient and understanding.

She remembered the days when

he'd listened to her rants and tears, offering only gentle smiles and comforting words. He'd always indulged in her, never once showing impatience.

She had no choice but to face the painful truth now-she was no longer important to him.

Despite everything, she found herself saying, "I want you to promise me something."

Perhaps she was reluctant to resign herself to this fate.

Looking at her intently, Jasper urged, "Tell me."

"I haven't thought of anything yet, but I'll let you know once I do." She lifted her chin slightly. "But you must agree to it when I make my request. Only then can that be counted as you repaying me. How about that?"

"You're not asking to get back together with me, right?" A look of suspicion flashed in Jasper's eyes.

Alyssa's chest tightened. "In your dreams! I've divorced you and we've broken up. Why would I still want be together with you? There are so many good men out there. Why would I limit myself to just you? That would be so low."

Good men? Was she referring to Justin?

Those words echoed in Jasper's mind. Instinctively, he tightened his grip on her wrist.

"Ouch..." Alyssa shifted her shoulders in a subtle attempt to free herself, feeling delicate and tender.

"Okay, I promise." Gazing deeply into her eyes, Jasper stated seriously, "I will agree to whatever your request is."

Alyssa felt a swell of emotion. She sniggered slightly and asked, "What if I asked you to commit murder or hurt someone?"

"I would do as you asked," Jasper replied without hesitation. "But based on the Alyssa I know, she would never be so cruel." Alyssa's eyes lit up and a wide smile spread across her face. She raised her left hand. "It's a deal, then. High five!" "Deal." Jasper's Adam's apple bobbed slightly as he returned the gesture.

Chapter 2317



On the way home from the hospital, Alyssa replayed Jasper's words in her mind, recalling the promise they'd sealed with a high five. Her heart swelled with a mix of emotions that she could barely define. Watching the snowfall outside, her eyes shimmered with tears. Softly, she murmured to herself, "Alyssa, he came to see you of his own accord and was willing to go along with what you wanted. Isn't that enough? "You no longer have the right to be carefree and proud in front of him. You need to be grateful."

As Sean drove, he glanced into the rearview mirror. Seeing Alyssa's desolate expression stirred a deep sorrow within him.

Being separated from Jasper had turned Alyssa's world upside down. If Jasper were to die, Alyssa's life would be completely shattered.

Perhaps having Jasper alive was the best outcome fate could offer after all they had endured, however bittersweet it was.

"Ms. Alyssa, it's late. Why don't you go home to rest instead of heading back to KS Group? You'll soon be busy with the fight for Solana City's Project A5," Sean said gently, concerned when he saw how pale Alyssa looked. Alyssa frowned, looking troubled. Instead of responding to Sean's suggestion, she said, "Sean, there's someone I'd like you to look into."

Sean responded immediately, "Of course. Tell me more."

"20 years ago, a woman named Mildred Hayes worked as a helper at Seaview Manor, caring for Grandpa Newton. Her mother's last name is Rollins, and she still lives in Solana City."

The grievance in her expression disappeared, replaced by her usual calm and composed demeanor. She continued, "This woman was killed by Justin 20 years ago, but the exact circumstances and cause of her death remain unclear. We need to uncover the full story." This revelation shocked Sean.

"Justin was involved in a murder at such a young age? He's the devil incarnate, isn't he?"

"I suppose. I can't believe that an elegant and gentle man who's passionate about charity could have such a dark side to him. If I hadn't seen and heard it for myself at the cemetery, I wouldn't have believed it."

Alyssa coldly stated, "It's terrifying that someone like him-someone who could put on such an act is living under the same roof as Jasper and posing as his life-savior. Doesn't this make you feel afraid?" Justin's elegant and bright face flashed in Sean's mind, making him shudder. "It's absolutely terrifying!"

"That's why we must get to the bottom of this. Generally speaking, a murderer should answer for his sins. Even if Justin was still a minor back then, it doesn't excuse him from justice."

