

Can't Win Me Back by Ginger Sue Novel

#Chapter 2376

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It was a quiet night, with pin drop silence filling the hospital's VIP ward.

In the office of Jasper's primary physician, Sheryl placed a bank card on the coffee table and sipped her tea relaxedly.

"Ms. Gillis, what is the meaning of this?" Sebastian Bender stared at the black-colored bank card in shock.

Nonchalantly, Sheryl smiled and asked, "Mr. Jasper's blood test results are out. I'm sure you have identified some issues with them, haven't you, Dr. Bender?"

Sebastian hesitated. "Indeed, there was an unusual substance detected in Mr. Jasper's blood sample..."

"Methamphetamine, for instance?"

Sebastian cried out in shock, "How did you know that?"

To be frank, you've had your suspicions ever since you started treating Mr. Jasper, haven't you? His symptoms are more like those of drug addiction rather than a simple headache. Am I right?" Sheryl pressed on, a sinister gleam in her eyes.

Sebastian's hands trembled as he held his teacup. He argued, "Patients under extreme pain could also show symptoms such as acute headaches. It might not necessarily indicate a drug addiction.'

The president of Beckett Group was being suspected of a drug addiction?

If word of this got out, not only would Beckett Group and Solana City be completely shaken, but Sebastian himself might not even survive.

He had to be careful with his words!

With a loud thunk, Sheryl placed her teacup down and lifted her lips into a cold smile.

What if these were indeed symptoms of drug addiction?"

Sebastian broke out in cold sweat. With a quiver in his voice, he probed, "Ms. Gillis, what are you actually trying to say?"

"I want you, as Mr. Jasper's primary physician, to issue a conclusive test report proving that his condition results from drug abuse. Make sure to indicate each of the relevant components clearly.

There are 10 million dollars on this card. Consider it a down payment. Once your work is complete, you will receive another 20 million dollars. It will be most worthwhile for you."

Sheryl tilted her chin upward slightly, scrutinizing Sebastian with a prideful gaze. "That's 30 million dollars, Dr. Bender. It's an amount you wouldn't earn even if you toiled away in this field for years.

"Plus, I know you're in desperate need of money. Your son, studying overseas, beat someone up so badly that they were severely injured.

"Right now, he remains in the detention center, waiting for you to secure the vast sum needed for his release. And I reckon you've already spent a considerable amount on your wife's bone marrow transplant surgery, haven't you?"

Sebastian's eyes widened in shock. He felt completely exposed, as if Sheryl had stripped him bare. She had a clear hold over his weaknesses. There was no way he could refuse her.

"You're hesitating because you're afraid of smearing Jasper's name. You're worried about offending him," Sheryl observed.

A relaxed smile spread across her face. "Don't worry. Firstly, you've discovered a prohibited substance in Jasper's blood sample, so you won't be making a false accusation. Secondly, Beckett Group will soon be welcoming its new era.

"New era?"

Sheryl's eyes twinkled with a proud gleam. In an imprudent tone, she said, 'Jasper's health has been deteriorating. Whether he's been taking banned medications or abusing drugs, he no longer deserves his position. He can no longer be president of the corporation.

"Mr. Justin has now returned. He's the legitimate eldest son of the Becketts. His health is improving daily, and his capabilities match Jasper's. If Jasper steps down, Mr. Justin can surely take over Beckett Group completely and become the sole heir.

When that time comes, you will have made a major contribution, Dr. Bender. Mr. Justin will see that you are well taken care of in the future.

Sebastian was on edge and highly strung. But he knew he had no other choice. It was simply his misfortune to be caught in the battle between the Beckett brothers. So, he could only accept the card with resignation.

Jasper remained unconscious. Newton insisted on staying at the hospital to keep watch over him. Despite his advanced age, he forced himself to remain vigilant. No matter who tried to persuade him otherwise, he remained steadfast. He made such a fuss that Javier had no choice but to also stay back at the hospital.

Nevertheless, Justin could tell that Newton was insisting on keeping watch, despite his failing health, because he didn't want Justin to have a chance to harm Jasper.

As Justin sat outside the hospital ward, he gazed at the unconscious Jasper through the glass window on the door.

He curled his lips upward in a subtle smile.

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"In a casual voice, Justin remarked, "Grandpa, you really do spoil Jasper. But, how much longer can you continue this?"

His smile was no longer bright. Instead, it was cold and sly. With an infinitely deep look in his eyes, he continued, "Don't you know that the kinder you are toward him, the more you are dragging him down?"

