

The Unwanted Daughter: When Love Comes Too Late

#Left Behind 131 - Read The Unwanted Daughter: When Love Comes Too Late Left Behind 131

Pretty Boy

He put some food on Tracy's plate and said calmly, "Don't worry. I'd never put myself in danger.

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If he could not handle a little trap, he would not have survived all the ones people had set for him over the years.

Tracy did not know everything about what Ronald could do, but she had been around him long enough to know-if he said he had it handled, he really did. She let it go without asking more.

After cleaning up the kitchen, she went to the balcony to work on her drafts.

Thanks to Ronald's management, her account had been growing fast-some of her videos had even gone viral, and more people were reaching out for collabs.

Still, she had been busy lately, so she only accepted easy, low-pressure projects that helped her unwind.

Ronald did not bother her. He sat on a low stool a short distance away, texting someone, the sunlight catching on the rough lines of his face, throwing shadows that made him look unreadable.

Light filtered through the trees outside, spilling across the balcony and turning the quiet scene into something that could have been painted.

Then, a sudden knocking shattered the calm.

Ronald's brows drew together. He glanced at Tracy, still absorbed in her work, then tucked his phone away and headed for the door.

Before the knocker could pound again, he swung it open-only to find Liam standing there, looking irritated.

Ronald frowned, his expression basically saying, You are not welcome.

"What do you want?"

"I'm here for my sister, obviously," Liam shot back, equally annoyed.

Then, before Ronald could block him, Liam leaned in and shouted into the apartment, "CeeCee! I know you're here. I've got something important to tell you!"

He slipped inside quickly, not giving Ronald a chance to stop him.

Ronald's jaw tightened as he followed, finding Tracy-who had been focused and peaceful moments ago- now frowning at the interruption.

Ronald caught Liam by the arm and yanked him back. "Mr. Liam, if you're looking for your sister, you've got the wrong place. This is private property, and I can call the cops."

Liam jerked his arm free, glaring. "Since when does some pretty boy get to stick his nose in our family business? Move, I need to talk to my sister alone."

Ronald did not even flinch at the insult. He even ran a hand over his face like he was admiring it. "Appreciate the compliment. But yeah, I am a gigolo-CeeCee's gigolo. She rented this place for me, so if

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anyone's leaving, it's you"

"You...

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Liam was stunned, clearly not expecting someone to wear "gigolo" like a badge of honor.

Tracy, who had been irritated at the intrusion, felt her annoyance fade just a bit at Ronald's words.

She set down her brush, wiped her hands clean, and stepped in from the balcony. "Mr. Liam, you sure you're not lost? There's no 'CeeCee' here for you."

Liam's brow furrowed. He deliberately stressed the word, "CeeCee, I have something important...

If you keep calling me that, you can see yourself out," Tracy cut in sharply, her tone cold and biting.

He had made it clear before that he did not recognize her as his sister and only cared about Erin.

He had not called her that name in years. Now suddenly using it? Disgusting.

Liam froze, clearly not expecting her to snap at him.

Ronald, practically glowing with satisfaction, stepped forward. "You hear that? No 'CeeCee' for you here!"

His smug look was so over the top that it was almost like his nonexistent tail was wagging.

Seeing that, Tracy's anger cooled even more, though Liam's only grew.

He wanted to insult Ronald again but could not find the words-and figured it'd be a waste anyway—so he turned on Tracy instead.

"I came here to bring you good news, Tracy. Don't be ungrateful."

Maybe because her temper had already cooled, Tracy did not bite back. She simply asked, "What news?"

Even though Liam was still fuming, he could not hide the smugness in his voice. "You're always saying we believe Erin and not you, so I went and investigated the kidnapping case with you and Erin. Found some clues."

He lifted his chin like he was doing her a favor. "I know you're cunning and manipulative, but I still used my own allowance—two whole months' worth—to look into it, just because you keep whining about how unfair we are."

"The moment I got something, I came to tell you. That's how much I care. Now you can't say I favor Erin anymore."

His attitude practically screamed, You should be thanking me.

Ronald rolled his eyes.

Was it just him, or did the Jackmans swap their brains for spare faces at some point?

And not even faces as good-looking as his.

Tracy could only stare at Liam, completely speechless.

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Chapter 132 For Her Own Good

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Tracy could not figure out why Liam had come all this way just to say that. What was he trying to prove?

The incident was long over, and the Jackmans had already written her off in their hearts, so why dig it up

now?

She had never been able to make sense of the Jackmans' way of thinking, but his words did catch her attention. What clue are you talking about?"

Seeing her ask, Liam assumed she had been swayed and puffed up proudly. "The kidnappers who took you and Erin? Turns out they were working together. The police have already tracked them down and will be arresting them soon."

Tracy's brows furrowed.

The man who had taken Erin was Tom Allen-Walter had left Cloudville to investigate him and had eventually traced the trail back to Erin herself.

Her own kidnapper, however, had been hired by Chris. Andrew had investigated that side, but though the culprit escaped, there had been no link to Tom.

So how could Liam be so sure the two groups were accomplices?

And more importantly, how could Liam uncover something neither Walter nor Andrew could, especially with just "two months' allowance"?

Ronald, who also knew the details of the case, was clearly thinking the same thing.

"You're saying they haven't been caught yet," he asked, "so how do you know they're the same group?"

Liam did not even hesitate. "I had people look into it.

"Took a lot of effort, but I tracked them down and gave the police the lead."

The pride in his voice was almost blinding, but Tracy did not buy it.

