

The Unwanted Daughter: When Love Comes Too Late

#Left Behind 201 - Read The Unwanted Daughter: When Love Comes Too Late Left Behind 201

Chapter 201 Misleading Photos.

Chapter 201 Misleading Photos

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It ended up with Franklin giving her a good scolding and declaring that if anyone dared to play matchmaker for Tracy again, he wouldn't mind teaching them a lesson himself.

Only then did Daphne stop her nonsense, though she began to resent Tracy in her heart.

I did it all for Tracy's good. Why couldn't she understand my good intentions?

Eighteen years of raising

her, and she turns out to be an ungrateful brat! She's not even a fraction of what Erin is!

Daphne was full of resentment. Every time she saw Tracy, she would give her a gloomy, reproachful look, as if to say, "I'm mad right now. You'd better come over and apologize to me immediately."

Of course, Tracy noticed, but she chose to play dumb. She didn't even glance at Daphne, keeping herself busy with her own things.

She had originally planned to follow Walter's lead and make a trip to Tom's hometown.

go alone. she However, Franklin worried it might be dangerous, and he wouldn't let her could only stay at the Jackman Villa for now.

During this time, Ronald texted her every day to check on her and make sure she wasn't being bullied by the Jackmans.

To avoid causing her any trouble, he never called.

But that night, right after Tracy had helped Franklin settle into bed, she got a call from Ronald.

"CeeCee, are you still at Jackman Villa?"

On the phone, Ronald's voice sounded unusually serious.

A bad feeling rose in Tracy's chest. She lowered her voice and asked, "I am. What's wrong?"

Ronald was silent for a moment before saying, "For now, you'd better stick close to your grandpa. Don't let him go online, and make sure he doesn't hear any gossip or rumors from outside."

Hearing how serious he sounded, Tracy felt a jolt of unease. "What happened?"

Ronald knew how important Franklin was to her, and he struggled *to* find the right words to break the news.

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Chapter 201 Misleading Photos

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After some hesitation, he said, "Do you remember the man we caught at the hospital taking pictures outside your grandpa's room? Winona didn't send him. The person behind him...

named Tom."

Back then, Ronald felt that there was something off about that man and had planned to investigate quietly. But the man had vanished after that day.

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Most of his attention had been on helping Tracy deal with Matthew and making other secret arrangements. He hadn't paid much mind to that man, only to realize later that it cost him a

step.

It wasn't the first time Tracy had heard the name Tom, but every time she did, it was connected to Erin.

Her voice dropped. "What did Erin do this time?"

Ronald's tone was equally grim with an icy edge. "She hired someone to take a bunch of misleading photos of you and Mr. Franklin, then had people spread rumors online-

“Tracy!”

A furious shout suddenly rang out from behind Tracy, cutting him off mid-sentence

Tracy instinctively turned around and saw Benjamin storming in from the doorway furiously. Andrew was right behind him, wearing the same stormy expression.

The two had been searching the house for her, and Benjamin was so furious that he dropped his usual composure and roared, “Where’s Tracy? Tell her to get out of here right now!”

In Tracy’s memory, Benjamin had always been calm and dignified. The rare times she had seen him this furious were always over company matters.

This time was probably no different.

Tracy didn’t bother responding to the two raging men. Her fingertips turned white from gripping her phone tightly as a glint of killing intent flashed in her eyes.

Erin really does have a death wish!

Benjamin’s voice was so loud that Ronald could hear it through the phone.

He immediately shot up from the couch, his voice sharp with worry. “CeeCee, leave Jackman Villa right now. I’ll come pick you up—”

“No.” Tracy’s voice was calm, but firm. “I’ll handle it myself. Don’t get involved.”

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Getting involved in the Jackmans’ affairs would do Ronald no good. She had already endured the worst of Benjamin’s fury before; at most, they would just send her off to the Angelic Etiquette Academy again.

Ronald could hear the resolve in her voice, but he was still worried.

After pondering momentarily, he said, “Alright. CeeCee, keep yourself safe.

“And, can you not hang up?”

The thought of leaving Tracy alone in that lion's den made him uneasy.

Tracy's finger, which was hovering over the red hang-up button, paused. It felt as if a feather had lightly brushed her heart.

After a long silence, she gave a soft "Mm" and slipped the phone into her pocket. Then she pulled the curtains aside and stepped out from the balcony.

Benjamin's furious shouts were loud and penetrating. Not only did a few servants who were still awake hear it, but even Daphne, Liam, and Erin, who had been about to turn in for the night, came downstairs.

Tracy was grateful that Franklin's room was on the top floor with good soundproofing. Given how deeply he slept at his age, the commotion hadn't stirred him.

The moment Tracy appeared, nearly every gaze turned to her. They were curious about what she had done to provoke Benjamin's anger.

No one had expected that the instant Benjamin saw her, he would stride forward in silence and suddenly raise his hand.

No data found.

Chapter 202 Benjamin's Rage

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Seeing Benjamin storm toward her furiously, Tracy frowned and instinctively stepped aside without thinking.

Benjamin's slap hit nothing, and after a brief moment of stunned disbelief, his anger flared even hotter. "How dare you dodge?"

Tracy found his remark downright foolish.

Was I supposed to just stand there and let you slap me?

Back when she had first come out of the Angelic Etiquette Academy, maybe she wouldn't have dared to move.

Because there, if she tried to dodge, they would only hit her harder—and it doesn't end there.

But now, she had left that place, and she would never again live under its chains.

Derek and the others had risked their lives to pull her out of that hell—not so she could spend the rest of her days cowering in its shadow.