Alyssa closed her eyes, hiding the

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fierceness in her gaze. She steadied her breath and continued, "If he dares to reveal his true nature and tries to hurt Jasper, we'll have leverage to control him. Perhaps that leverage could help Jasper when it matters the most

Sean admired Alyssa's strategic composure. She was no longer impulsive, but measured and astute.

Then, a thought struck Sean. In a chilling tone, he remarked, "Ms. Alyssa, if Justin could kill at 14, that shows a naturally cold-blooded, brutal side."

Alyssa remained calm. "Don't you

think his behavior resembles his

uncle, Zachary Dutton? Moreover, Mrs. Rosie has shared that he used to torture and kill animals. Given that it isn't surprising he could commit murder."

Wide-eyed, Sean asked, "But killing animals and murdering a person... Are they really the same?"

"In essence, both acts stem from a lack of regard for life," Alyssa replied, a heaviness in her chest. She shook her head "He didn't care for the animals he tortured. When that net stopped thrilling him, he naturally shifted his focus to people. This pattern is common among many psychopathic killers."

"But Ms. Alyssa," Sean asked, finally voicing a question that had troubled him, "if Justin is so disturbed, how could he have saved Mr. Jasper's life? Doesn't his ruthlessness contradict that act?" Upon hearing that, Alyssa stiffened up. The look in her eyes was gloomy.

Unaware of the tension, Sean continued, "If I were him, I'd have bribed the kidnappers. I'd use the situation to get rid of my younger brother once and for all so that he no longer stands in my way.

"After all, Mr. Jasper was just an unwelcome illegitimate child in the Beckett family at the time. If he died just like that, it probably wouldn't cause much of an uproar either. People would forget him soon enough." The more Alyssa mulled over it, the more her heart raced. She tightened her grip on the car door handle.

Chapter 2318



Could that be the case? Could Justin really have harbored such sinister plans at such a young age?

Alyssa wasn't keen to believe in a conspiracy, but she had begun to suspect something two years ago. How could a 15-year-old manage to rescue Jasper from the kidnappers' hideout? Even an adult would have struggled to pull that off. It would have been impossible for a teenager like him.

Moreover, the kidnapper-Gustav Holm, infamously known as "Crazy Gustav" among gangs was a vicious criminal with numerous kills to his name. And yet, Justin freed a captive right under his nose. Forget Gustav; if Alyssa herself had been in his place, Justin's return to the Beckett family would have been out of the question.

Snapping back to reality, Alyssa quickly pulled out her phone and called Silas.

As soon as he picked up, she said, "Silas, can you help me retrieve a case file? I need to look at something."

Silas sighed. It was either radio silence from Alyssa or a shocking request like this. "Lyse, case files aren't something we can just hand out. There are rules."

"In that case, you can explain it to me. This wouldn't be against the rule, would it?"

Silas was rendered speechless. "What case are you interested in?"

"It's the case from 20 years ago when Gustav Holm kidnapped the Beckett brothers."

Silas was perplexed. "Lyse, why are you suddenly looking into that?"

"You don't need to know why. Just look it up for me."

After a pause, Alyssa asked, "How many years was Gustav sentenced to? Do you remember the case details?"

"I recall he was initially sentenced to death. Later, due to good behavior and assisting the police in a burglary case, he was deemed to have atoned for his crimes. And so, his sentence was reduced to life imprisonment. "However, his

accomplice got 25 years. Considering time off for good behavior, he might be released soon."

Alyssa narrowed her eyes, deep in thought.

Late that night, Newton lay connected to an IV drip. Jasper sat by his bedside in the ward, keeping watch.

"Jasper, you must secure Project A5

in Solana City this time. If you do no one will be able to threaten your position in the Beckett Group even if

I'm no longer around." even if

With a firm and hopeful look in his eyes, Newton gazed at the grim expression on Jasper's face.

Jasper clasped Newton's weathered

hands tightly and, in a low voice, reassured him, "Don't say that,

Grandpa. You'll live a long, blessed

life.