"Mr. Justin."

Sheryl hurried toward Justin. "The matter is settled."

Justin shot her a look, and she got what he meant. She pushed his wheelchair to the lounge so they could talk privately.

"Mr. Beckett Senior is so frustratingly stubborn!" Sheryl felt indignant on Justin's behalf. "To hell with Jasper. You should be the heir to Beckett Group! Why is he still insisting on protecting that bastard even at a time like this? Has he gone senile?"

"It's just as I had expected," Justin said with a perfunctory smile. "In Grandpa's eyes, Jasper is his biological grandson, whereas he and I have been distant for a long time."

That's absolutely horrible. He can't even recognize those closest to him!" Sheryl was so infuriated that she stomped her feet. "I have bought off Dr. Bender to be a witness and prove that Jasper consumed illicit drugs.

"Even so, with Mr. Beckett Senior's protection of Jasper, it seems we still won't be able to crush and vanquish him completely."

Justin gazed at Sheryl with dark, gloomy eyes. He lifted his lips into a sarcastic smirk. "Is that how much you hate him?"

"Yes! I wish I could get rid of him with my own hands. I'd cut him to pieces and feed him to the sharks!" she answered through gritted teeth.

Back then, Sheryl's reputation as a Gardner had been destroyed. She had ended up in a situation worse than street beggars. Whenever she was reminded of this, her eyes would turn red with hatred.

With Justin present, she held herself back from cursing Alyssa and the rest of her family.

Justin narrowed his eyes. In a candid and crisp voice, he said, "Such deep-seated hatred suggests that you were once deeply in love with him."

A chill ran down Sheryl's spine, and her chest tightened. She rushed forward and knelt by Justin's feet. She gazed up at him with reverence in her eyes.

"No, Sir! I have never cared about anyone other than you... Not even Jasper! I was still too young, too naïve, and too foolish back then. I was manipulated by Sophia. Otherwise, why would I have anything to do with such lowly people?"

Justin couldn't care less about her confession. He mumbled to himself, "I have never experienced deep love or any deep-seated hatred. So, I'm really envious of your hatred and Jasper's love."

He did not hate Jasper or Newton. He didn't despise anyone.

It seemed like he had only done these things because they felt intriguing.

At that moment, Sheryl's phone rang. It was Remy calling

She answered the call in Justin's presence. In an annoyed tone, she said, "Yes?"

"I've looked into it. I didn't find anything." Remy reported in a cold voice.

Sheryl was extremely frustrated. "Are you sure? Out of all the CCTV cameras inside and outside, none of them captured her? I don't believe you!"

"Come and look personally if you don't believe me.'

With that, Remy ended the call.

Feeling dismissed, Sheryl was on the verge of hurling her phone to the ground.

"Sir, a woman barged into Lab No. 1 today, beat up a doctor, and stole his entry pass. I asked Remy to investigate, but he said that none of the surveillance cameras captured any footage of her. What terrible luck is this?"

Looking completely undisturbed, Justin asked, 'Did we get into any trouble?"

"No. We conducted a thorough inspection and search afterward and determined that nothing was lost. Nothing was amiss either."

Sheryl paused briefly, and concern flashed across her eyes. "B-But... That person might have recognized me."

Justin's interest was piqued. He raised a brow. "Oh?"

"I think she called out my real name."

Sheryl's gaze became unsteady. Shuddering at that thought, she continued, "I have undergone plastic surgery to change my appearance and even my voice. Plus, I have been professionally trained in speech and behavior. How could she have recognized me? That's impossible!"

"Nothing is impossible." Justin twisted the ring on his finger nonchalantly. "The fact that that woman was able to enter and leave that place without anyone noticing shows that she's bold and crafty. Also, she knows you quite well.

Sheryl had a moment of realization. She widened her eyes and exclaimed, "I know who she is! It must be her... It must be!"

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Justin asked, "Who are you talking about?"

"Amber Altman! It must be her."

Sheryl clenched her teeth in anger. 'She was by Jameson's side the entire time. She must have heard things about me.

"On top of that, she went with Jameson to Mosgravia to meet with you on several occasions. Now that I'm back, she must be suspicious of me and tailing me in secret. That previous encounter at the orphanage should have been a warning!"

Justin smiled slightly and did not comment.

The look in Sheryl's eyes turned grim. "Sir, we can no longer spare Amber. I don't care if she suspects me, but if she starts suspecting you and blabs to Alyssa, you would be in trouble!"