Not only did Tracy dodge, but she also deliberately put more distance between herself and Benjamin.

Her actions pushed him over the edge. Without a second thought, he yanked the leather belt from his waist. "You little punk! Let's see where you run now!"

He raised the belt and lunged toward her.

Crack!

Tracy didn't have time to react to Benjamin's sudden outburst, and pain seared across her shoulder where the belt had struck.

The sharp crack of leather on flesh was so loud and jarring that, even through the phone, Ronald felt the strike on his heart.

Without a moment's hesitation, he turned on his heel and strode out the door.

His face was as cold as frost, and his eyes blazed with killing intent.

Every last one of the Jackmans deserves to die!

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Chapter 202 Benjamin's Rage

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Meanwhile, Tracy bit down on the pain and didn't make a sound. She quickly stepped aside again, dodging the next swing of the belt.

From what Ronald had told her earlier, she could roughly guess why Benjamin was angry, but she still didn't know the full story.

They were at Jackman Villa, and Franklin was still upstairs. She did not want to cause a commotion.

Once she had put some space between herself and Benjamin, she spoke first. "If you're going to hit me, Mr. Benjamin, you should at least give me a reason."

But Benjamin said nothing. He only kept swinging the belt.

His eyes were burning with hatred, as if she were not the daughter he had doted on for eighteen years, but an enemy who had destroyed his family.

Benjamin valued dignity and appearances above all else. Even Daphne, who had been married to him for decades, had never seen him lose control like this. The others stood frozen, not knowing what to do.

Only Erin, standing at the top of the stairs, couldn't hide the smile at the corner of her mouth. Her gaze kept flicking toward the upper floor.

Go ahead, let chaos reign

. Wake that old man up. Drive him into his grave. All my secret meddling paid off—Benjamin's now raging out of his mind.

Erin excitedly watched as the chaos grew, but the next moment, her smile froze.

For reasons she couldn't guess, Liam suddenly rushed forward and stood in front of Tracy.

The belt landed with a sharp crack on Liam's arm.

The burning pain made his face change instantly, and he couldn't help shouting, "Dad, are you crazy!"

In all his life, Liam had never been hit before. He never knew a belt could hurt that much.

Seeing her youngest son take the blow, Daphne finally snapped out of her shock. She hurried over to pull Benjamin back. "Honey, let's talk this through. Calm down."

She snatched the belt from his hand before asking, "What happened?"

Whether from rage or exhaustion, Benjamin stood there, breathing heavily, saying nothing.

Chapter 202 Benjamin's Rage

+5 Free **Coins**

It was Andrew, who had been keeping a stern expression, finally spoke up. He glared coldly at Tracy. "Why don't you ask her what stupid thing she's done now?"

Everyone's eyes turned to Tracy.

Curiosity, doubt, gossip, disgust...

There were all kinds of looks, but not one of them cared whether the blow she had taken earlier had hurt.

Daphne frowned, her gaze heavy with disappointment and helplessness. "Tracy, what have you done again this time?"

The word "again" made it seem as if she was certain Tracy had done something shameful and

wrong once more.

Tracy stepped back, widening the distance between herself and all of the Jackmans, including Liam.

She ignored Daphne's question and instead fixed her eyes on Erin, her gaze sharp enough to

cut.

The moment Daphne saw her looking at Erin, her face darkened. "I'm talking to you. Why are you looking at Erin? Are you trying to throw dirt on her again?"

She always loved blaming Tracy.

Even back when they saw her push Erin down the stairs, she still insisted that Erin had fallen on her own.

Andrew stepped in front of Erin, his face cold as he glared at Tracy. "The photos are already all over the internet. Everyone knows what kind of shameless person you are. Don't you dare try to drag Erin into this."

"What photos?" Liam asked anxiously.

When no one gave him a straight answer, he pulled out his own phone to check.

But there was no need to search.

The news was already exploding online. The moment he unlocked his phone, a flood of headline notifications poured in.

"Intimate Photos Exposed, the Jackmans Caught in Scandal."

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Chapter 202 Benjamin's Rage

"Granddaughter Turned Mistress? Twisted Morality or Human Nature?"

"Fake Heiress Seduces 80-Year-Old Tycoon to Enter the Family!"

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One twisted disgusting headline after another filled the screen, making Liam feel like his phone had been infected with a virus.

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Chapter 203 Get Her off Me!

Chapter 203 Get Her off Me!

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+5 Free Coiris

Every single one of those twisted news alerts was filled with photos of Tracy and Franklin together.

There was one where Franklin sat in his wheelchair while Tracy crouched in front of him.

Another showed Franklin lying in a hospital bed with Tracy resting in his arms.

And then there were the photos of Franklin lying in bed while Tracy gently tucked the blanket around him, her face full of tenderness.

The photos were actually innocent, but the angles and article made them look overly intimate, almost suggestive, fueling wild speculation.

Especially in the comment section, a–bunch of “insiders” started sharing all kinds of rumors.

[I’m in the circle. I’ve seen that fake trying to compete with Ms. Jackman more than once, counting on years of familial affection. But her schemes were too basic, the Jackmans never fell for it and they grew more and more annoyed with her.]

that.

[No wonder the Jackmans changed the fake heiress’s last name in front of the media. At the time, I thought the Jackmans were too cruel to toss aside eighteen years of love just Turns out it was she who pushed them to it.]

[I always wondered why the Jackmans kept her around when they clearly hated her. Turns out the old man couldn’t bear to let her go!]