"I'm old. I've lived for long enough. I only have two wishes-for you to fully succeed in Beckett Group and for you and Alyssa to reconcile."

A lump rose in Jasper's throat. He curled his fingers inward slightly.

"Jasper, I'm sure you remembered how you cried in front of me back then, saying you wanted Alyssa back."

Jasper's pupils constricted slightly as a mix of inexplicable emotions brewed within.

"I refuse to believe you no longer love Alyssa. You were so deeply in love with her before. Just because you took a couple of pills... you lost your love for her? Fucking bullshit!"

Newton's burst of agitation made his chest hurt. A pained expression came across his face.

Jasper quickly comforted him. "Grandpa, please take care of yourself. The doctor warned that stress and anger won't help." Newton insisted, "In that case... Promise me you'll win Alyssa back."

Jasper looked uncomfortable, his voice low. "Grandpa, she and I have "

Just then, a knock sounded at the door. Justin's warm voice came from the other side. "Grandpa, I'm here. May I come in?"

Chapter 2319



Coincidentally, both Jasper's and Newton's expressions darkened, and they both fell into silence. It was as if they had read each other's minds and learned that neither of them wanted to let Justin in. Yet, their unwelcome guest had already taken the liberty of coming in. Ben, who had been waiting at the door, reluctantly opened it for Justin.

"Grandpa, I heard that your condition suddenly flared up. How are you feeling? Are you feeling better now?"

Then, as if only just noticing Jasper in the room, Justin's eyes flickered briefly. He gave a warm smile. "Oh, Jasper. You're here too."

Jasper's expression remained grim. He nodded slightly. "Hey, Justin."

"If I'd known Jasper was here, I would've come tomorrow instead. I don't want to disrupt your rest." Justin wheeled himself over to Newton's bedside.

"It's fine, Justin," Newton replied, though his smile seemed forced. "But it's late, and you're not in great health yourself. You didn't have to make a trip to visit me."

Justin leaned forward slightly, a subtle gleam in his eyes. "Grandpa, you've always treated me the best and loved me the most. I wouldn't feel right not being by your side while you're in the hospital." Newton's body trembled slightly beneath the blanket at Justin's words.

Jasper noticed the change but kept his expression neutral. He masked his doubts, a skill essential for someone in a high position. content.

Over the years, Jasper had become adept at concealing his emotions, though it often left him feeling isolated. Recently, those feelings had begun to resurface, filling his lonely nights with a sense of emptiness and a coldness that crept through him. With a gentle expression on his face, Justin spoke again. "Grandpa, there's something I'd like to discuss with you in private. Would that be alright?"

Newton shot Jasper a conflicted look. "Is it urgent? Jasper isn't an outsider. You can just go ahead and say it."

"Grandpa, I'll leave you and Justin to chat. See you." Jasper didn't want to intrude, so he turned and left the room with Ben.

As he closed the door, he could faintly hear Justin's voice. There was a sense of tenderness in his voice which he had never heard before. "Grandpa, I've found someone I care about." Jasper froze. Subconsciously, he pressed his lips together tightly.

In a surprised tone, Newton asked, "Oh? There's someone who caught your fancy? Is she someone from Mosgravia, or did you meet her in Solana City?"

"She's someone you know. Not just you-Jasper knows her too."

A soft smile as gentle as a breeze spread across Justin's elegant and charming face. He continued, "It's Alyssa Taylor. I really like her."

"What? Y-You have feelings for Alyssa?" Newton's eyes widened, his face paling.

Standing outside the door, Jasper caught every word. Each one pierced his chest like a slender needle, invisible yet sharp, leaving wounds that bled silently within him.

"That's right," Justin admitted with a calm smile.

Newton forced himself to remain composed, though his voice trembled slightly. "S-Since when?"

"It just happened without me realizing it. Feelings can be difficult to explain," Justin replied, picking up an apple and a knife from the bedside table and slowly peeling it.

