

Chapter 1163 The Past Of Loraine's Parents

The sound of iron shackles scraping against the floor echoed through the room. Seated at the visiting window, Loraine couldn't help but feel a surge of nerves.

A man in a prison uniform, his head bowed and his demeanor subdued, shuffled forward.

Prison life had clearly taken its toll. Jaden's hair had turned grey, his eyes were sunken, and his spirit seemed crushed.

When a prison guard sharply commanded him to sit, Jaden flinched, his gaze distant and confused.

Then, through the visiting window, he caught sight of his visitor.

Today, Loraine was dressed in a vintage long dress, her hair styled meticulously.

She had consulted Rowan and Wesley to mimic her mother's favored style.

She was certain that upon seeing her, even Joseph might be momentarily fooled into thinking his daughter had returned, let alone Jaden, who was downtrodden in his cell.

Her effort was not in vain. Upon seeing her, Jaden's eyes widened, and a torrent of emotions—shock, fear, guilt—flooded his weary face. He stood up, agitated.

Then, he gasped out a name that had haunted him for years. "Tessa!"

Loraine regarded him with a steely gaze, remaining silent. Tears welled up in Jaden's eyes as he stammered, "Tessa, you despise me, don't you? I'm living this wretched life because you wish to punish me and take your revenge!"

In her heart, Loraine felt nothing but disdain. Even now, Jaden failed to acknowledge his misdeeds. His ongoing fear of retribution from his supposed victim was his only acknowledgement of guilt.

Jaden's mental state was fragile, and this confrontation only deepened his turmoil.

Seizing the moment, Loraine pressed on, adopting his mistaken identity to draw out more, "I trusted you so deeply. Why did you betray me? How could you exploit my trust to harm me? Do you know the agony I suffered when the fire started? I am helpless, awaiting death..."

As Loraine spoke, the imagination of her mother's final anguishing moments weighed heavily on her heart, sharpening her pain.

Jaden, having witnessed the accident, became increasingly convinced that Tessa had returned for vengeance. Overwhelmed by guilt, he broke down, sobbing uncontrollably. "I... I only wanted Farley to die. I never thought you'd be with him that day!"

His explanation was frantic and disjointed. "I sent people to rescue you, but by the time my people got there, it was too late. They couldn't even find Lorrie..."

Suddenly, he became hysterical, slamming into the iron window, his eyes red as he alternated between crying and laughing. "Tessa, I know I was wrong. I've regretted it ever since! And Lorrie—she's still alive, she's alright. She looks just like you! Please, for Lorrie's sake, forgive me!"

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The prison guards moved to restrain Jaden, but Marco gestured for them to hold back, allowing Loraine to continue her interrogation.

Regaining her composure, Loraine pressed him, her tone harsh. "Weren't you and Farley good friends? Why were you so intent on killing him?"

Jaden, momentarily stunned, then laughed bitterly, his response chilling. "Why? Don't you know? It was all because of you!"

His expression darkened, and he clenched his teeth. "When Farley and I were in the suburbs, I was the one who saw you first. Then Farley came to your rescue. Why did you choose to marry him instead of me?"

If the person questioning him were truly Tessa, she might reveal that Jaden, initially frightened by her kidnapping, had wanted to flee the scene. It had been Farley who insisted on intervening to save her.

Loraine, previously unaware of the full story, was now on the edge of her seat. She urgently asked, "Where did this happen?"

Jaden, lost in his recollections, muttered, "In the southern suburbs of Zodiac. Farley and I were there on a business trip for the branch company, and that's where you were kidnapped. Don't you remember..."

Suddenly, clarity dawned on him. He glared at Loraine and gritted his teeth. "You're not Tessa! You're Loraine, aren't you? I've been deceived by you! Forget it; I won't tell you anything more!"

At that moment, Marco stepped out from the shadows to stand by Loraine. "It seems we can't get any more out of him. Let's go."

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Upon seeing Marco, Jaden narrowed his eyes and called out in desperation, as if reaching for his last chance, "Marco, help me get out of here. I'll tell you everything you want to know! Just don't leave me in prison; let me go stay with Cayson, please."

Loraine paused, considering his plea. Jaden thought his plea had swayed her, but then he saw her expression turn icy. She spoke without a trace of emotion.

"Even if I could forgive you, my mother in heaven never will."

Chapter 1164 Investigation

Loraine and Marco exited the prison, the sound of Jaden's wails echoing behind them as he was reprimanded and led back to his cell.