Liam might be a prodigy in racing, but he was impulsive and not exactly known for his patience or investigative skills. There was no way he could dig up something Andrew and Walter both missed.

Still, she kept those thoughts to herself.

Liam mistook her silence for acknowledgment, his grin widening.

“They haven’t been caught yet, but I’ve got people keeping an eye out. Any updates will come to me first. You’ve always said you were wronged, right? Well, your birthday’s next month. By then, I’ll have cleared your name. Consider it my gift to you.”

He lifted his chin like he was offering her a rare favor, already picturing her teary-eyed thanks.

Growing up, he had always trailed behind her, and she had never asked him for much, except for that day two years ago when she was sent to the Angelic Etiquette Academy.

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Chapter 132 For Her Own Good

Now that he had helped her so much,” surely she had to thank him.

He tilted his chin even higher, waiting.

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However, before Tracy could say a word, Ronald’s voice sliced through the air. “So it’s not even settled yet, and you’re already here taking credit?”

His tone dripped with disdain. “You and your family wronged Tracy in the first place. Looking into the truth is the bare minimum you should do. Don’t you think it’s pathetic to try to collect gratitude before the truth is even confirmed?”

The mocking hit Liam like a fist to the throat.

He glanced at Tracy, only to find her looking cold and distant, clearly agreeing with Ronald.

Something clogged in his chest.

He had not come to boast.

He had just wanted to share the news and to let her share in his excitement.

So why couldn’t she understand him at all?

Liam's eyes burned with a mix of anger and disappointment. "I did all this for your own good, and you can't even see my intentions!"

The words for you made Tracy instinctively recoil.

Before she could say anything, Ronald let out a sharp, derisive laugh. "For her own good? Please. This isn't about her-you're just dressing up your own ego trip as some grand act of kindness."

He leaned forward, his voice slicing through the air. "What you really want is to see her cry with gratitude while grovelling for your approval, so you can feed that pathetic, self-important pride of yours."

His gaze swept over Liam with open contempt. "What were you in your past life, a chef? You sure know how to serve up

blame."

The jab hit deep, and Liam's face went stiff with shock and rage.

"You!"

"What about me?" Ronald cut him off before he could gather himself. "Don't bark like a dog. I'm scared of dogs." With that, he grabbed Liam by the collar and unceremoniously hurled him out the door.

He had been careless earlier, letting Liam slip past him, but if it came down to an actual fight, the outcome was obvious. Years of surviving on the edge had given Ronald skills Liam's cushy gym sessions could never

match.

Liam stumbled, nearly smashing his face on the floor outside. Seething, he kicked and pounded on the iron door, but inside, no one so much as glanced his way.

Ronald slid the balcony door shut, muting the noise, and guided Tracy back into her chair. "Keep painting, Tracy. I'll stay right here with you."

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Chapter 132 For Her Own Good

She did not resist, and the corners of her lips curved ever so slightly.

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She had lost count of how many times the Jackmans had trampled her while pretending it was “for her own good.”

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Chapter 133 Suncord Mountain

Chapter 133 Suncord Mountain

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No matter how many times Tracy comforted herself, telling herself that it was okay and that they weren't worth it, she still couldn't help but feel her heart ache with sadness.

However, this time...

Tracy turned and looked over at Ronald, who was sitting beside her with a polite smile.

Noticing Tracy's gaze, Ronald cocked his head to the side and asked, “What's wrong?”

Tracy shook her head and averted her gaze.

Ronald would never push Tracy into talking about something she didn't want to.

Instead, he changed the topic, “CeeCee, next month is your birthday. Is there any gift you want?”

Tracy guessed that Ronald must have overheard what Liam had said. She shook her head and said, “I don't celebrate my birthday.”

Tracy used to celebrate her birthday. However, ever since Erin had shown up with a DNA test on her 18th birthday, Tracy no longer liked celebrating her birthday.

For the next few years after Erin's appearance, the Jackmans always forgot about her, so Tracy fell into a habit of not celebrating anymore.

Ronald watched Tracy quietly for a moment, falling silent. However, he was quietly thinking.

If she really didn't care, why would there be an air of loneliness in her demeanor now?

The rental apartment once again settled into a warm, peaceful atmosphere, which was broken only by the dull, persistent thudding at the door.

However, this sound didn't last too long. Liam didn't have much patience.

He gave the iron door one last kick before he stormed off.

The engine of the sports car revved as Liam stepped on the gas, blasting through several consecutive red lights.

As he passed one of the streets, a row of modified sports cars flew past him.

Immediately recognizing them as his racing buddies, Liam quickly turned his steering wheel to follow them.

Whenever he was in a bad mood, Liam liked to go racing. The thrill of speeding could help him forget everything that was bothering him.

With skillful precision, Liam weaved past car after car before finishing with a perfect drift maneuver, coming to a steady stop just ahead of the lead vehicle.

The brakes shrieked like knives raking across one's eardrums, and the two cars skidded to a halt nose-to-nose, barely a finger's breadth from colliding into each other.

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Chapter 133 Suncord Mountain

Liam found it extremely thrilling, and he felt so much better.

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He was about to get out of his car to greet his friends when he froze. All of a sudden, his face drained of color.

This place...

This is... Suncord Mountain?

Panic, fear, and dread coursed through Liam at the same time.

A flood of emotions surged up within him, and all the memories he had tried so hard to forget now rose, almost threatening to devour him.

He felt as if a huge boulder was weighing down on his chest, and all the oxygen seemed to have been sucked out of the air around him.

As Liam sank deeper into his emotions, someone suddenly knocked on his car window.