"Ms. Alyssa used to be the woman Jasper loved. They were in love, and I was genuinely happy for them. I have never considered taking her from him.

"After all, Jasper is my only brother-the one I risked my life to save. He's had a difficult life since childhood. He came into our family with Anne, only to be scorned by everyone. He's lacked love all his life, so of course, I was happy when he found someone he loved.

As he stood outside, chills ran through Jasper, his hands clenching into fists. Justin's words might have sounded caring, even empathetic but to Jasper, they felt like invisible hands tearing open a wound in his heart that had only just begun to heal.

Very few people mentioned Jasper's past since he'd become the Beckett family heir, as doing so meant challenging his authority.



Justin, whether intentional or not, had struck a nerve with Jasper. Yet, Justin was his older brother, someone Jasper deeply respected. Jasper could only restrain himself. "But right now, Jasper and Ms. Alyssa are separated. Since he no longer wants her, I want her. Grandpa, you'll support me, won't you?"

A slight smile appeared on Justin's lips as a strip of apple peel fell to the floor. "I know you've always been fond of Ms. Alyssa and wanted her to marry into our family. If she and Jasper aren't meant to be, then I'll be the one to marry her. That way, your wish will still be fulfilled, right?"

Despite Justin's calm, graceful demeanor, he radiated an unspoken intensity. Jasper held his breath, his frown deepening.

Newton braced himself, struggling to keep his composure. He attempted to sit up but lacked the strength. With a strained breath, he murmured, "Justin, it's not that I have anything against you or that I don't support you and Alyssa. It's just that I understand Alyssa deeply. "Jasper holds a place in her heart, and he'll be the only one she loves for the rest of her life. She won't be able to accept anyone else.

"Alyssa is a stubborn woman. She's unyielding. If you were to push her... I'm afraid things won't end well for either of you."

"Nothing is impossible for someone determined. I'll treat her sincerely. She will accept me eventually." Although Justin's smile reached his eyes, a chilling coldness still emanated from him-it was so cold that even those around him could feel it. "After all, patience is one of my virtues. I just want your approval, Grandpa. You won't stand in my way, will you?"

Newton's face twitched slightly as he struggled to maintain composure, uncertain how to respond.

...

Jasper's vision blurred as he leaned against the wall for support, staggering to the basement parking lot. He was panting heavily.

"Mr. Beckett! What happened to you?" Xavier rushed to assist Jasper as he swayed unsteadily.

"The pills..."

Xavier was stunned. "What did you say?"

Jasper's body trembled as he reached into his suit pocket and pulled out a bag of blue pills.

Recognizing them as those Sheryl had given him, Xavier tried to snatch them away, but Jasper was already desperate. He tipped the pills into his mouth, swallowing them all at once.

"Mr. Beckett! How could you take the pills from that woman? She works for Mr. Justin. She can't be trusted! What if it's poison?"

"Xavier... I can't take it anymore..." Jasper uttered, leaning on Xavier. His face was pale, glistening with sweat. "I don't know if it's a side effect of Jameson's pills, but the only relief I get is from these pills Sheryl gave me."

Xavier's heart sank, a sense of dread building within him. He had a feeling something bad was about to happen.

With Xavier's help, Jasper got into the car. Then, they drove off.

As their taillights faded into the

night, Sheryl emerged from behind a

pillar, lifting her phone with a smirk She put it to her ear. "Mr. Justin Jasperis now addicted. He can't stay away from Crystal Ice now."

"It took him long enough to give in. My brother is far more strong-willed than I'd imagined," Justin replied. He sounded menacingly evil. "But I've always relished a challenge, whether it's with him or with Ms. Alyssa."

Sheryl's voice turned cold. "Do you plan on taking action soon?"

"Project A5 will be our opportunity. We'll wait for the right moment."

Three days later, Alyssa had just finished a meeting at KS Group when Sean approached her. "Ms. Alyssa, I've found the address of Mildred's mother."

With a dim look in Alyssa's eyes, she instructed, "Get the car. We're going there now."N