A tired expression crossed Justin's face. "I understand why you're worried, but I don't have the energy to waste on these irrelevant people at the moment.

"Don't worry, Sir!" Sheryl lowered herself in front of Justin once again. She picked up his hand and held it tightly. "Leave that bitch to me. No matter what it takes or what it costs, I will ensure your safety and help you reclaim everything that belongs to you."

The next evening, Cyrus, Alyssa, and Jonah were in the cellar of Heightsnew Villa.

What did you say? They had a fake prisoner take his place?"

Cyrus raised his brows in shock. He was so surprised that he almost crushed the wine glass in his hand.

"Did they fucking think the surveillance system in Solana City's prison is just for show? Are they trying to bring The Shawshank Redemption to life?"

Alyssa swirled her wine glass while propping her chin up with her other hand. "It sounds more like The Shawshank Exchange to me."

She was about to take a drink when Jonah stepped forward quietly. He covered the rim of her glass with his palm and said, "Lyse, your doctor told you not to consume any alcohol for a month. Have you forgotten?"

Alyssa pouted and grumbled, "Hey, I was just enjoying the mood in the cellar.

"Damn it. They transferred a prisoner out of prison without anyone noticing, and even substituted him with someone else? This is more serious than breaking out of prison. The authorities will be humiliated if word gets out."

Cyrus blew his top. He slammed his hand on the table and jumped to his feet. "I can't sit by and do nothing. I have to report this to the station first thing tomorrow morning!"

The look in Alyssa's eyes turned serious. "Don't! The fact that Zachary was able to get out of prison shows that there are corrupt cops among Solana City's police force. If you report this and make it publicly known, we will lose our lead.

'Then, not only would you fail to arrest Zachary, but we might never uncover Justin's secret scheme. Our entire plan would be ruined if we act hastily.

Jonah's charming face grew solemn as he replaced the wine in Alyssa's hand with warm water. "I agree with Lyse. We will lose everything if we take action now."

Cyrus buried his head in his hands in frustration. He pulled at his hair and sighed.

He was an upright police officer. Yet, all he could do was be patient while watching a criminal roam free. Not being able to arrest him felt more torturous than castration!

Jonah sat down next to Alyssa. "Cyrus, have any of your colleagues been behaving suspiciously recently?"

"My colleagues?"

Alyssa took a gulp of water. With a dull look in her eyes, she said, "Considering the level of authority required, I suspect it's someone in a higher position. They would have to be a police chief, at the very least."

Cyrus was appalled. "Lyse, are you suggesting you're suspicious of Mr. Barrett?"

"Cyrus, all in all, you must keep this to yourself for now. Pretend this never happened. At the same time, Investigate the circumstances of Zachary's imprisonment to confirm my suspicions."

Cyrus ran his tongue across his teeth. In a firm voice, he replied, "Will do! You have never been wrong about your guesses. This time, I will stand firmly by your side. I will not cause any chaos in the organization!"

Alyssa stifled a laugh and beamed.

Ever since Jasper's incident, the Taylor brothers had never seen Alyssa smile. They were so delighted that they welled up.

"Next, I want to investigate the patients confined in that run-down hospital building." Alyssa's expression turned solemn again as she thought of those patients in such dire conditions.

"There's something I don't understand," Jonah said, knitting his brows in confusion. "The Dutton family has been destroyed. They can't assist Justin in any way. Why did he go to such lengths to help his uncle escape from prison?"

Alyssa lapped her chin thoughtfully

There was no doubt that Jonah had just asked an excellent question.

Beneath Justin's elegant and easygoing appearance lay a ruthless and egocentric personality. He would never engage in anything that wouldn't benefit him, nor would he help anyone of no use to him. Jameson's fate alone was sufficient to reveal his heartless nature. As Alyssa contemplated this, she took a deep breath.

They are probably accomplices. As for what they are plotting, we'll have to continue investigating."

Amber was in the kitchen, helping Lyla and Colene prepare desserts for the family's consumption the next day.

Axel had purchased a manor in Belbanks for her and put it under her name. He chose a location near Heightsnew Villa to make it convenient for her to visit at any time.

Amber had no family, so the Taylors were her family. She would come to Heightsnew Villa to help Mandy, Colene, and Lyla however she could.

At the same time, she was careful not to visit too often, lest she bother them or overstay her welcome.