Liam came back to his senses and saw his friend standing outside his window with a strange look on his face. "Mr. Liam, what... what are you doing here?"

Suncord Mountain was off-limits for Liam. Everyone knew that.

As such, they never called Liam along if they went racing at Suncord Mountain. No one had imagined he'd take the initiative to come today, and in such an aggressive fashion.

Liam took several deep breaths to calm himself, though his face still looked a bit pale.

He opened the car door and stepped out, glancing at the cigarette his friend hadn't yet lit. Without a word, he reached over to take it, lit it, and took a deep drag.

Smoke curled around him as he exhaled, releasing thick clouds into the air.

Liam finally stabilized his emotions. However, his hand holding the cigarette still trembled slightly.

He glanced over at his friends, smiling as he punched one of their chests. "How could you not call me for a race? Are you afraid I would win?"

His friends exchanged looks, unsure of what exactly was going on.

After a moment's silence, a few of them laughed, trying to break the awkwardness in the air. "Yeah! We really can't hide anything from you."

"Mr. Liam, you're too good. If you're here, none of us will be able to stand out. No one dares to compete with you!"

"Exactly! You attend all the rally races in Cloudville. We can only sneak in a race at a place like Suncord Mountain where you don't come..."

He was interrupted as someone next to him elbowed him hard. Realizing he had said something wrong, he quickly fell silent.

The atmosphere became heavy with awkwardness once again as everyone glanced cautiously at Liam.

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Chapter 133 Suncord Mountain

This only served to irritate Liam.

I'm not some pitiful soul! Who do they think they are to look at me like this?

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Liam took another puff of the cigarette he was holding and waved his hand impatiently. "Enough, do you think I'm that fragile? Am I made of glass? We're racers. Of course, there's some risk of danger. It happened so long ago, it doesn't affect me any longer."

Even while Liam said he didn't care, his slightly trembling fingers and pale lips were telling a different

story.

After all, everyone was afraid of death. This was especially for someone like Liam, who had lived a smooth and easy life since he was young.

The accident had been a close call. Liam had been a mere step away from death's door.

If it hadn't been for Erin risking her life to find him and bring him home, he would have died a long time

ago.

Meanwhile, Tracy had gone on a trip even though he had been fighting for his life in the hospital. She hadn't even come by to see him.

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Chapter 134 Mastermind

Chapter 134 Mastermind

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I even forgot about how heartless she had been and went out of my way to help her look into the truth. She didn't appreciate it at all! As expected, she can't hold a candle to Erin!

With all these thoughts, the fear that had been swirling in Liam seemed to dissipate a little, turning into

anger.

Liam didn't have the mood to continue playing any longer. He threw away the cigarette butt he was holding and waved to his friends before he left.

He was determined to find out the truth of the kidnapping before Tracy's birthday. He was going to show her how ungrateful she was.

Redirecting his anger into the investigation, Liam threw himself wholeheartedly into it and was even more focused than he was before.

With Liam's assistance, the police were able to quickly arrest the kidnappers. After interrogation, the kidnappers also revealed that the person behind Tracy and Erin's kidnapping was Chris Woodward.

Upon receiving the news, Liam immediately went to Tracy to let her know, unable to hide the smug look of glee on his face.

"We misunderstood you before, but now I've helped to look into the truth and cleared your name. Don't you think it's time for you to move out of this rundown place and cut off contact with irrelevant people? Don't keep causing all this conflict with your family," Liam said.

As he spoke, he gave Ronald a look of disdain, unable to hide his contempt and hostility.

However, Ronald acted as if he couldn't see Liam, turning his head to smile at Tracy, waiting for her

response.

It was a look of complete trust, which only frustrated Liam even more.

Tracy didn't seem to be bothered by Liam's emotions and calmly asked, "Has Chris admitted to all these?"

Without thinking, Liam answered, "The police have already gone to the Woodward residence to arrest him. He'll have to admit to it sooner or later."

He continued with confidence, "This case will be closed before your birthday."

Tracy's face remained emotionless.

It was indeed Chris who had kidnapped me, but as for Erin...

Tracy didn't voice the doubts she had and conveniently ignored Liam's comment about having conflict with the family. She turned away and brought Ronald to an internet café.

She chose a corner seat, her fingers quickly moving across the keyboard as strings of code appeared on the

screen in front of her.

Ronald was surprised. "CeeCee, you have the skills of a hacker as well?"

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Chapter 134 Mastermind

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Tracy's eyes never left the screen even as she answered him, "No, I don't. I'm just looking for a file."

Tracy really didn't have that skill set.

It was Derek who could do that.

She had just learned some of the basics, such as the ability to find two files that Derek had hidden. Two files that even the Angelic Etiquette Academy hadn't been able to find.

Tracy quickly found what she was looking for, saved it onto a USB drive she had prepared in advance, and then left with Ronald.

It wasn't long after they had left the internet café that she suddenly stopped in her tracks and glanced behind them.

The internet café was crowded, with many different people coming and going.

Only Tracy knew about the files that Derek had hidden away.

If anyone was looking for those files, they would be watching her every move.

Ronald followed Tracy's gaze but didn't see anything out of the ordinary.

Confused, he asked, "CeeCee? What's wrong?"

Tracy shook her head and turned to leave.

Confused, Ronald looked toward the internet café with a thoughtful gaze.

Inside the internet café, an unfamiliar figure stopped in front of the computer that Tracy had used earlier.

His fingers flew across the keyboard, and very soon, strings of code appeared on the screen.

If Tracy had still been there, she would have immediately known that these were the files she had been searching for earlier.

The man quickly searched through the code and found a folder that contained a video.

