

Rewritten 5

Chapter 5

After dinner, Madelyn went to bed early. Before drifting off to sleep, she indulged in a comforting cup of hot milk—a habit she had held onto for many years.

Beyond the thin curtains, the night enveloped the surroundings in darkness. A distant headlight cast a faint glow through the window, while the sound of tires rubbing against the road echoed harshly. Zach's Audi A6, a new car bestowed upon him as a reward by his company, was parked outside.

Stepping out of the car, Zach made his way into the foyer of the living room, placing his car keys on a nearby table. His keen eyes scanned the room, but the familiar figure he sought was nowhere to be found. Once, there used to be a slender silhouette perched on the sofa, engrossed in mundane soap operas. However, the space now sat vacant, with the coffee table immaculate, devoid of its usual assortment of snacks.

Zach's eyes dimmed a little. Rosario emerged from the kitchen and inquired, "Mr. Jardin, have you had dinner?"

Zach asked, "Where's Madelyn?"

Rosario replied, "She's not feeling well, so she went to bed early."

"I'll go check on her," Zach said, his hand in his pocket as he walked upstairs. A trace of weariness etched onto his face. He climbed three steps before halting, and uttered, "Jadie will return tomorrow afternoon. Prepare a few dishes she enjoys."

"Sure, Mr. Jardin," Rosario responded.

Zach made his way to the third floor, reaching for the doorknob of Madelyn's room. However, contrary to his expectations, it didn't yield. The door was locked from the inside. A furrow formed on Zach's

brow, unable to hide his surprise.

Both Zach and Madelyn occupied rooms on the third floor, while Hayson's resided on the second floor. Ordinarily, the second floor remained off-limits to all. As for the fourth floor, it served as Jadie White's exclusive living space. Previously, Zach could freely enter and exit Madelyn's room, as she never bothered to lock it. Yet this sudden change caught him off guard. Zach couldn't help but wonder, 'Has Madelyn truly given up pursuing me?'

Zach rapped on the door and called out, "Madelyn, are you asleep?"

Upon hearing the devil's knocking, Madelyn clutched her covers and huddled in her bed, deliberately ignoring the sound. She had already been awake when she heard Zach's car pull up outside.

Zach had acquired a separate house nearby, boasting two bedrooms, two living rooms, two bathrooms, and a kitchen. He rarely returned to the Jent residence as long as Madelyn remained here. Zach had escaped from this home due to his aversion to her. The only reason he had come back now was because Jadie White, who had been undergoing treatment overseas, was due to return tomorrow.

Jadie had suffered from asthma since childhood, a condition she was born with. The medical facilities in Venturia were only average, prompting Zach to send her abroad for treatment. The reason Zach had approached Madelyn so late was to caution her against harboring any ill intentions toward Jadie.

Jadie happened to be Zach's childhood friend, and the two of them had grown up together in an orphanage. Rumor had it that they had endured countless hardships, spending nights on the streets and battling stray dogs for scraps of food. They had relied on each other for survival.

In Zach's second year of living in the Jent residence, he personally brought Jadie back with him. Hayson didn't object much. It simply meant having an additional person to take care of, and the Jent family was financially well-off.

Jadie and Madelyn were around the same age. Jadie had a natural beauty since she was young, with a pure and innocent appearance. She was the type that almost all boys in their teenage years liked. She preferred to wear white dresses, had long straight black hair that reached her waist, and her eyes were both innocent and captivating. Even Madelyn couldn't deny that Jadie surpassed her in attractiveness. She accepted it as normal for men to be enamored by Jadie's charm.

However, Madelyn's jealousy transformed her into an entirely different person. Behind Jadie's back, she would frequently subject her to bullying. Using thin needles, Madelyn would prick Jadie's waist, arms, thighs, and other vulnerable parts of her body. But Jadie didn't dare speak out due to a dark secret she harbored. It was this secret that gave Madelyn the audacity to relentlessly torment Jadie. But then... Jadie met an untimely demise.

She died at the young age of twenty. She took her own life by cutting her wrists...

To this day, the memory remains etched in Madelyn's mind. It was a day engulfed by pouring rain when Zach barged into her room, his hands stained with blood. Illuminated by flashes of lightning, his eyes carried a murderous glare. He appeared like a malevolent specter, clutching her throat tightly as he said, "Why? Why... couldn't you just leave her alone? Madelyn... why wasn't it you who died! Curse all of you, Jents!"

In that chilling moment, Madelyn realized that Zach truly intended to end her life.

Jadie's demise became an everlasting nightmare for Madelyn, haunting her throughout her existence. She bore indirect responsibility for Jadie's tragic fate. In the years that followed, Madelyn found no solace in sleep.

Driven by the profound remorse stemming from her actions in a previous life, Madelyn made a resolute decision to make amends to Jadie.