[Tracy is shameless. Just to stay in the wealthy family and enjoy its privileges, she even set her sights on an eighty–year–old man. With skills like that, she could succeed at anything!]

[There’s no smoke without fire. I bet something was going on between them long before. It was only after the fake heiress thing was exposed that they finally had the chance to cross the line.]

[I heard Franklin is practically at death’s door, yet he somehow found himself a much younger lover.]

[The high society circle is completely messed up.]

On and on, the filthy comments poured in.

It seemed like everyone thought that leaving the most explosive comments while watching the drama from behind a screen made them look smart and insightful. They acted as if they could see through everything.

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Chapter 203 Get Her off Me!

In reality, it was just stupid and disgusting.

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Something in Liam's mind seemed to explode. He stood frozen, not even reacting when Daphne snatched his phone from him.

His neck turned stiffly toward Erin.

These photos...

"What? This ... this...

"

Daphne screamed. Her hands trembled badly as she gripped the phone, her face turning pale.

She whipped her head toward Tracy. A mix of disappointment, anger, and pure disgust filled her eyes.

"The Jackmans have stood proud in Cloudville for so many years, and we've never faced anything this humiliating. Tracy, just how far do you want to ruin us before you stop?

"I must be the unluckiest person alive to have met you!"

She could already imagine how all the wealthy socialites in their circle would r next time they saw her.

Her words cut deeper than a winter wind.

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Among the Jackmans, no matter how much they disliked or rejected Tracy, Daphne had always carried the faintest trace of motherly care.

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It was this nearly invisible thread of motherly love that made Tracy's bond with Daphne ran

else. deeper than anyone

Which was why hearing these words from Daphne's mouth hurt far more than hearing them. from anyone else.

But Tracy had no time to dwell on the pain. She had already seen the disgusting comments on the screen.

Ronald had warned her earlier, but she had thought it was only about using Franklin to target her, or maybe using her to get to Franklin.

She never imagined this.

In an instant, a wave of rage surged through her. It felt like it burned away every shred of reason she had left.

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Chapter 203 Get Her off Me!

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Her head snapped toward Erin. The fury and killing intent in her eyes made the smug Erin's heart skip a beat, and she instinctively stepped back.

W—what is she trying to do?

Before Erin could push away the fear, Tracy suddenly charged toward her.

No one expected it. They were all still caught up in their own anger and accusations. They could only stare in shock as Tracy closed the distance.

Smack!

Tracy swung with almost all her strength, slapping Erin so hard that she crashed against the stair railing.

Erin was stunned. Her head was still ringing when a sharp pain spread across her scalp.

Tracy grab her hair in a tight grip, her voice low with restrained fury, like a demon whispering in her ear. "Didn't I warn you to never lay a hand on Grandpa?"

Panic flashed in Erin's eyes. She clawed at Tracy's hand, trying to free her hair, while screaming for help. "Help! Mom! Andrew! Get her off me!"

Her cry finally snapped the others out of their shock. They rushed forward in a flurry.

"What are you doing? Let go of her!"

"Tracy! How long are you going to keep this up? Let Erin go!"

"You brat! Stop! Right now!"

The Jackmans scrambled to pull them apart, shouting curses at Tracy as they did.

Daphne held Erin close, looking heartbroken and worried.

Benjamin grabbed Tracy's arm, trying to drag her away, but she clung to her target like a crocodile locking onto its prey. Even when he slapped her across the face, her murderous gaze never left Erin.

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The Intimidating Tracy

Andrew tried to pull Tracy's hair, but the pain only made her grip Erin's hair tighter, and it caused Erin to scream louder.

Only Liam stood frozen at the bottom of the stairs, his eyes darting back and forth between Erin and Tracy, unsure of what to do.

Seeing Erin's eyes well up with tears from the shock, Andrew felt heartbroken for her.

His gaze shifted to Tracy, and a flash of cold light glinted from behind the gold frames of his glasses.

Without warning, he reached out and grabbed Tracy's fingers.

Crack!

Amid the commotion, the sharp crack of a bone breaking echoed clearly to all like a hammer blow.

Tracy's face went deathly pale from the pain. She didn't make a sound, but her grip loosened, and Erin's hair slipped from her hand.

Erin immediately buried herself in Daphne's arms, trembling all over like a frightened child.

Benjamin and Andrew stepped in front of her, guarding her like the most loyal knights.

And right in front of them, Tracy was like a fierce dragon, ready to lash out at their dearest.

Andrew's usually calm face was filled with fury. "Tracy, are you out of your mind?"

"I am! I've been driven mad by all of you!" Tracy glared at him with hatred.

Her cheeks were red and swollen, her face pale, and cold sweat dripped down her forehead. Her pinky was bent backward at an unnatural angle as her whole hand trembled in pain.

Yet there was still stubbornness and defiance in her eyes.

Andrew's heart clenched unexpectedly.

She hated me?

But why?

They weren't related by blood, but he had always treated her like his sister. He believed everything he did was for her good. He didn't understand why she would hate him.

Still in Daphne's embrace, Erin was trying to look shaken and pitiful. However, a dark, twisted hatred flickered in her eyes, unnoticed by anyone.

Damn Tracy!

I will kill her one day!

I swear I will!

Chapter 204 The Intimidating Tracy

The tense silence was broken by the sudden sound of a bell ringing from upstairs.

It was the bell set up for Franklin to alert the family in case he needed help.

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Though old and frail, Franklin was a light sleeper. The commotion downstairs had clearly woken him.

Everyone instinctively looked up toward the second floor.

Erin's eyes lit up.