His eyes lit up, and he excitedly opened the video.

However, once he had watched the contents of the video, he was so angry that he slammed the mouse onto the tabletop.

“Damn it!”

The loud noise attracted the attention of everyone around him.

Looking around, he quickly suppressed his anger, turned off the computer, and left in a hurry.

No one else knew about what had happened in the internet cafe.

However, the news that the Woodward’s only son had been arrested as a suspect in a kidnapping had spread quickly.

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Chapter 134 Mastermind

The Woodward’s had just accepted a new project from the Jackmans. With this new development, everyone was watching to see what would happen next.

Due to this incident, Andrew was furious and lost his temper at the office.

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The new project had barely begun before the Woodward’s scandal had come to light. To make matters worse, this scandal concerned the kidnapping of his two sisters.

Andrew demanded an explanation from the Woodward’s.

He was ready to take action against the Woodward’s. However, he would have to wait for the police to prove that Chris was guilty.

Although the kidnappers insisted that they were acting on Chris’s instructions, there was no solid evidence to back up their story. If Chris didn’t admit to it, the police had no way to prove it.

Without any solid evidence, Chris was quickly granted bail. After all, he was the Woodward’s only son.

Upon returning to the Woodward residence, Chris stormed into Felicia’s study.

When he first found out that Felicia and Erin were working together, Chris had planned to sabotage it to drive a wedge between Felicia and the Jackmans. He hadn't expected that he would have to take the blame for all of it.

He had underestimated her. Felicia had driven him into a corner, and even his own father was held in place and didn't dare to help him.

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Chapter 135 Trump Card

Chapter 135 Trump Card

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Fortunately, Chris still had a trump card up his sleeve. He was not worried about Felicia throwing him to the wolves.

Chris threw open the door to the study with a loud bang, storming in. Felicia was sitting in her study, poring over documents with her glasses on.

Seeing Chris standing there with a furious expression on his face, Felicia didn't get angry. Instead, she casually took off her glasses and said, "You have to knock before entering the study. Have you forgotten your manners? What have I taught you over the years?"

Felicia's tone was calm, and no trace of anger could be heard. Rather, she sounded a bit disdainful.

On the surface, Felicia always seemed to be a gentle and loving mother to Chris. However, when no one else was around, she didn't bother to hide her disdain and contempt for him.

Chris was already used to it. However, this time, he felt especially humiliated and frustrated.

"Why are you setting me up?" He asked angrily. "You're the one who arranged for those kidnappers! Are you the one who told them what to say to the police?"

Felicia raised her eyebrows and asked calmly, "Aren't you the one who kidnapped Tracy?"

Chris was left speechless.

He took a few deep breaths to calm himself before he spoke again, "Yes, I was the one who kidnapped Tracy, but I have nothing to do with Erin's kidnapping. Besides, I was trying to build a good relationship with Erin for our family."

Chris spoke with an air of righteous confidence, but Felicia merely scoffed coldly, "Do you really think I don't know what you did?"

His heart seemed to stop for a moment, and his anger turned into panic. "I... I don't know what you're talking about."

Felicia casually flung her glasses onto the table, crossed her legs, and folded her arms. She looked at Chris as if he were nothing more than a clown making a fool of himself.

"The reason I chose you in the first place was because you had ambition and desire, but you were also stupid and easy to control. You even had a fragile body that might give out at any time. Unlike your brother, who's smart, talented, and healthy. One wrong move, and he could easily stab me in the back."

Chris clenched his fists tightly. He was rooted to the spot, swirling with humiliation, anger, and panic. However, he quickly regained his composure.

After all, he had heard all these countless times as he was growing up.

Calming himself down, Chris spoke again with a gentler tone, "Since you chose me and spent so much time grooming me over the years, please help me this time. I was wrong. I promise it won't happen again."

He took a more humble and lower stance, hoping that Felicia would cut him some slack this time.

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Chapter 135 Trump Card

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However, Felicia just chuckled lightly, "Indeed, you really are dumb. You've been by my side for so many years. When have I ever used a pawn that is no longer useful to me?"

Chris's eyes widened.

He knew that Felicia was decisive, but he hadn't expected her to abandon him so easily.

"You're no longer interested in the shares I have?"

As the Woodward's' only son, he had received shares from the older Woodward's, which his parents had been fighting over.

Chris had thought that Felicia was doing this to give him a warning and to force him to give her his shares so that she would have an advantage over his father.

"Of course I want them," Felicia answered with a slight smile as she watched him. "As for whether I can get them, that depends on whether you're going to hang on to them and go to prison or if you want my help."

Of course, Chris understood what she meant, and his face drained of color.

He'd been by Felicia's side for so long, so naturally, he was very aware that even if he handed over his shares to her, it wouldn't change anything. She would still treat him as a useless pawn.

Chris gritted his teeth and no longer hid his emotions, glaring at Felicia with hatred.

After a long while, he suddenly let out a soft chuckle. "My dearest mother, why don't you take a look at something first before you decide if you want my shares?"

Chris unlocked his phone and pulled up a video from his gallery.

The video was in high definition, but the angle was tricky. It looked like it had been secretly filmed from behind some kind of hiding spot.

A woman was standing in the center of the video, dressed elegantly and lavishly. It was none other than Felicia.

A woman was tied to the chair that was before Felicia. The woman was wearing bold makeup, her features sharp and unforgettable.

Felicia stood there coldly, instructing the two bodyguards she had brought with her to strangle the woman with a rope before hanging the body to make it look like it was a suicide. Before she left, she even instructed the bodyguards to make sure they cleaned the place up thoroughly.