She was overly cautious, meek, and understanding. The Taylors were fond of her, but more than that, their hearts went out to her.

"Amber, you and Axel should just go ahead and register your marriage the next time he gets some time off work."

While Colene kneaded the dough, she winked at Lyla, signaling her to back her up. "It's so troublesome traveling back and forth. It would be much easier for you to marry into the family. Then we ladies can get together every day. Oh, right. Can you play bridge? The three of us are always short of one player!"

Amber's heart raced, and she blushed. The dough in her hands became messy as she grew flustered.

"I can. A little," she stuttered.

Lyla smiled broadly. "Colene is right. We will become a family sooner or later anyway. Axel is always away from home, and we can't feel at ease knowing you're living alone."

"It's alright. I'm fine going back and forth. It isn't troublesome at all. Plus, I can look after myself," Amber said, her voice as light as a cloud.

She still felt deeply inferior and was held captive by the fear of a potentially blissful future, even though she was well aware of Axel's deep love for her.

Colene was about to speak when she suddenly froze.

With the cold winter air still clinging to him, Axel had appeared in the kitchen unnoticed.

Hands in his pockets and head tilted playfully, he watched Amber from behind. His fiery eyes overflowed with passionate intensity.

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The unsuspecting Colene was filled with joy when she saw Axel had returned. Just as she was about to greet him, Lyla quickly dashed forward and covered her mouth.

Lyla gave her meaningful looks as she gently pulled her away from the kitchen.

With that, only Amber and Axel remained in the kitchen.

Amber was puzzled when she realized Colene and Lyla had gone quiet. As she was about to turn around, Axel covered her eyes with his hands.

Amber's heart skipped a beat. She pursed her lips briefly, then said in a tender voice, "Quit joking around, Axel."

Axel chuckled softly. "Couldn't you at least pretend to guess who I am? Where's the romance?"

He removed his hands from her eyes and began to trace the curves of her body, all the way down to her perky bottoms and stopping there.

Why, you-Behave yourself. The fiery touch from Axel's palms was making Amber quiver all over.

She leaned into his arms; her eyes red and moist.

She was moved, but more than that, she missed him very much.

"I can be even naughtier."

Before Axel could finish what he wanted to say, he lowered his eyes before smiling and pressing his lips against Amber's soft ones. He kissed her deeply.

He was a good kisser, and his kiss made Amber's face flush red. She soon grew giddy and couldn't help but lean back. Overwhelmed by shyness, she didn't know where to place her hands.

Just then, Axel murmured, "Hold me."

In the next second, he kissed her again. A soft moan escaped Amber's lips as she wrapped her arms around Axel's waist.

She pressed her hands up against his back, leaving patches of white flour on that black coat of his.

The contrast of black and white complemented their blissful moment.

Their tongues danced as they shared a moment of tender reunion.

Axel finally relented, both of them gasping for air. He noticed her flushed cheeks and the

mist in her eyes, and an unfamiliar heat spread through him. He swallowed hard. "Did you miss me, hmm?"

"I did.." Amber answered meekly.

Boys would be boys. Axel got into the mood. He nuzzled her cheek with the stubble on his

jaw, prickling and tickling Amber at the same time.

"Prove it to me," he challenged.

"I made your favorite foods while you were away. There's sauerkraut and desserts in the fridge." Amber's eyes twinkled with happiness, though she seemed slightly embarrassed. "They're probably nothing special."

A lump rose in Axel's throat. He wrapped his arms around her tightly.

He came from a wealthy family but had spent his life wandering, a soul adrift between the lights and shadows. He yearned for a simple, normal life with his partner, a life where they could support each other.

Amber had given him everything he longed for. He was completely satisfied, content in the knowledge that he had no regrets.

"Says who? Everything my wife gives me is the best in the whole wide world," Axel choked out, his voice surprisingly seductive for its husky quality.

Completely enveloped in Axel's love, Amber buried her bashful face in his chest, quietly listening to his sweet nothings. "Amber, I love you. I love you very, very much."

Amber winked at him cheekily. "In that case, prove it to me."

"As long as your hips can take it, I can spend three days and three nights proving it to you. We don't even have to leave the room." Axel sucked on her reddened earlobe, his alluring eyes filled with a wild, intense fire.

Amber's face turned completely red. She struggled, pushing him away.

Filling her up after eating, and eating again after she was filled up.

She remembered the taste of those three days and three nights with Axel—a whirlwind of heaven and hell. He had made her melt, but it had felt like she might die.