I almost forgot! That old man is the key!

Excited, she slipped out of Daphne's arms like a frightened deer grabbing onto a lifeline.

"Tracy's gone mad. O-only Grandpa can stop her! I'll go to him!"

With a look of sheer panic, she scrambled up the stairs.

Tracy immediately guessed her plan. Her expression darkened, and without thinking, she sprinted after her.

The force of her sudden charge threw Benjamin and Andrew off balance. One hit his head against the wall and nearly passed out, and another slammed his waist against the stair railing, bending over in pain. Daphne also stumbled, nearly tumbling down the stairs.

Before they could recover, Tracy had already seized Erin's hair and yanked her backward.

"Ahh!"

Erin screamed as she fell backward.

"Erin!"

The three lunged to grab her, but it was too late. They could only watch as she tumbled down the steps, hitting each one with a heavy thud.

Fortunately, Liam was at the bottom. He caught her before she hit the floor.

The stairs weren't very high, but Erin hadn't been ready. She hit a few spots on the way down, and though there were no visible cuts, her whole body ached.

She never expected Tracy to be this insane-attacking her even with a broken finger.

Her expression twisted with venom before she could hide it.

And just at that moment, Liam, who was looking down to check on her injuries, caught sight of it. He froze.

Erin... She...

Before he could say anything, Daphne and the others rushed over, pulling Erin into their care.

They were relieved to find that Erin wasn't bleeding. Then they immediately turned to Tracy angrily, ready to condemn her.

Tracy beat them to it, her voice cold and sharp. "If anyone dares tell Grandpa about this, I'll kill them."

The words were aimed at everyone, but her eyes were locked on Erin. The murderous look in her like it could actually cut someone.

Everyone was intimidated by her, and they were stunned.

Somehow, they all felt that Tracy might really be capable of killing someone.

eyes

Tracy then turned toward a maid who had been frozen in the corner. "Go see what Grandpa needs. And remember, do not let him find out what happened here."

The maid flinched, trembling as she stammered, "G-got it."

Once she hurried away, the room fell into another unsettling silence.

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Chapter 205 We Might Have Misunderstood Her

Andrew was the first to react. Along with his anger and disgust, there was also a strange discomfort in his chest.

He felt like the Tracy in front of him had turned into a stranger.

His little sister wasn't supposed to be like this.

Andrew couldn't help but frown. "Tracy, do you even realize how much the company lost because of this? We haven't even gotten to you about it yet, and here you are throwing a fit!

"If I had known you were this shameless, we should never have brought you back no matter how much Grandpa argued.

"It has been two years, and you still have not learned a thing. I think we should send you back to the Angelic Etiquette Academy for another two years. If you still refuse to learn, we will keep sending you until you finally understand and obey!"

Tracy froze at his words. A rush of instinctive fear spread through her body, sharper than the twisted pain in her fingers.

She was scared.

She was afraid that the Jackmans would really send her back.

From the day she returned, she had kept her head low around them, giving in to Erin at every turn.

She never wanted to go back to that hellish place.

But she didn't have to be afraid.

Even if the Jackmans tried to send her back again, Angelic Etiquette Academy wouldn't take her.

Derek and the others had fought their way through hell to drag her out of there. That was her final shield.

Tracy took a deep breath to suppress the panic bubbling in her chest.

Then she looked at Andrew coldly. "I have nothing to do with the Jackmans anymore. Even if you wanted to send me back, you have no right to do it."

She did not care how he would react. Lowering her head, she grabbed her twisted finger with her other hand and pressed hard.

Crack!

The sharp sound echoed, and her finger snapped back into place.

Her body trembled from the pain, but aside from a faint grunt and the cold sweat beading on her forehead, she made no sound.

David had taught her that.

– Dack WITCHE

village doctor.

When they got hurt at Angelic Etiquette Academy and didn't receive proper treatment, David had patched

them up.

He had even stole medicine for her when she had a high fever, but a teacher caught him and beat him to death right in front of her.

In his final moments, he had held her hand tightly, not just to express his final regrets, but to press the nearly melted pill into her palm.

Everyone watching Tracy was stunned. Even Erin forgot to react.

Normally, if someone's finger was twisted out of shape, the first thing they'd do is run to a doctor. No one would dare try to fix it themselves.

They'd only ever seen something Tracy had done on TV.

At that moment, the same thought ran through every mind.

Is this really the Tracy we knew?

Tracy ignored their reactions and went back to her room.

She had to find a way to reduce the swelling on her face so Franklin wouldn't worry tomorrow.

The others just stood there, staring at her back, completely forgetting how to react.

Erin's eyes swept over them, then she let out a small gasp and fainted.

"Erin!"

Everyone snapped out of it and rushed to her side. Panic was written all over their faces as they scrambled to get her to the hospital.

After a round of examinations, the doctor confirmed she was only badly frightened, with some bruises but no serious injuries. They finally breathed a sigh of relief.

By the time it was over, it was already past midnight.

Andrew still had to deal with the chaos in the news and its impact on the company, so he did not stay at the hospital.

Liam left with him.

On the way back, Andrew noticed Liam staring blankly ahead, lost in thought. "Liam, what is wrong? You have been off all night," Andrew couldn't help but ask.

When their father had scolded Tracy, Liam had stepped in to stop him. When Erin was being bullied by Tracy, Liam had not intervened either, and he had barely said anything the entire evening.

That was not like him at all.

Liam frowned, looking unsure how to begin.

"I..." He hesitated for a long time. "Do you think ... Maybe we had misunderstood Tracy?"