The video had captured audio as well, making it clear that Felicia was the one giving the orders.

Felicia had been calm and composed all this time as she sat on the couch. Now, her expression finally changed. She clenched the phone tightly with both hands and shot to her feet.

Chris watched her expression change with satisfaction. He leisurely moved toward the adjacent couch and

sat down.

Chris's earlier subservient demeanor had vanished. He crossed his legs and said, "In order to gain control over me and my brother, you killed our biological mother and set it up to look like she killed herself. If the police find out about this video, who do you think will be the one who goes to jail or maybe even gets

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sentenced to death?"

This time, it was Felicia's face that was drained of color.

She gripped the phone tightly, as if she wanted to smash it into pieces. "How did you get this video?"

Felicia had been very careful back then, but she hadn't expected to overlook such a significant piece of evidence.

Chris smiled, the corners of his lips twitching upward. "You're right. My brother is very smart. Before you came to us, he knew you had been investigating us quietly, so he secretly installed surveillance cameras in the house. That's how we managed to capture such a wonderful scene."

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Chapter 136 Finding A Scapegoat

Chapter 136 Finding A Scapegoat

Felicia's eyes widened in shock.

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When she had first approached the twins, they were just in their early teens. It was hard to believe that Derek had such boldness and insight at that age.

Felicia's eyes darkened as she glared at Chris. She looked like she wanted to kill him there and then, yet she did not dare to do so.

After a long pause, she suddenly laughed. “Your brother is really pitiful. He planned so much for your sake, only to be thrown into a place like the Angelic Etiquette Academy by his own brother.”

Chris’s smug smile was frozen in place, quickly morphing into anger. “If you hadn’t deliberately told me about Angelic Etiquette Academy, I wouldn’t have sent him there!”

Chris had had no idea what it was and had never wanted to cause the death of his brother.

It’s all because of this woman!

Felicia gave him a mocking smile.

She had no interest in taking up this argument with Chris. She got straight to the point. “I can help you clear your name. However, since things have escalated to this stage, we’ll need a scapegoat.”

Seeing her like this, Chris knew that she already had a plan in mind. He asked, “Who are you thinking of?”

Felicia raised her eyebrows. “The Jackmans already have someone they suspect. There’s no need for me to help them find another scapegoat.”

Chris immediately knew what she was planning.

Tracy was the fake daughter, who was not favored. Indeed, she was the perfect scapegoat.

If they made it seem like the Jackmans’ family conflict had implicated them, they could leverage that to demand higher returns on the new project partnership.

Killing two birds with one stone. I really can’t underestimate this woman!

At this moment, Chris was very glad that he had a good brother.

Even after his death, he had left such a wonderful gift behind.

Once Felicia made her move, both kidnappers immediately changed their statements.

Chris was released with no charges, but the investigation into the kidnapping continued.

When Liam received the news, he deflated like a balloon that had been let loose, and he started to avoid Tracy guiltily every time he saw her.

The kidnappers had confessed, so he had gone to Tracy and bragged. He hadn't expected things to take a turn. This was like a slap in the face!

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Chapter 136 Finding A Scapegoat

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On the other hand, Tracy acted as if this matter had nothing to do with her as she went about her own business every day.

There had been no progress on the investigation into Walter's death. Everything seemed to point to a perfect accident.

Maybe she needed to make a trip there personally to look into that guy, Tom.

On the other hand, there was a lead on Patricia's case.

Among the cases of female students at Sunderpeak High School who transferred out or committed suicide right before the SATS, there was only one Patricia Vesper.

She was from the same year as Tracy. According to Trina, Patricia was the student who jumped off a building one day before the SATS.

However, it was documented that Patricia had transferred out of the school the day before the exams.

Considering the reactions from Mr. Schmidt as well as the Renaults from Sinhaven...

By now, of course, Tracy knew.

Tracy looked at the documents she was holding. Even though she had already been prepared for the worst-case scenario, her hands still trembled.

David had been stealing medicine for her and had been beaten to death right in front of her. His last wish was for Tracy to pass Patricia a message, but she hadn't even been able to do that...

After a long silence, Tracy gathered up the documents and stood up. The look of determination in her eyes held a hint of hatred as well.

During her time at Angelic Etiquette Academy, David had often talked to her about Patricia.

Patricia was a happy and lively girl. Even surrounded by darkness, Patricia would be able to bring light to those around her.

She had always been a top student. No matter which school she attended, Patricia would always be awarded the scholarship for the top student and had gotten into a prestigious school like Sunderpeak High School through her own efforts.

How could someone with Patricia's personality jump off a building to kill herself?

If there had been nothing suspicious about Patricia's death, why would Mr. Schmidt hide it?

As such, Tracy resolved that she would get to the bottom of it and find out what had happened to Patricia.

Tracy composed herself, packed up everything on the desk, and got ready to get to work.

She had just left when she ran into the Jackmans, who were all dressed up.

All of them had originally been walking toward the car, surrounding Erin as they chatted and laughed. When they noticed Tracy, the warm atmosphere seemed to vanish.

Tracy wasn't concerned with the reason why the Jackmans were all dressed up. She habitually walked off

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towards a corner, planning to avoid them.

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However, Erin suddenly ran over and linked her arm with Tracy's. "Tracy, you're finally here! We've been waiting for you!"

Instinctively, Tracy stepped backward, avoiding Erin's hand.

It never ended well for her when she was standing close to Erin in the presence of the other Jackmans.

Seeing how wary she was, Erin showed a hurt expression, her eyes seeming to fill with tears.