Outside, the sun was starkly bright compared to the gloom of the prison.

Bathed in warm sunlight, Loraine tilted her head back, a solitary tear glimmering at the corner of her eye.

She smiled, wiping it away, and spoke with calm resolve. "I never imagined my parents died for such a petty reason."

It seemed that Jaden's obsessive desire for her mother was just one facet of his greed; his true aim was the wealth of the Torres family, using his infatuation as a mere pretext.

Yet, that was no longer significant; the root cause of her parents' death was this grim reality.

Marco, standing beside her, remained silent but thoughtful. He opened an umbrella to shield her from the intense sun and took her hand as they walked forward.

They entered their car and drove away from the prison.

Once settled in the car, Loraine felt her spirits lift slightly. "The southern suburbs Jaden mentioned might hold the clues we need. It's worth checking out."

Marco agreed and immediately made arrangements for his team to investigate.

Loraine then thought of Jaylah. After a brief pause, she stated coldly, "The Wilson family's extensive network could be a problem. If Jaylah is involved in what happened, she might try to interfere."

Marco considered this, then suggested with a hint of strategy, "What about informing Joseph about our investigation? This way, she can't use the Wilson family's influence to obstruct our investigation openly, and it prevents her from accusing us of eloping and getting married in secret."

He aimed to lighten the mood with his plan, and it worked; Loraine chuckled and agreed, "Okay."

For Loraine, this journey was not just about resolving the turmoil in Joseph's heart, but also about uncovering the truth behind her mother's departure from the Wilson family years ago.

If her mother had been compelled to leave, or if other hidden circumstances had played a role, it was Loraine's duty as a daughter to stand up for her mother and seek justice.

The passing of her mother was an irreversible fact, but those still alive had the capacity to address past regrets.

The southern suburbs, once underdeveloped and a notorious haven for criminals and other unlawful elements due to its mountainous terrain, had become somewhat more accessible after a decade of development. Despite this, the area remained relatively remote, requiring over half a day's drive from the city center.

After arranging their business matters in Zodiac, Loraine and Marco departed for the southern suburbs.

Meanwhile, at the Wilsons' house, Joseph was at home,

reminiscing over childhood photos of Tessa with a sorrowful expression, when the door to his room burst open. Vincent stormed in, his face etched with shock, and blurted out, "Dad, did you really disrupt Loraine's engagement party?"

Joseph's reverie was interrupted, and he responded with a cold stare, his voice deep and firm, "Marco is not the right match for Loraine. I've already lost my daughter; I cannot stand by and watch my granddaughter make the same mistakes."

Vincent was momentarily speechless, struggling to grasp his father's logic. After a brief pause, he expressed his frustration. "But I just heard that Marco and Loraine were so upset that they left the city!"

His tone tinged with irritation, he added, "I don't know if they've gone back to Vagow. I still need Loraine's help with something!"

Upon hearing this, Joseph's mustache twitched upward in agitation, and he glared, exclaiming, "So that's why he handed over the engagement ring so readily. Just as Jaylah predicted, they were planning to sneak off and get married!"

As he rose from his seat, his anger flared. "Do they think I'm joking? Alright, I'll show them how serious I am. I might as well start a hunger strike now and let Loraine witness it!"

Vincent rolled his eyes and retorted, "Dad, you're not getting any younger. Why create more drama for the younger generation? How does this help anyone other than making Loraine miserable?"

Joseph pointed a finger at him and scolded, "You ungrateful child, always talking back! What have you done all your life besides aggravate me?"

"Am I deliberately trying to annoy you? Come on! It's always about defending myself against the false accusations you make for Jaylah's sake. If I didn't stand up for myself, I'd have been crushed by injustices long ago."

Vincent had grown up talking back to Joseph and never shied away from expressing his feelings.

Joseph, teeth gritted, snapped back, "Don't pin everything on others! You make mistakes and never own up, playing the victim instead. What has Jaylah ever done to wrong you? When your mother passed away, her last wish was for you to look after Jaylah!"

Vincent knew a lecture from Joseph was inevitable, as it had been all his life. He scoffed dismissively, "Alright, you're always right. Can we just drop it now?"

His tone carried a hint of mockery. "You never believe me anyway, so just keep trusting Jaylah. But just a heads-up, she might have driven my sister away. Now you trust her over Loraine. Just be careful that Loraine doesn't start denying you as her grandfather as well."

Vincent grinned wryly. "I'd better keep a close watch on my niece. When they have children, I'll be the great-uncle, and you'll just be the envious onlooker!"