

C 701

## Billionaire's Regret: Finding Her

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"Where are they?" Sebastian demanded as soon as he arrived, scanning the room and finding it empty.

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"How long have they been inside?"

"Over forty minutes."

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"Where's the entrance?"

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The staircase curved downward. As soon as they reached the bottom, the rich scent of perfume and wine hit their noses, but the air was thin—far too thin.

Sebastian barely noticed the lavish surroundings. His eyes immediately found Caitlin, slumped against the sofa like a sleeping doll.

"Mr. Vanderbilt!" Tyler shouted as he spotted both women—Caitlin limp on the sofa, Zinnia collapsed on the floor. "There's no oxygen in here! They might have suffocated!"

“Caitlin! Caitlin!” Sebastian ran to her, dropping to his knees. He touched her face—it was clammy, slick with sweat. Her pulse fluttered weakly beneath his fingers. She was still alive, but fading fast.

A fierce, desperate ache tore through his chest.

“You’re going to be fine,” he whispered hoarsely. “I won’t let anything happen to you.”

He gathered her into his arms and carried her toward the stairs as fast as he could. Tyler lifted Zinnia, following close behind.

They didn’t even check whether Nicoletta was inside. There was no time. As soon as they reached open air, Sebastian barked orders.

“Get the emergency oxygen—now!”

His men sprinted to the vehicles and returned moments later with portable oxygen tanks.

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Caitlin's head snapped up. She **saw** Nicoletta pivot toward a narrow passage opening behind her.

"She's escaping!" Caitlin shouted.

Zinnia moved instantly, lunging toward the older woman. But Nicoletta had already drawn a concealed pistol she'd slipped from the safe earlier. She fired wildly.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Bullets tore through the air. Caitlin and Zinnia dove behind the velvet sofa, glass and plaster exploding around them.

The secret door slammed shut. When the echo of gunfire faded, Nicoletta was gone.

Caitlin and Zinnia rushed to the wall, searching for a latch, but the panel wouldn't budge.

"That damned woman," Zinnia hissed. "She tricked us!"

"It's my fault," Caitlin said through gritted teeth. "I should've known she'd have another way out."

They hadn't realized this room had multiple exits. Nicoletta's foresight was maddening.

"Come on—we'll go back the way we came."

They turned and hurried to the stairway, only to find the metal door above sealed shut.

Caitlin tugged the handle. It didn't move. Zinnia threw her shoulder against it, to no effect.

"She locked the main entrance!"

Both women pushed, hammered, clawed at the door, but it didn't even rattle.

“She must’ve triggered something that sealed both doors,” Caitlin muttered.

“What do we do now?” Zinnia asked, her voice trembling slightly.

“Find the mechanism,” Caitlin ordered. “There must be a control somewhere near the hidden door.”

They ran their hands along the smooth wall, searching for hidden seams.

Outside, Nicoletta was already making her way through a dark, narrow corridor lined with old pipes and power conduits. She stopped to catch her breath, smirking as she stared back at the sealed door behind her.

“Oh, Caitlin,” she murmured mockingly. “Haven’t you heard the saying—old foxes don’t die easily? You’re still too young to play my game.”

She flipped a lever beside her. With a loud mechanical clank, the outer locks engaged. Now, even if Caitlin and Zinnia found the mechanism inside, the doors wouldn’t open.

“Let’s see if you can still enjoy your precious ledger when you’re gasping for air,” she whispered with a gleam in her **eye**.

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Then she reached for another valve and twisted it sharply.

Inside the chamber, Caitlin and Zinnia heard a faint hiss above them.

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Unaware of what Nicoletta had done, they continued searching. Finally, Caitlin pried open a small metal cover in the wall, revealing a hook-like lever inside.

“I think this **is** it!” she said.

“Try it!” Zinnia urged.

Caitlin pulled the hook hard. Nothing happened.

“Let me,” Zinnia said, taking over. She yanked it again, harder this time, but the door didn’t move an inch.

