

CAN'T WIN ME BACK

Chapter 2471

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When Jonah reached the bedside, he leaned in slowly, giving Julien an unobstructed view of his tanned skin, well defined abs, and that devastatingly captivating face.

Reclining against the headboard, Julien found himself lost in Jonah's eyes. His breath hitched, and his mind momentarily blanked as Jonah's mesmerizing gaze locked onto him.

What could he do? His heart still betrayed him, a frantic drumbeat against his ribs. He was a fool—a pathetic fool.

Jonah braced his arms on either side of Julien's head, his dark eyes overflowing with a raw, possessive affection. It was as if he sought to consume Julien—just as he had last night.

"Julien, does it still hurt—"

"Fuck you!"

Julien's bloodshot eyes blazed as he swung his hand, landing a sharp slap across Jonah's face.

The illusion of his frailty shattered. A crimson handprint bloomed on Jonah's cheek in a split second, the flesh puffing up visibly.

But the sting barely registered. Not when the ache in Jonah's chest was already unbearable.

"Jonah, right now, not only do I loathe you, but everything about you every single thing you do disgusts me!"

With all his strength, Julien shoved Jonah away. Shaking, he yelled, "What made you think that you could touch me? What made you think you had the fucking right?"

Jonah stiffened, his entire body locking up. He looked lost for the first time—like a stray dog caught in the rain, cornered with nowhere to run.

"The drink you had at the bar last night was spiked_"

"Even so, that still has nothing to do with you!" Julien cut him off, his voice sharp enough to wound. "Who the hell do you think you are? You mean nothing to me!"

He yanked his clothes from the floor and hastily put them on. Then, digging into his wallet, he pulled out a stack of Aerian dollars.

With a resounding smack, he slapped the money against Jonah's bare chest.

"Consider it payment for last night. And don't ever show your face in front of me again. I never want to see you again!"

Without another word, he turned on his heel and stormed out.

The room was silent, broken only by the leaden thud of Jonah's heart, a lonely drumbeat in the vast emptiness. "Judas!"

The door burst open, and Evan rushed inside, panic written all over his face.

"Mr. Lovelace took off! You fought so hard to find him! You can't give up now! You have to win him back no matter what it takes!"

Jonah remained motionless, his face pale and drawn.

Evan's frustration mounted. He had witnessed Jonah's last heartbreak, watching him spiral into an abyss so deep that it nearly swallowed him whole. He refused to let that happen again.

"Julien hates me," Jonah said, his voice barely more than a whisper.

Trembling, he crouched down, picking up the scattered bills one by one. He clenched them tightly, his fingers pressing into the crumpled notes. "Evan... Perhaps it's time for me to let go."

Evan's voice rose. "Fuck! Are you mad? You actually believed the shit he just spewed? Words said out of anger don't mean a damn thing!

"I once swore I'd blow up the president's house in a fit of rage. Does that mean I'd actually do it? Are you really that dense?"

Jonah let out a bitter laugh. "I'd give up everything-my pride, my dignity-just to hold onto him. But what would be the point?"

Curling in on himself, he looked like a discarded tin can, crushed and abandoned.

"Julien and I... We were over a long time ago," he murmured. "I was the one who refused to see it. I was the one who clung to a fantasy that never existed."

When Julien exited the hotel, the sky had darkened, rain pouring in relentless sheets.

A sleek Lincoln pulled up beside him, gliding to a smooth stop.

"Mr. Lovelace?" The hotel's lobby manager approached, smiling. "A gentleman arranged a car for you, given the weather. Please, get in. You'll catch a cold."

Julien's eyes narrowed. "Was it Jonah Taylor?"

"Oh, no. Mr. Jonah Taylor didn't arrange this."

Julien frowned. "Then who?"

The lobby manager's smile didn't falter. "He didn't give his name."

Julien scanned the area, finding nothing suspicious. "I'll pass," he said coolly. "But thank him for me."

Without another glance, he strode off into the rain.

Meanwhile, inside the hotel's café, a man in a black cap sat in the corner, watching through the rain streaked window.

He lifted his coffee to his lips, his gaze locked onto Julien's retreating figure as a cold, calculating look settled on his face.

His eyes gleamed with something dark.