The dough lay in a messy heap, the planned desserts forgotten. But there was something else they could do instead.

After two hours of passionate lovemaking, Axel carried Amber to the bathroom to clean her

up.

She never allowed him to leave the lights on during their lovemaking, and he always respected her wishes.

This time, Amber was completely drained. She fell asleep without even realizing it.

When she felt a gush of warm water against her skin, she slowly opened her eyes. She was soaking in the warm bathtub, completely naked.

Then, she noticed Axel, sitting on the edge of the bathtub in his bathrobe as he wiped down her body gently and patiently.

She let out a scream, wrapping her arms around herself. Water splashed across the bathroom.

"Amber, what's wrong? What happened?"

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Axel didn't care that he was soaked to the bone. He grabbed onto Amber's shoulders as she trembled violently.

"You're alright... I'm here! Don't be afraid!

Amber stared at him blankly. Her face was pale, and her mouth hung open. It was as if she were drowning, gasping for air.

"Was it a nightmare? You're okay. Don't be afraid... I'm right here.' Axel panicked. He pulled her into his arms.

"H... I'll help myself." Amber shivered uncontrollably, trying to cover the old scars on her body.

Back at The Millennium, Jameson had tormented her for days. That dark, humiliating past was suffocating her.

She avoided leaving the lights on because intimacy deeply traumatized her.

She only showered alone; those hideous scars were constant reminders of her shameful past.

The trauma lingered, and she didn't want the love of her life to see her in such an ugly state. Surprise flashed across Axel's eyes. He realized what was happening.

He stepped into the bathtub with her, embracing her tightly. His eyes were bloodshot.

"Amber, listen to me," he said, his arms wrapped securely around her.

Tears welled up in Amber's eyes. Being in Axel's warm embrace gradually calmed her.

"Amber, you are absolutely wonderful, I'm the lucky one to be with you. I am the one who doesn't deserve you." Axel gently patted her back as she trembled. Those scars pained him

too.

The past is the past. Let's look ahead. Happier days are waiting for us."

In the early hours of the morning, all was silent within Heightsnew Villa.

Alyssa sat on the patio, a blanket wrapped around her, gazing at the moon. She was worried about Jasper and the terrifying schemes Justin and Zachary might be plotting.

"Lyse? What are you doing here?"

Alyssa's mind came back to reality. Her eyes lit up when she saw Axel. "Axel, when did you return?"

Tonight. Sorry, I didn't go to you and Jonah because I have been looking after Ambs.

Axel's heart ached. He took off his coat and put it around Alyssa's shoulders. 'It's too cold out here. Let's go inside.'

"I'm not cold. I used to love sitting here, watching the snow. Mom did too."

Alyssa could tell from the look on Axel's face that he was worried. In a concerned voice, she asked, "Axel, are you and Ambs alright?"

"Amber isn't doing too well." A pain shot through Axel's heart when he thought of how despondent Amber looked.

"What happened?"

"She's still haunted by her past. She doesn't talk about it because she doesn't want me to worry. She's been struggling internally."

Sitting beside Alyssa, Axel stared out at the snowy grounds. "I feel helpless. I can't erase her past..."

"Ambs is the strongest woman I know. If anyone else went through what she went through, they would have been worn down long ago, I admire her greatly."

Alyssa gave Axel a gentle pat on his shoulder. "Axel, everything will be okay. You and time are the best medicine for Ambs."

"I plan to marry Amber once I'm done with my current tasks." Axel closed his eyes. In a determined voice, he declared, "I'm resigning from the organization."

Alyssa was in utter shock and disbelief. "Axel, you're resigning?"

Axel had once claimed that he would dedicate his life to his career. Was he giving it up for

Amber?

"Yeah. Amber needs me." Axel smiled. 'Frankly, I've had this thought for a while now, and I've only finally decided tonight. I just want Amber to be happy and well, If she's not, then everything else is pointless.'

Alyssa was deeply moved by Axel's affection and courage, so much so that tears filled her eyes.

Axel chuckled. "So, Lyse, let me know if there's anything you need me to do while I still have the authority. This offer won't last forever!"

Axel returned to his playful self, easing up the slightly melancholic atmosphere around them.

After a slight pause, Alyssa sighed. With a serious and sharp look in her eyes, she said, 'Axel, help me find the whereabouts of the ex-chairman of Dutton Group. Specifically, Justin's uncle, Zachary Dutton. Could you please look into this?'