“It’s not working,” she panted. “No reaction at all.”

Caitlin’s **jaw** tightened. “It should be the right one. That means she locked it from outside.”

“So what now?”

“Call for help. Try your phone.”

They both pulled out their phones—but the screens showed no signal bars.

“I lost service when we came down,” Zinnia said.

“Same here,” Caitlin replied grimly.

The weight of their situation sank in.

Caitlin forced herself to breathe steadily. “We need another plan. Try pounding on the door. Maybe the

others can hear us.”

Zinnia grabbed a heavy candlestick and ran to the stairwell, slamming it against the door again and again.

The sound thudded dully, swallowed by the thick metal.

Meanwhile, Caitlin searched the walls for another lever, another hidden latch—but there was nothing.

Zinnia returned, panting. “It’s useless, Caitlin. No one can hear us.”

Caitlin looked up, her pulse quickening. The air was growing heavy, thick, harder to breathe.

Her gaze shifted to the ventilation ducts above. The faint hum that had been present before—the steady flow of oxygen—was gone.

Her eyes widened. “No... she’s shut off the oxygen supply!

Zinnia tugged at her collar, her voice tight. “That’s why it’s getting so hot in here. She’s trying **to** suffocate us!”

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Caitlin clenched her fists, forcing calm into her voice. “Then we find another way out—fast. Or this room becomes our tomb.”

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"They're responding," Tyler said between breaths.

But Sebastian wasn't satisfied. "Get them to the hospital—now!"

He scooped Caitlin back into his arms, running for the car. Tyler followed with Zinnia.

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They sped to the nearest hospital, where emergency staff rushed the women into treatment. After intensive oxygen therapy, the doctors finally announced that both patients were out of danger.

Outside the emergency room, Sebastian paced restlessly, his expression drawn tight with worry.

"Mr. Vanderbilt," Tyler said quietly, "you should relax. The doctors know what they're doing."

"I'm not worried," Sebastian muttered—but his clenched fists and furrowed brow said otherwise.

He couldn't stop thinking about what could have happened. If they hadn't arrived when they did, if they hadn't blown the door open, Caitlin and Zinnia would have died trapped in that sealed chamber.

The thought alone made his blood run cold.

When the doctor finally emerged, Sebastian was there in an instant.

"You got to them just in time," the doctor said. "Your first aid measures gave us the time we needed. Both women will recover."

"Thank you. Thank you, doctor."

Relief washed over him like a tide.

Later, both Caitlin and Zinnia were transferred to private hospital rooms. Sebastian stayed by Caitlin's bedside, watching her sleep, unwilling to leave.

Tyler entered quietly. "Mr. Vanderbilt, the team just called in. They searched the entire chamber. Nicoletta isn't there."

Sebastian frowned. "You're sure she didn't just send Caitlin and Zinnia inside?"

“No. Everyone saw her go down with them. But now she’s the only one missing.”

Sebastian thought for a moment, his expression darkening. “Then she must have planned this. She lured Caitlin and Zinnia into the chamber with the ledgers, then used a hidden exit to escape. She locked them in and tried to suffocate them to death.”

Tyler nodded grimly. “That sounds exactly like her. She’s a venomous woman.”

Sebastian straightened. “If she didn’t escape through the main entrance, there has to be another way out. Search the entire villa—every crawl space, every tunnel. Find her. I don’t care how long it takes.”

“Yes, sir.”

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When Caitlin woke, she found herself lying in a hospital bed, surrounded by the soft hum of machines and the faint scent of disinfectant.

Sebastian, who had been keeping watch beside her, immediately leaned forward and took her hand. “Caitlin? You’re awake?”

“Sebastian...” Her voice **was** weak and airy, every word costing effort.

“You’re safe now,” he whispered, holding her hand tightly and pressing it against his cheek. His gaze was full of emotion, relief, and a deep fear that hadn’t yet faded.