Liam, who was the most impulsive, immediately came forward, "What is wrong with you? We're all out here waiting for you out of the kindness of our hearts. You don't appreciate our goodwill, and now you're treating Erin with this kind of attitude? I can't believe we were thinking of bringing you along for Erin's birthday party. It's your birthday today as well, so we thought we could celebrate together, but you're so ungrateful!"

Tracy froze for a moment before she remembered it was actually her birthday today.

She'd long forgotten about it. After all, it had been many years since she had celebrated it.

Chapter 137 Their Birthday

Chapter 137 Their Birthday

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Liam's comment made Tracy smirk. Her eyes filled with mockery as she glanced at the luxury car parked nearby, its door wide open.

Waiting for me?

She'd clearly seen them getting ready to leave when she stepped outside earlier.

She chuckled. "So, you're saying you want me to go to Ms. Jackman's birthday to celebrate my own? That car only has five seats. You expect me to believe you were waiting for me?"

Liam froze, like he'd just been slapped.

He wasn't even sure why he said that. He'd only stepped in because Erin seemed wronged.

He didn't mean to.

Tracy's words left Liam speechless, and the rest of the Jackmans looked guilty.

Today was Erin's birthday. They'd been planning it for weeks but had completely ignored the fact that it was also Tracy's birthday.

Breaking the awkward silence, Andrew said, "Alright, since you're here, get in the car. We're short on time."

He shot her a sharp look through his glasses. "You share the same birthday as Erin, so this party is also for you. We promised equal treatment. You won't be left out. Just behave today and don't stir anything up."

His tone was pure warning, as if he thought Tracy's earlier question was her way of comparing herself to Erin and stirring up trouble.

Tracy's smile faded. "Don't worry, Mr. Andrew. I'm not showing up to Ms. Jackman's birthday party, so you won't have to deal with me causing trouble."

She had plenty to look into and neither the time nor the desire to go to Erin's birthday party.

But as Tracy turned away, Erin didn't give her a chance to leave. "Tracy, the party is starting soon. Just come with us.

"Remember a few days ago when we visited Grandpa in the hospital? He told us to celebrate with you this year and even got you a gift. You wouldn't want to disappoint him, right?"

Tracy was ready to refuse, but she stopped mid-thought.

After her 18th birthday, only Franklin and Walter remembered her birthday. Now Walter was gone, and she couldn't bring herself to let Franklin down.

After a pause, she decided to follow them to the hotel.

She knew Erin's eager invitation probably meant trouble, but she didn't want Franklin worrying,

Even though he acted fine before she left, always joking around to cheer her up, she knew deep down his health and energy had taken a hit after Walter's death.

2:28 pm GG B

Chapter 137 Their Birthday

That was why she didn't want to burden him with anything.

Seeing Tracy slide into the car without a fuss, Erin subtly smirked.

All it took was dropping Franklin's name, and Tracy became easy to handle.

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The car rolled toward the hotel. Tracy sat as far away as possible, arms folded tight, eyes fixed on the blur of scenery rushing past the window.

In sharp contrast, Erin sat in the middle, practically glowing under the Jackmans' attention.

When Liam glanced over, he caught the quiet loneliness wrapped around Tracy. For some reason, it hit him hard in the chest.

He looked back at Erin.

He didn't know what Andrew had told her, but it made her chuckle, earning warm looks from their parents. Andrew even reached over and ruffled her hair.

Liam's gaze drifted back to Tracy.

A sharp pang hit his chest, and an uneasy feeling crept in.

The whole scene felt off.

Before he could think more about it, Erin suddenly called out, "Liam, Andrew got me two gifts this year. You're not gonna let him outdo you, are you?"

Her words snapped him out of it, and he brushed the thought aside.

"Of course not. I'll make sure mine outdoes his."

The warmth and laughter filled the car again, as if they'd forgotten there was anyone else riding with them.

When they pulled up, people immediately gathered to welcome the Jackmans.

Erin, the birthday girl, was in the spotlight as she stepped into the hotel with everyone fussing over her.

Wearing a simple shirt and jeans, Tracy was the last to step out of the car, slipping by without anyone noticing.

Winona spotted Tracy and almost made a snide remark, but the words stuck in her throat.

Instead, she shot Tracy a cold look before following Erin inside, already planning to give Tracy a hard time once they were in the hotel.

Tracy noticed none of it.

Once inside, she scanned for cameras, found herself a quiet corner, and sat down.

She didn't touch the food or strike up conversations.

She knew Erin was up to something, so she stayed on guard, but leaving out wasn't an option.

2:28 pm GGG

Chapter 137 Their Birthday

With the Jackmans backing Erin, she wasn't sure whether Erin might drag Franklin into trouble.

Luckily, Erin was too busy soaking up the attention from the crowd, acting like Tracy didn't exist.

Norris stuck by Erin's side like a loyal knight, handing her his carefully prepared gift.

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Chapter 138 Gifts

Chapter 138 Gifts

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"Erin, this necklace is the very first piece I designed. It's my favorite and the one I'm most proud of. I named it Starflow.

"I never got the chance to make it before because I couldn't find the right materials. But recently, my family managed to get our hands on a purple diamond. I went to the workshop myself and made it just for you. Do you like it?"

The Gills were big players in the jewelry business, with the best resources in Cloudville. And since Norris designed and crafted it himself, it was truly one of a kind.

Erin's face lit up with surprise and joy. She nodded excitedly. "I love it! You're the best, Norris."

Norris affectionately stroked her head. "You're my fiancée. Of course, I should be good for you.