The concern in Andrew's eyes vanished instantly, replaced by a darker expression.

"You saw the photos. The truth is right in front of us. How could we have misunderstood her? What is wrong with you tonight?"

Liam retorted quickly, "I saw the photos, but Tracy did not take them, and she could not have leaked them. It would do her no good. She and Grandpa ...

"She has always been close to Grandpa. Even after Erin came back, nothing about that changed. We all know that. If anyone's a victim here, it's Tracy.

"But you and Dad came back and dumped all the blame on her. You did not even give her a chance to explain before you hit her. I have never seen Dad lose control like that. It was... it was completely unreasonable!"

Chapter 206 Ronald Heard Everything

Liam didn't know why he chose the word "unreasonable," but his father's reaction had truly been unreasonable.

Thinking about Tracy straightening her finger herself and walking upstairs alone made his chest tighten.

He could not help shooting Andrew a reproachful look. "Andrew, you too. No matter what happened, you shouldn't have grabbed Tracy's hand with so much force like that. You know better than anyone that she is terrified of pain."

It's strange that Tracy had not made a sound the whole time.

It was as if she had grown used to that kind of pain.

But how could any normal person get used to something like that?

The unsettling thought jabbed at Liam's heart, filling him with creeping fear, as if he was facing something

scary.

Andrew was left speechless by Liam's words.

It was not just because Liam had never dared to speak to him in that tone before, but also because he could not seem to find a way to argue back.

If he thought about it carefully, Tracy had been a victim in this whole thing too.

But instead of focusing on how to handle the situation, he and their father had rushed back home to demand answers from her. In hindsight, it did seem unreasonable.

However, Tracy could have explained herself.

Their father had even given her the chance later, yet she had not said a word in her own defense. Instead, she had gone straight for Erin.

The image of her losing control like that, and Erin's tearful, frightened face, made Andrew's eyes darken.

"No matter what, she should never have hit Erin," he said coldly. "Erin had nothing to do with this, but she attacked her anyway. It was obviously to distract us, or maybe to frame Erin for the whole thing.

"If she got hurt... she deserved it."

Liam's mind was still tangled with unease from earlier, and he could not think of a proper response.

He turned to look out the car window, letting Andrew's words drift through his mind.

Why had Tracy lashed out at Erin the moment she learned what had happened?

Suddenly, he remembered seeing Erin taking photos with her phone-once at the hospital room door and again outside Franklin's bedroom.

The backgrounds in those online photos looked like those two places.

No way! How can I start suspecting Erin like that?

Liam shook his head hard.

There had to be some misunderstanding. I will get to the bottom of this, clear Erin's name, and find out who is really behind all this!

When Tracy returned to her room, she ignored whatever was going on outside.

She cleaned and treated her injuries quickly, already planning to get someone to take care of the aftermath.

The rumors online might hurt Jackman Enterprise's reputation, but she did not need to get involved in that. Andrew would take care of it.

Her only task was to make sure none of this reached Franklin and maybe see if she could catch Erin slipping up.

But the moment she pulled out her phone, she remembered her call with Ronald was still connected.

He had probably heard everything that had happened just now.

Tracy gripped the phone tightly and dared not speak.

She had never wanted Ronald to see her so humiliated in front of the Jackmans. It was like ripping away her carefully built mask and showing him the rot underneath.

She didn't want that.

To her, everything about the Jackmans, except Franklin, was part of her dark, polluted past. Ronald and that small rented apartment were the beginnings of the life she wanted to walk toward.

She did not want those two worlds to ever touch.

Maybe sensing her feelings, Ronald's voice came through the phone, "CeeCee ...

He seemed to be suppressing some emotion, and his usual bright and uplifting voice sounded unusually low and heavy.

Tracy opened her mouth but didn't know what to say.

After a brief pause, Ronald spoke again. "I'm outside the villa estate. Can you come out for a moment?"

Tracy froze.

She did not know where the sudden rush in her chest came from, but without even ending the call, she slipped on her slippers and hurried out of the villa estate.

His familiar SUV was parked on the roadside. Its simple, ordinary look clashed with the grand elegance of the neighborhood.

But in her eyes, that plain car and the man leaning casually against it, watching her from afar, was like a

light shining in endless darkness.

She stopped in her tracks, staring blankly at the scene.

When she did not move, Ronald did not call out. He simply stepped forward, closing the distance himself.

Every time he saw her, Ronald wore the same bright smile.

This time was no different.

"CeeCee," he called while striding toward her. But when he got close enough to see her clearly, his smile faltered.

Tracy's face was pale, her cheeks red and swollen, her hair a mess, and her clothes were torn. She looked like she had been badly bullied and beaten.

Even though he had overheard everything on the phone, Ronald had not expected her to look this battered.

Chapter 207 You Can Come to Me

The Jackmans have some nerves!

In a split second, a cold, murderous glint flashed in Ronald's eyes.

It was time to reshuffle the elite families of Cloudville.

Maybe because they were standing so close, Tracy caught the flicker of emotion in his gaze-and for a moment, she froze,

In her mind, Ronald had always been bright, sunny, open, and sincere. His eyes were as clear as a newborn's, never clouded by any negative feelings.

She was still stunned when she suddenly felt his cool fingertips touch her swollen cheek. "Does it hurt?" he asked.

Tracy came back to her senses and turned her head slightly, feeling uneasy.

"It's fine."

She didn't say whether it hurt or not. She only said it was fine.

She'd endured far worse-that's why. She had long grown used to the way the Jackmans treated her, so the small injuries no longer bothered her.