He couldn’t imagine what life would be like without her. The very thought terrified him.

As her mind cleared, Caitlin remembered the suffocating darkness of the secret room—the moment she realized there **was** no air left, when despair had nearly swallowed her whole. She had been so afraid. Not of dying, but of leaving behind Sebastian and their children.

Now, seeing his face again, she felt tears spill down her cheeks. “Hubby...”

Sebastian bent and pulled her gently into his arms. They held each other tightly, trembling from the shock of reunion.

“I thought I’d never see you again,” she whispered.

“You will always see me,” he murmured against her hair. “I won’t ever let something like that happen.”

After a while, he loosened his embrace just enough to look at her tear-streaked face. His thumb brushed her cheeks, wiping away the dampness, and he kissed her softly.

When the kiss broke, Caitlin's thoughts turned to Zinnia. "Wait-Zinnia! How is she?"

"She's fine," Sebastian said quickly. "She's right next to you, just resting."

Caitlin turned her head toward the other side of the room, where a curtain separated the beds. She couldn't see through it, but then a familiar voice spoke up.

"Caitlin, I'm fine," Zinnia said. "You don't have to worry."

Sebastian drew the curtain aside so the two women could see each other. Relief filled Caitlin's eyes when she saw Zinnia awake and alert.

Then she suddenly remembered the ledgers. "Sebastian, what about the documents? The records?"

"They're safe," he assured her. "I've locked them away. Nothing's missing. You focus on recovering first. Once you're strong enough, we'll deal with everything else."

Caitlin nodded, then sighed. "I can't believe I let Nicoletta escape. It was my fault. I should have been more

careful."

“What exactly happened?” he asked. “How did she get **away**?”

“She escaped through a hidden door while we were checking the ledgers,” Caitlin explained.

Zinnia added, “We didn’t know there **was** another passage, and she had a weapon hidden on her. **It** all happened too fast.”

Sebastian listened quietly, his expression grim. “That matches what I suspected. At **least** you’re both safe. Don’t worry—I’ve already sent people after her.”

For now, both women needed rest more than anything. The investigation could wait.

They hadn’t told Xavi about Zinnia’s hospitalization, but Tyler eventually let it slip. As soon as Xavi heard that Zinnia and Caitlin had nearly died, he panicked, ready to board a plane immediately.

He called Zinnia’s phone. “Are you okay?”

“I told you, I’m fine,” she said gently.

“I’m coming there,” Xavi insisted. “I can’t just sit around. I’ve been worried sick.”

“Don’t,” she said, trying not to smile. “We’ll be back soon. Just stay home and wait for me, okay?”

It took her a while to calm him down, but eventually he agreed—grudgingly. Still, the thought of waiting helplessly made him restless. He hated that he couldn’t be there for her right away.

By the second day in the hospital, both Caitlin and Zinnia were recovering well, and doctors said they could be discharged within another day.

That morning, while the two women were chatting quietly, footsteps echoed down the corridor. A moment later, the door opened, and someone walked in holding an enormous bouquet of flowers.

Zinnia’s eyes lit up. “Wow, it’s Mr. Vanderbilt!”

She immediately assumed it was Sebastian—after all, he was the type to surprise Caitlin with flowers at any opportunity.

Caitlin laughed softly. “Not necessarily.”

When the bouquet lowered, revealing a familiar, smiling face, Zinnia gasped.

“Xavi?!”

He grinned sheepishly. “I couldn’t wait any longer. I asked Mr. Vanderbilt for permission and caught the next flight.”

He stepped forward, handing her the flowers, then turned to Caitlin. “Sorry, ma’am. I didn’t bring you one.”

Caitlin chuckled. “That’s fine. If you gave me flowers, your Mr. Vanderbilt might break your legs.”

She looked at the young couple, amused. Xavi had changed so much since falling for Zinnia—steadier, more

mature, and surprisingly dependable. And Zinnia, once all ice and sharp edges, had softened.