"I specially prepared this for your birthday. If you don't mind, let me put it on."

He picked up the necklace and carefully fastened it around Erin's neck.

They looked like a perfect match, like they were meant to be.

Tracy, who had been quietly tucked away in a corner and barely noticed, suddenly lifted her head at the mention of Starflow.

She peered through the people, eyes locked on the necklace around Erin's neck, her pupils quivering.

Starflow?

Tracy could still recall the day that the design first took shape.

It was a weekend back in high school. Norris had been helping her with homework when he had doodled it right in her textbook.

"Tracy, I specially designed this for you. I'll use the finest materials in the world to turn it into our wedding gift!"

He'd been so genuine back then, full of ambition, showing her every change he made, even letting her choose the name.

Though Tracy didn't say much, she had carefully framed the draft after the final version was done.

But later, Erin had "accidentally" smashed the frame in Norris's room, and the draft had been "accidentally" torn apart.

That moment had unleashed all the grievances and anger Tracy had been holding inside.

Erin only stood there with watery eyes, acting pitiful and muttering, "I didn't mean to."

And just like that, everyone rushed to defend her.

Norris even said, "It's just a piece of paper, Tracy. You're overreacting."

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2:28 pm BBB

Chapter 138 Gifts

Just a piece of paper?

He knew exactly what it meant to her. But to him, it was nothing more than that.

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And now, that very draft had turned into his proudest and favorite work. He had made it himself and fastened it around Erin's neck.

Tracy had long stopped expecting anything from Norris, but her chest still felt like it was full of needles.

She knew people changed, but she never imagined they could change that much.

No one else noticed Tracy. All eyes were on Erin, as if she were a goddess who could steal the spotlight the moment she showed up.

Erin, however, noticed Tracy. She'd been paying attention to Tracy since they entered the hotel.

Instead of going over, she shifted slightly so the necklace faced Tracy.

She leaned against Norris's arm, smiling sweetly and happily. "Norris, does it look good on me?"

His voice was full of affection. "Of course it does. No one else could wear it like you."

Erin's smile deepened as she glanced at Tracy, pleased to see that Tracy's face went pale.

She knew exactly what that necklace meant to Tracy. That was why she was thrilled when she received it.

That was the best gift she'd gotten all year. She was happy when Tracy was upset.

Erin acted as if she'd just spotted Tracy, hurrying over with a cheerful tone. "Tracy, everyone is enjoying themselves. Why are you sitting here alone?"

Her movement drew everyone's eyes to Tracy.

Some sharper guests suddenly remembered it was also Tracy's birthday, though the Jackmans' reaction was different.

Acting clueless, Erin held up the necklace with a smile. "When I first saw the design, I said it would look amazing on someone. I didn't expect Norris would remember and make it for me.

"Tracy, don't you think it's beautiful?"

Ignoring Erin's clear showing off, Tracy gave a small nod. "It's beautiful."

She lowered her head, hiding her feelings and unwilling to get drawn into a conversation with Erin.

Erin's happy look slowly faded, and she cautiously asked, "You seem upset. Are you mad at me?"

"I know it's your birthday too. If you like this necklace, I can give it to you. Just don't be mad."

She reached for the clasp, her face showing she didn't truly want to take it off.

Tracy had no idea why Erin thought she was angry. She was about to say something when Norris stepped forward. "Erin, I made that for you. No one else has a claim to it."

2:28 pm BGB

Chapter 139 Her Scheme

Chapter 139 Her Scheme

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He glanced at Tracy, his face tight with disgust and caution. "Tracy, don't push it!"

Tracy had always known he took Erin's side, but hearing him say it still felt like a slap.

"Before you call me out for going too far, have you forgotten who this necklace was originally made for? And who gave it its name?"

Norris felt like someone had poured freezing water over him, leaving him frozen on the spot.

How could he have forgotten?

He still remembered the strong, sincere feeling he had when designing that necklace, picturing it on Tracy.

But Erin liked it now.

Before he could say anything, Erin's cautious, nervous voice cut through. "Tracy, maybe you misunderstood. Norris told me he designed this necklace thinking of his future wife."

That gave him the perfect excuse to break his promise. "Yeah, this necklace was meant for my future wife."

He frowned at Tracy. "Even if you named it, it was originally for Erin. She's put up with a lot for you over the last 18 years. You don't have any right to compete with her."

Each word stabbed Tracy's heart like a needle, making her lips go pale.

Still, the pain inside felt a bit lighter.

Tracy gave a small, bitter laugh. "You're right. I have no chance against Ms. Jackman."

Her eyes dropped, full of loneliness and distance.

"So, I won't bother you anymore. Can I leave now?"

Norris stared at her blankly, not sure how to react.

That wasn't right.

Tracy was usually confident, proud, and never one to admit fault or accept that she had no right.

She was even looking at him so coldly.

Panic hit him like never before, as if something important was slipping away.

"Tracy..."

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"Norris." Erin suddenly pulled him back, forcing him to look at her.

She said understandingly, "Don't blame Tracy. Maybe she's just upset she didn't get a gift. I get how she feels."

2:29 pm BBB

Chapter 139 Her Scheme

Norris sighed. "Erin, you're always so kind."

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The Jackmans stayed quiet, but their eyes showed they were indulgent toward Erin and full of disgust for Tracy,

They seemed to forget today was also Tracy's birthday. Even with promises to treat her equally, they hadn't gotten her any gifts.

If Erin hadn't said anything, they probably wouldn't have even let Tracy come.

They only saw Tracy as greedy and never satisfied, always trying to compete with Erin.