Ronald understood what she meant, and his eyes darkened slightly. He remembered the first time they met-how she'd treated his wounds and said, "You get used to it after taking enough hits."

He had looked into her background and knew she had grown up cherished by the Jackmans. The worst years had come after Erin returned, but even that did not seem enough to make her say something like that.

The only gap in the records was the two years the Jackmans had supposedly "sent her abroad." He couldn't find any information at all—not even proof she had left the country.

It should have been impossible for the Jackmans to erase Tracy's tracks.

What had CeeCee gone through during those two years?

Ronald wanted to know more than anything, but he also knew this was the one secret she least wanted to talk about—just like those ten graves. ¹

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If she didn't want to tell him, he would never force her.

Pushing all those thoughts aside, Ronald took Tracy's hand and led her back to the car. Once there, he pulled out the medicine he had bought on the way.

Besides the handprint and belt marks on her face, she also had scratches and scrapes all over her body. Ronald treated each one with care, then gently pressed an ice pack to her face.

He stayed silent, but his lips were pressed tight, and his mood was visibly tense.

Chapter 207 You Can Come to M

Sensing it, Tracy reached for the towel wrapped around the ice pack. "I can do it myself."

Before she could touch it, Ronald grabbed her wrist.

They were close to each other, and his eyes felt like a bottomless whirlpool, pulling her in.

His voice was unusually serious. "CeeCee, you don't have to handle everything on your own. You can come

to me."

Tracy's heart skipped a beat.

She understood exactly what he meant.

He wanted her to see him as someone she could rely on.

Over all the time they'd spent together, he had reminded himself more than once that she was the only person he had in this world.

Their eyes met, and in each other's gaze, they saw reflections of themselves-along with emotions neither of them could fully understand.

After a long moment, Tracy still said nothing, but she slowly pulled her hand back from his grip.

Ronald smiled faintly, and he continued pressing the ice pack gently against her cheek.

Maybe it was the tenderness of his movements, or maybe she no longer felt the constant need to stay tense as she did in the Jackman Villa, Tracy's eyelids grew heavy. Before she knew it, she had drifted off to sleep.

Feeling her steady breathing, Ronald draped his jacket over her and continued tending to her injuries, his touch even gentler now.

He knew she didn't want Franklin to worry, so any swelling or visible wounds on her face had to be reduced or hidden as quickly as possible.

If he hadn't come tonight, Tracy might not have been able to get any rest at all.

That night, Ronald stayed by her side without sleeping or doing anything else.

Later, in the early hours, he saw Andrew's car return. Something sparked in his mind, and he sent a

message.

Originally, he had planned to just teach Andrew a lesson for hurting Tracy.

But now he has changed his mind.

He would dig a deeper trap-not just for Andrew, but for the entire Jackmans.

After that night's chaos, the Jackmans were unusually quiet.

Everyone silently agreed to hide the scandal from Franklin, not just because of Tracy's earlier warning, but because they didn't dare let him know.

But Franklin had lived a long life-there was no way he wouldn't notice the strange tension in the house.

Especially with Daphne occasionally shooting Tracy angry, wary looks, as if she feared Tracy might do something.

Feeling worried, he asked, "Tracy, are you hiding something from me?"

Tracy knew Franklin wasn't easily fooled. She kept her expression calm and replied, "No, I'm fine. I'm not very close with the Jackmans these days-that's just how we are."

Since she sounded natural, Franklin didn't suspect anything. He knew she could never go back to the way things were with the Jackmans. He just felt disappointed and heartbroken for her.

Tracy should have been cherished like a precious jewel. How had she ended up like this?

Tracy pretended not to notice the worry in his eyes and focused instead on caring for him, helping him take his medicine and settle in for his nap.

Franklin still napped every day, and now that he was older, he fell asleep more quickly.

Chapter 208 Paparazzi Sneaking Around

Tracy quietly closed the bedroom door and told the maid to call her immediately if Franklin woke up. Then she left the house.

Trina had called earlier, saying she wanted to speak with her privately.

Because of Patricia, Tracy often kept in touch with Trina privately, and over time, they became friends.

It had to be something important for her to suddenly call and ask for a one-on-one meeting.

Sure enough, after they sat down, Trina took a small USB drive from her bag and handed it over.

Seeing Tracy's puzzled look, Trina explained, "When my mom first started using electronic devices for teaching, she wasn't used to them. She often misplaced files, so I make it a habit to organize and back up her devices once a month.

"This USB drive contains proof that your painting, The Disheartened Peacock, is original and not plagiarized."

Tracy was surprised.

It had been so long, and too much had happened in between. She had already stopped caring about it.

She had thought that after Phoebe resigned from the school, Trina would let it go as well. She never expected her to bring this up now.

Noticing Tracy's gaze, Trina cleared her throat softly. "Honestly, I wasn't planning on giving this to you because I didn't want to invite trouble for myself. But I just can't stand the thought of you carrying a stain like this on your name."

Her mother was an artist, so she understood what it meant for someone in this industry to be labeled a plagiarist.

Thanks to Patricia, she'd spent enough time with Tracy to know she didn't deserve such a reputation. At that moment, she could almost understand why her mother had been so determined all these years to clear Tracy's name.

Although Tracy truly no longer cared about it, she did not turn down Trina's goodwill. She took the USB and thanked her sincerely.

Franklin's naps never lasted too long, so she didn't linger with Trina and soon returned to the Jackman Villa.

But the moment she entered the neighborhood, she saw several figures sneaking around.

Ever since the scandal broke out, paparazzi have often lingered around the area.