Two people who couldn’t have been more different, somehow finding their way to each other. Fate was strange like that.

Zinnia’s eyes brimmed with **tears** as she accepted the flowers. “Why are you crying?” Xavi asked. “**It’s** just flowers, not onions.”

“I’m happy, you idiot.” She gave his arm a playful punch, laughing through her tears.

Some people talk about love endlessly but never act. Others show it with one simple gesture—a flight across the world, a hand holding flowers. That was the difference between love and convenience.

Zinnia knew she'd found the right man.

Caitlin smiled, shaking her head at their sweetness. When Sebastian arrived a little later, he, too, was holding a bouquet—bigger and brighter than Xavi's.

“Mr. Vanderbilt!” Xavi greeted quickly, standing straight.

Sebastian waved him off. “Relax. You two keep talking. We'll pretend we're not here.”

He turned to Caitlin, handed her the flowers, and leaned down to kiss her.

Xavi blinked, then smacked his forehead. How had he forgotten to do that? Next time, he wouldn't miss his

cue. Fresh chapters posted on [findnovel.net](http://findnovel.net)

When the curtain between the beds was pulled closed, he immediately took the opportunity to pull Zinnia into his arms and kiss her too.

By now, everything in D country was finally settling. Once Caitlin and Zinnia were discharged and the Jonathan Family's assets officially divided, they could return home.

Meanwhile, in A country, Magnus received the DNA test results he had ordered.

He didn't open the envelope right away. Instead, he carried it back to the royal palace and went straight to his father's private study.

Closing the door behind him, he held out the sealed envelope. "Father, the report is ready. You should be the one to read it."

Leif VI accepted it with both hands, his expression grave. "So it's finally here."

The anticipation had been agonizing. Days had felt like years, and now the moment of truth was heavy enough to crush him.

The document was thin, barely a few pages—but in his hands, it felt impossibly weighty.

Magnus urged softly, "Father, open it. Let's **see** what it says."

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“All right,” Leif VI said, his voice trembling as he carefully tore open the envelope. His hands were unsteady. the thin paper rustling between his fingers.

He drew out the folded report and began to read. Line by line, his eyes traced every word until they reached the final conclusion: Confirmed biological father–daughter relationship.”

For a moment, the world seemed to stop. His eyes blurred, tears welling and spilling before he could stop them. His lips quivered, but no sound came out.

“Father.... Magnus called softly.

“It’s true, isn’t it?” he asked, though he already knew the answer from the look on his father’s face. Read full story at [findnovel.net](http://findnovel.net)

Leif VI raised his tear–filled eyes and nodded. “Yes.” His voice cracked as he tried to speak. The tears came freely now, unstoppable.

He hadn’t even known that Kelly had carried his child–had borne his daughter into the world and raised her alone. More than twenty years had passed, and he had never once realized that his own flesh and blood had been living out there all this time.

He should have felt nothing but joy—excitement, relief, the indescribable elation of a man discovering family he never knew he had. Yet alongside that joy came a crushing weight of regret.

He had not been there for her. Not once. Not as a protector, not as a father.

He had failed her completely.

The guilt rose up inside him like a tide, and for a long while, he could only cover his face and weep in silence.

At that moment, Leif VI was not a king, not a man of authority or ceremony. He was simply an old father broken by what he had lost.

Magnus stood by quietly, his own chest tightening as he watched. He gently took the report from his father's hands and read it himself. The words confirmed what they both already suspected—Caitlin was, without question, Leif VI's biological daughter.

Who would have thought that a simple act of curiosity—collecting a strand of hair—would lead to this?

“Father,” Magnus said gently, “this is a good thing. You’ve found your daughter. You should be happy.”

He reached out, holding his father's shaking hand. "Don't blame yourself. You'll have a chance to meet her one day."

Leif VI looked at him, eyes glistening. "Thank you, Magnus. You've always been a good son. I don't regret a single thing about raising you."

Magnus smiled faintly. "You've been a father to me, and that's more than enough."