Even though Tracy never asked for anything.

Erin gave a shy, generous smile. "I just want us to get along as a family. I don't mind losing a little."

She looked troubledly at Tracy. "Norris made this necklace for me, so I can't give it to you. But if you want any other gifts, I can help you get them.

"They might not be great, but if it makes you happy, I'll talk to the people who gave the gifts. I'm sure they'll understand."

Her kindness only made Tracy look greedy and unreasonable.

Nearly everyone stared at Tracy with sneers and contempt.

She didn't care.

Maybe she'd gotten used to those mean looks, and nothing inside her stirred anymore.

Calmly, she said, "Thanks for the offer, but I don't need it."

Erin looked surprised, as if she hadn't expected Tracy to say no. "Well, okay. But if you change your mind, just come to me.

"By the way, if you're not taking any other gifts, does that mean you won't take the one Grandpa got you?"

Tracy, who was about to leave, abruptly stopped. "Grandpa's gift is with you?"

She and Erin had never been close. Franklin wouldn't have left the gift with Erin.

As expected, Erin shook her head. "Andrew put all the gifts in a separate room. I can take you to get them if you want."

Franklin had insisted that the gift be handed to Tracy in front of everyone to show his support.

Luckily, Andrew had mentioned it by accident. Erin had used some tricks to get Tracy's gift stored with the others, making sure Tracy stayed stuck at the hotel.

There were a lot of big shots from Cloudville at the party. Erin wasn't going to miss a perfect chance to embarrass Tracy.

2:29 pm BG B

Chapter 140 You Don't Have Evidence

Chapter 140 You Don't Have Evidence

A flash of malice flickered in Erin's eyes.

Tracy quickly avoided Erin's attempt to link arms with her. "No thanks. I'll get it myself."

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"There are many rooms in this hotel. You don't even know what Grandpa's gift looks like. I should come with you," Erin said, putting on a pitiful expression. "Or maybe you just don't want me tagging along?"

Norris couldn't stand seeing his beloved woman treated like that and jumped in. "Erin, forget it if she doesn't appreciate your kindness. Andrew knows what the gift is. He can go get it."

Andrew looked upset-not because of Norris, but because he was mad at Tracy for acting unreasonably.

He'd assumed Tracy still hadn't learned to behave herself after Erin had been back for years.

With so many guests around, Andrew didn't cause a scene. Instead, he planned to send Tracy away first and talk to her seriously later.

When Andrew went off to get the gift, Tracy said nothing against it.

She'd been cautious about Erin's eager invite all along. Waiting in public was safer than going with Erin to get the gift.

But despite all her precautions, Tracy didn't realize she'd missed something.

Soon after, Andrew came back furiously, heading straight for her.

Tracy sensed danger and tried to step back, but Andrew was faster.

The loud slap echoed through the hotel, freezing everyone for a moment.

Liam was the first to react, rushing forward to pull Andrew back. "Andrew, what are you doing?!"

Andrew adjusted his glasses, glaring at Tracy with anger and disappointment. "You should ask her what she did!"

Tracy turned her head, showing almost no emotion despite the slap.

She'd dodged slightly, so the slap didn't hit her full on, but her cheek was red and swollen.

Looking at him calmly, she said, "Everyone saw me standing right here. What exactly did I do?"

Andrew's anger grew. "Still denying it? We threw a birthday party for you. Erin even offered to give you her gifts, but you just weren't satisfied! You went and destroyed all of Erin's gifts. You've gone too far!"

Everyone gasped.

"What?!" Daphne exclaimed, "Are you serious?"

"I saw it myself. How could it be false?" Andrew snapped at Tracy. "Apart from the necklace Erin is wearing, every gift she got this year was ruined."

2:29 pm BBB

Chapter 140 You Don't Have Evidence

Everyone stared at Tracy with shock and disgust.

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"See? No matter how many years the Jackmans raised her, she can't change her bad nature."

"Good thing she's not their real daughter. Who knows how much more shame she'd have brought to the family?"

"I always knew she was arrogant and mean. Looks like I was right."

The criticisms were loud and open, like they wanted to make sure Tracy heard every word.

Erin smirked for a moment but quickly covered it up.

She gently pulled Andrew aside. "Andrew, maybe this is just a misunderstanding. Tracy refused to come with me to get the gifts. She might not even know where the room is."

He disagreed. "Erin, you always think too well of people."

"She's been with us for 18 years. We've thrown her birthday parties every single year. She knows exactly where the guest gift room is."

"She refused to get the gift, not because she couldn't find it-she was just scared we'd discover what she did!"

Erin looked shocked and hurt. "How could this be?"

"Tracy, I already said you could have the birthday gifts. Even if you wanted every single one, I'd have given them to you. But how could you go and destroy them? Those were everyone's blessings to me."

As they both blamed her, Tracy stayed calm.

She'd been through such situations so many times that she'd gotten numb to it.

Looking Andrew straight in the eye, she said, "Mr. Andrew, you sound so confident. Did you see me do it? Do you have any real proof?"

Andrew was certain. "Who else could it be? You're always competing with Erin. Out of everyone here, only you would do something like this!"

Tracy laughed softly and pointed at a camera in the corner. "I've been in front of that camera since I walked into the hotel. If you don't believe me, check it anytime."

"But you haven't done that. You didn't see me do anything, and you have zero evidence, yet you just assume it was me."

"Is this how you run your company? Just making wild guesses?"

Even though she smiled, Tracy felt sad inside.

She knew no matter what she said, Andrew wouldn't take her seriously or bother checking the footage.

2:29 pm BBG