But because the Jackmans had given strict instructions and security at the villa estate was tight, they had never managed to sneak inside.

However, the villa's gates stood wide open. The paparazzi were hovering nearby, looking ready to rush in at any second.

A wave of unease hit Tracy, and she hurried out of her car.

"What are you doing?"

Quick as lightning, Tracy grabbed one paparazzo trying to sneak in, holding her ground at the keeping a sharp eye on the others with cameras.

gate

while

They hadn't expected her to appear so suddenly. They froze for a brief moment, feeling guilty, before quickly raising their cameras. "You're the Jackmans' fake daughter, right? Are those photos real?"

"Do you and Mr. Franklin really have an improper relationship?"

"Now that your identity has been exposed, why haven't you left the Jackmans? Is it because you can't bear to give up wealth and luxury?"

"Did you seduce Mr. Franklin first?"

They spoke under the guise of "seeking the truth," spitting out disgusting, twisted questions. They shoved their cameras in her face, desperate to capture every unflattering expression she made.

Tracy's face darkened as her furious gaze swept over each one of them.

She didn't have the time or energy to think about how they had gotten in-or why there was so much commotion and no sign of the maids or security reacting.

Right now, she could only make sure none of them entered.

If they got inside, there would be no way to hide this from Franklin.

But she was only one person, and there were too many of them.

As they grew more aggressive, her gaze sharpened. She suddenly snatched the nearest camera and smashed it hard on the ground. Then she raised her hand and slapped its owner across the face.

Smack!

The loud slap echoed like it hit every one of them, and it stunned them all into silence.

The paparazzo she'd hit stood frozen before finally gaping at her in shock. "How dare you hit me?"

"I've already hit you. Go ahead, call the police!" Tracy's eyes were icy. "Better yet, let them investigate how you got into this neighborhood. Trespassing on private property is a crime. Everything you just filmed can be used as evidence against you."

Her words did make them hesitate.

They were used to skirting the law, but none of them actually wanted to be arrested or caught up in a lawsuit.

Still, the one she slapped wasn't willing to back down. "We followed the people in front of us. The security guard saw us and didn't stop us. How is that trespassing?"

The others quickly chimed in. "Yeah, Ms. Jackman opened the front gate for us. She had even invited others inside. So, why can't we go inside?"

2/

"Maybe she left the gate open on purpose so we could enter. That's not trespassing."

Tracy's expression changed.

Erin opened the gate and let them in?

Chapter 204 Chapter 209 All of You, Get Out!

Tracy did not have time to think. She quickly stepped back, slammed the door shut, and ran into the

house.

Her sudden move caught the paparazzi off guard. They stared at each other for a long moment before one of them finally asked, "What do we do now?"

The one who had been slapped earlier pondered momentarily, then gritted his teeth. "We'll climb over."

“The others are already inside. Why should we be stuck out here? Once things get chaotic, nobody’s going to care about a few of us nobodies.”

His camera was destroyed, and he’d been slapped. He wasn’t about to walk away empty-handed today.

The group quickly came to an agreement, then helped each other climb over the wall.

Tracy had no idea they’d snuck in. She rushed into the villa and froze at the sight before her. A group of paparazzi was pointing their cameras directly at Franklin, who was standing with his cane.

Franklin was the type of man who could face a mountain collapsing without flinching. The only time he ever truly lost his composure was at his birthday party, when he heard that something had happened to Walter.

At that moment, his face went pale with anger as he clutched his chest and struggled to catch his breath. He was clearly shaken.

Tracy couldn’t think about anything else. She rushed forward and stood in front of him. “What are you doing? Get lost! All of you, out! You’re not welcome here-get out!”

A wave of fear and panic surged in her chest. She only wanted to get these people out before anything worse happened.

But the paparazzi, who had finally gotten their chance, weren’t about to give up. They pointed their cameras straight at the two of them.

“Are those photos online real? Are you really in that kind of relationship?”

“Ms. Yarwood, is it true that you shamelessly seduced your grandfather for wealth and power?”

“Mr. Franklin, is that why you favor this outsider over your own granddaughter-because you’re having a improper relationship with her?”

“How long has this been going on? Do the other members of the Jackman family know?”

They swarmed like wild dogs smelling blood, shoving their cameras in front of Tracy and Franklin, desperate to catch something scandalous for an even bigger story.

“Bastards! You-

”

Franklin's face turned white with fury. He wanted nothing more than to raise his cane and strike every single one of them, but more than anything, he felt a sharp pang of worry for Tracy.

1

No wonder Tracy has been so tense around the rest of the family lately. She's been through so much!

As the cameras kept jabbing closer, nearly poking her in the eyes more than once, Franklin finally couldn't hold back. He raised his cane and shouted, "Get out! All of you, get out!"

His cane struck the nearest paparazzo. The blow wasn't strong, but in the chaos of shoving and pushing, Franklin stumbled.

Tracy reacted instantly, catching him before he could fall. She turned coldly to the stunned maids hiding in the corner and barked, "Don't just stand there! Take Grandpa upstairs now!"

The maids had been too shocked to move, but one of them instinctively stepped forward at her words- only to be stopped by a hand.

Erin, who had been standing smugly in the corner, enjoying the scene, stepped out. "I'll take Grandpa upstairs."

She had worked too hard to set this up. At first, she worried the drama wouldn't be as satisfying if Tracy wasn't home, but fate had smiled on her and brought Tracy back right in time.

There was no way she was letting the old man leave in the middle of this show.

