

## Chapter 7

### BOOK 2

#### Chapter 1

On the first day of the New Year, my boyfriend, James Jackson, takes me skiing in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. However, he insists on taking the dangerous backcountry route with Melissa Johnson.

I'm well aware of the dangers of off-piste skiing and firmly stop him from following Melissa's path.

Later, Melissa ends up trapped in an avalanche and tragically loses her life.

Years pass, and eventually, James and I walk down the aisle to be married.

But on our wedding day, just as I anticipate a sweet kiss, he pulls a fruit knife from his suit jacket and stabs me in front of everyone.

"If it weren't for you stopping me from taking the backcountry route that day, Melissa wouldn't have died!"

It turns out James has resented me all these years, blaming Melissa's death on me.

When I open my eyes again, I'm back on that snowy night.

Snow falls thickly on the backcountry trail, reducing visibility to near zero

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James, panting with excitement, looks at me with a glint in his eyes. "Do you fancy venturing on a more challenging trail?"

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"Do you fancy venturing on a more challenging trail?"

The moment James speaks, a shudder runs through me.

Memories from that day flood my mind.

The wedding ceremony at a five-star hotel.

Friends and family offering their congratulations.

James lifting my bridal veil as I close my eyes, waiting for a kiss.

But in the next instant—

His expression twists into something unrecognizable. From the inner pocket of his suit, he pulls out a gleaming fruit knife and plunges it into my chest without hesitation.

"Thud!"

The champagne tower collapses. Guests scream in horror and scatter in all directions.

James tightens his grip on the knife handle, his bloodshot eyes burning with rage.

Clutching my chest, I muster my last bit of strength to ask, "Why... James, how could you do this to me?"

We've been together since college, saving every penny for our first home.

I'm five months pregnant.

How could he commit such an unforgivable act?

James twists the knife cruelly.

As my consciousness fades, I hear his furious roar:

"If you hadn't stopped me from going to Wild Snow Trail that day, Melissa wouldn't have died!"

So that was it...

He's hated me all these years for stopping him from skiing off-piste during our winter vacation in college.

He blamed me for the death of his first love.

Sought vengeance against me.

But—

If I hadn't stopped him that day, we would have been buried by the avalanche!

"Baby?"

James's voice pulls me back to reality.

I really have time-traveled.

It's the fourth day of our winter vacation.

We're standing on an unbroken snowfield at an altitude of over two thousand feet.

The blizzard howls around us, reducing visibility to just a few feet.

Only the dim flicker of our headlamps pierces the darkness.

I speak coldly. "James, aren't you the team leader? Why are you asking me?"

If he's so determined to meet his fate...

Then I won't stop him.

In my past life, James had asked me the same question.

I had thought it was too dangerous and forcibly pulled him down the mountain.

Melissa, however, had insisted on continuing.

We parted ways here.

In the end, everyone who followed Melissa was caught in the avalanche.

James survived because of me.

Yet, he blamed Melissa's death on me.

This time, I won't stand in his way.

James makes his decision without hesitation. "Since everyone else wants to continue, let's go up!"

"Stop!" I shout. "I'm going down the mountain now."

James frowns, his tone sharp. "What nonsense! We've climbed all this way, and now you want to go back?"

I let out a cold laugh. "You two tricked me into coming here. I never wanted to climb in the first place."

"The one who wanted this adventure is Melissa—not me."

After my freshman year ended,

James and Melissa invited me on a ski trip, promising it would be a surprise.

I thought we'd be going to a regular ski resort.

I had no idea they would drag me deep into the backcountry of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Hearing my complaint, a flicker of embarrassment crosses James and Melissa's faces.

I smirk coldly. "Don't worry about me. Just give me a map—I can find my way down myself."

We've been skiing these wild trails for hours.

The terrain is complex, with countless branching paths.

But as long as I have a route map, I'm confident I can make it back safely.

James, however, refuses outright.

"It's too dangerous for you to go alone. Just stay with the group."

Melissa chimes in, "Yeah, Rosa, we've climbed this far—why give up now?"

The others eye me with clear annoyance.

James had introduced them as extreme sports enthusiasts—people who constantly sought the thrill of closed trails and untouched snowfields.

This time, they specifically chose the Sierra Nevada backcountry to challenge this wild snow trail.

"I heard the snow quality here is perfect for freestyle skiing!"

"And since this route is barely explored, we might even discover breathtaking landscapes. Once we post the photos, they'll go viral!"

They're all eager for the adventure and clearly displeased by my reluctance.

We reach a standoff.

Then, Melissa speaks.

"You can leave if you want," she says sweetly, "but leave your headlamp and supplies behind."

I narrow my eyes. "Why should I?"

The blizzard is in full force, and visibility is dangerously low.

"Are you trying to get me killed?"

Melissa steps behind James, feigning innocence. "You won't need them if you're going back. No need to be so aggressive."

James exhales sharply, then says coldly, "Stop wasting time and just leave. We don't need you slowing us down."

I grit my teeth. "I asked for a map. Are you pretending not to hear me?"

James's handsome face twists in irritation. "I don't have an extra map."

I don't believe him for a second.

Chapter Comments



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