

# The Promise of Happiness Chapter 1

## Chapter 1

"Ugh..." The moment Natalie Nichols woke up, she felt her body hurting as though it was falling apart. She was stark naked beneath the covers, her pale skin littered with hickeys. There were so many that she could not bear to even look at them. *What's this?* Suddenly, a memory of a steamy scene from the previous night flashed in front of her eyes. She had entered the room in a semi-conscious state and was ravished by a stranger for the entire night. The man had paid no heed to her cries and pleas as he claimed her as his own. Natalie put on her clothes and got out of the bed with wobbly legs, determined to find the b\*stard that took away her virginity. However, the man was nowhere in sight. The only thing she found was a silver cross earring on the bed. *Was it left by that man?* Natalie pocketed the earring and was preparing to leave the suite when the door was kicked open from the outside. Thomas Nichols, who was nearly fifty, stormed in, followed by Natalie's twin sister, Yara. "Dad, Yara..." Natalie paled instantaneously. "You didn't return all night, and we thought that something happened to you. Who knew that you would be fooling around with a man in a hotel!" Thomas pointed his finger at his daughter as he berated loudly. Yara, on the other hand, whined, "You really went too far this time, Natalie! Dad, Aunt Yvonne, and I almost went crazy looking for you!" Natalie shook her head vigorously. "N-No, I didn't." "Have you no shame? See those marks on your neck and limbs? And you still dare to say that you didn't?" "I-I was set up by someone, Dad. I also have no idea how this happened." Seeing that Natalie was still defending herself, Thomas grabbed the ashtray beside him and threw it toward her. *Thud!* Before she could react, she had another wound on her forehead. Blood began seeping out of it continuously, trickling down her face. "I have just agreed to your marriage with Mr. Quinn, Natalie, and now look what you've done! Now that you're unchaste, how am I supposed to explain this to him?" Natalie widened her eyes in disbelief. "Jacob Quinn is nearly sixty, and all three of his previous wives are dead. And yet, you still want me to marry him?" "What's wrong with that? You should be honored to be able to marry him." Thomas held onto Yara's arm with a look of disappointment. "Fortunately, you and Yara are only similar in looks and not in terms of moral conduct. Your behavior has brought shame to our entire family!" Yara side-eyed her sister contemptuously. "Don't forget that she grew up in the countryside, Dad!" Faced with Thomas' cold glare and Yara's indifference, Natalie could not help but exclaim internally. *Look! This is the attitude of my own father and sister!* Not only was Natalie's forehead bleeding, but so was her heart. Ten months later, alongside the cries of infants, Natalie successfully gave birth to two children in her apartment on the outskirts of the city. As Yara scooped up the babies, who were still covered in blood, she glared viciously at her sister lying in bed, weakened by childbirth. "G-Give them back... to me..." Despite the deathlike pallor of her face, Natalie still tried her best to get up. "Give them back? Can you provide for them?" Yara taunted. "I-I am your sister... Your biological sister!" Natalie stared intensely at the girl who looked exactly like her. "Why... Why are you doing this to me?" "That woman is your mother, not mine! Back then, she chose you and left me to fend for myself in that house full of wolves. Where were you during those years of sufferings?" Yara's smile sent shivers down Natalie's spine. "The world only needs one person with this face, and that person is me!" "What are you trying to do?" "I'll burn you to death!" Yara poured the gasoline she had prepared beforehand all around the

room. She then lit the lighter and threw it on the ground before leaving with the twins. Within seconds, the fire began to spread rapidly throughout the apartment. Walking out of the building, Yara looked back at the sea of flames and then glanced at the newborns in her arms. Ten months ago, she had bumped into Samuel Bowers' subordinate when she went back to the hotel to destroy all evidence of framing her sister. Only then did she realize that the man that Natalie slept with that night was not the ruffian she had hired but Samuel himself, a prominent figure in Dellmoor. Surprised, Yara quickly came to a decision. She was going to trick Samuel into thinking that she was the girl from that night. After all, she and Natalie were identical twins. As long as her sister disappeared from the face of the earth, no one would know her secret. *As for the twins, they'll be beneficial in enabling me to get close to Samuel in the future.* "Why are you crying? If you two weren't Samuel's children, I would've left you there too." After a short pause, she continued, "However, with your support, it won't be long before I marry into the Bowers family." Unbeknownst to Yara, who was still deeply immersed in her imaginary world, Natalie had used all her strength in escaping through the window before the room was set ablaze. As she trudged away from the building, she suddenly felt a familiar sharp pain coming from the lower part of her body, followed by soft cries. *So I didn't just give birth to twins...* With trembling hands, Natalie lifted her third and fourth child. *For them, I'll endure all hardships.* She gritted her teeth as her eyes glinted with vehement hatred. "I will take back everything that you've stolen someday..."