Tracy, struggling to hold back the frenzied paparazzi, didn't notice what was happening behind her. She didn't notice that when Erin tried to help Franklin, he suddenly grabbed her wrist.

Franklin's face darkened, his eyes sharp and piercing. "Did you do this?"

Erin's heart skipped a beat, and panic flashed in her eyes. "I don't understand what you mean, Grandpa. Let me just take you upstairs first. Once these paparazzi are gone, you can come back down."

Then she deliberately raised her voice. "Don't worry, Grandpa. This is the only time they'll ever get in here. If they miss this chance, they won't get another. Once they leave without any photos, people will stop talking about you and Tracy."

Her words were like a shot of adrenaline to the already frenzied paparazzi. They became even more aggressive.

“Mr. Franklin, are you avoiding our questions?”

“Are you dodging because we hit the truth?”

“Mr. Franklin, please answer us directly right now!”

They shoved forward, ignoring anyone in their way.

Tracy was petite. No matter how hard she fought, she couldn't match the force of so many men with their cameras. And now, more paparazzi had somehow slipped in through the front door.

They charged forward without care. Someone stepped on Tracy's foot, sending her stumbling backward.

“Tracy!”

Franklin's heart clenched as he saw her losing her balance. He reached out instinctively to catch her.

2

At the same moment, Erin, who was holding onto him, seemed to see her chance. A sinister gleam flashed in her eyes.

Chapter 210 Blame on Her

Go die, old geezer!

She grabbed Franklin's hand and suddenly pushed him forward with all her might while screaming in horror, “Grandpa, watch out!”

Erin's voice was like a hammer blow to Tracy's heart.

She looked up instinctively and saw Franklin's body lurching forward-his forehead slamming hard into the nearest camera.

The thud exploded in Tracy's ears like a thunder.

“Grandpa!” she screamed.

Her face went pale as she rushed over to catch Franklin's falling body, holding him tightly in her arms.

The paparazzo lost his grip, and the camera tumbled, hitting Tracy hard on the head.

Everything was complicated, yet it all happened in just a split second.

Bright and glaring blood ran down her forehead. She ignored the dizziness and quickly went to check on Franklin.

“Grandpa, grandpa!”

Franklin’s face had turned pale. He was unconscious with fresh blood streaming from the wound on his forehead.

Everyone was shocked by the scene.

The paparazzi who had eagerly sought to capture this exclusive news instantly sobered up and backed away in fear, as if trying to distance themselves from the incident.

Tracy looked up with a gaze filled with deep hatred. It felt like she could kill everyone present.

“What are you standing there for? Call an ambulance! Now!”

Her voice cracked with panic. Her whole body trembled as fear was about to consume her.

Her mind completely went blank. She was staring at the unconscious Franklin. Her trembling body followed into the ambulance and went to the hospital with him.

After the incident, the paparazzi completely forgot about getting scoops. They quickly gathered their things and hurriedly fled the Jackman Villa.

Amid all the chaos, no one noticed Erin’s cold and excited expression.

The last person in the family who stood by Tracy’s side was now gone, and the entire Jackman fortune

would be hers.

Considering there were still other people around, she held back her excitement.

1/

She took out her phone and dialed Andrew’s number.

The moment the call connected, her expression and tone of voice turned panicked. She said, “Andrew, something bad happened. Grandpa had an accident.”

Beep, beep..

The beeping sounds of the medical equipment in the room echoed alongside everyone's heartbeat.

Tracy stood in front of the operating room. Her eyes were fixed on the surgery sign, while body shook uncontrollably.

News of the incident spread fast. The rest of the Jackmans also rushed to the hospital.

Before they could ask for details, Erin ran up to them with a panicked look on her face.

"I don't know how those paparazzi got in. Tracy got really angry when she saw them and went crazy yelling at them. She even tried to push them out..

"I was trying to bring Grandpa upstairs, but he saw her so agitated and worried she might get hurt, so he reached out to grab her. I guess she didn't notice, and in the scuffle, Grandpa fell.

"It was so scary. I'm still terrified."

Erin threw herself into her mother's arms as she sobbed and recounted the incident, but her words subtly placed all the blame on Tracy for provoking the paparazzi and causing the accident.

The Jackmans immediately turned on her with furious glares, but Tracy just stared blankly into the operating room, completely unresponsive to her surroundings.

Her hands were still stained with Franklin's blood. It felt like boiling water against her skin.

Suddenly, someone grabbed her shoulder from behind and pulled her back. "Andrew is talking to you. Yo

Liam's angry been startled.

and impatient expression immediately froze when he grabbed Tracy's shoulder, as if he'd

Her face was pale, and fresh blood was still running down from her forehead. The stark contrast of colors was piercing Liam's eyes like a needle.

He thought Tracy was just frightened. After all, it was normal to be scared after making such a huge mistake and not knowing how to face the family.

However, looking at Tracy now, it was clearly more than just fear.

Seeing Liam just standing there, Andrew frowned and stepped forward. "Tracy, we are talking to you. Are you even listening?"

"You still haven't fixed the last mess, and now there's another one? Can't you just behave? Are you happy now that you've hurt Grandpa so badly?"

Daphne, holding the sobbing Erin, also looked at Tracy with disgust. "Had we known you were this kind of person, we never would have taken you in out of pity."

2/

Even Benjamin, despite his worry for Franklin, glared at Tracy furiously and scolded her, "From now on, there's no place for a malicious daughter like you in the Jackman Villa. Leave this place immediately! We don't want to see you again!"

Despite their accusations, Tracy still showed no reaction, while Liam turned to look at his family in disbelief.