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Leif VI wiped at his tears, trying to compose himself. His gratitude for this adopted son ran deep. Though they shared no blood, their bond was as real as any between father and son.

Magnus hesitated for a moment, then said, "Father, there's something else—another surprise. I think it'll shock you even more."

Leif VI blinked. "What is it?"

“Caitlin has a twin brother.”

“What?”

Leif VT’s voice rose with disbelief, his entire body tensing.

Magnus nodded. “It’s true. His name **is** James. He’s living in the United States. Kelly gave birth to twins. Caitlin’s brother disappeared when he was five years old but was found only a few months ago.”

Leif VI stared blankly, the words taking time to sink in. Then his hands went to his head, fingers gripping his hair as he tried to process it all.

“A son... I have a son too?”

The flood of emotion hit him again, stronger this time. His mind was spinning, his heart aching as he imagined Kelly-pregnant, frightened, raising two children alone while he remained oblivious.

How much had she suffered? How much pain had those children endured without him? The thought tore through him like glass.

“I didn’t know,” he murmured. “I sent your uncle to the US years ago to look into things, but when he returned, he never told me that Kelly had twins. He only said she’d had a daughter with another man. I never imagined that child was mine. It’s all my fault-Kelly, the children... I failed them all.”

He struck his forehead with a fist, the weight of years of ignorance and regret crashing down at once.

Magnus stepped forward quickly. "Father, please. Don't do that. None of this was your fault. You couldn't have

known."

He knew better than anyone how much his father had already suffered. After the accident that had left him crippled, Leif VI had lost not only his health but also his will to fight. By the time he learned that Kelly had returned to her homeland and remarried, it had been too late for him to reach her.

Stripped of strength and purpose, he'd accepted the arranged marriage that followed—one of politics, not love—and buried himself in duty to his kingdom. His pain had never truly healed.

Magnus saw that clearly now. "Father, you've already endured so much. You didn't choose this path—it was forced on you. You can't blame yourself for the past."

Leif VI's breathing slowly steadied. Magnus's calm voice pulled him back from the edge of despair.

"You've found your children," Magnus said softly. "That's what matters now. You can't change the lost years, but you *can* make new ones. Think about how to rebuild what was broken."

“You’re right,” Leif VI whispered. “You’re absolutely right.”

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But another thought struck him—a father’s worry. “Magnus, what about you? I have children now, real heirs. Won’t this affect you? And what about your mother? How will she ever accept it?”

Magnus shook his head. “It doesn’t change anything for me. I’ve always known who I am and where I stand. I was never meant to be a king by blood. My role has always been to serve—to shoulder what you couldn’t.”

He smiled faintly. “If the day comes when your real children return, I’ll step aside. That’s what I was raised to do.”

Leif VI felt his throat tighten. “No, Magnus. You’ll always be my son. You belong here, with us. This palace is your home, and it always will be.”

“Thank you, Father.”

They clasped hands, firm and warm. The affection between them was genuine, unshakable.

After a pause, Magnus continued, “As for Mother... I think it’s best not to tell her yet. She might not take it well. Let’s wait until the right time—until you can meet Caitlin and James in person. Once there’s trust, we can tell her then. It’ll be easier for everyone.”

Leif VI nodded slowly. “Yes. That makes sense. You’re wise to think that way.”

He exhaled, the air shuddering in his chest, a strange mix of sorrow and hope filling him.

“When will I see them, Magnus? How long must I wait? I can’t leave the palace without raising suspicion. How can I possibly go to the US?”

Magnus smiled reassuringly. “You may not need to. Caitlin is still traveling. She has things to settle abroad. Give it a little time. When the moment is right, I’ll arrange for you to meet them—somewhere safe, somewhere private. I promise.”

Leif VI leaned back in his chair, his heart lighter than it had been in decades.

He closed his eyes and pictured it—the first meeting, his daughter’s face, his son’s eyes.

For the first time in many years, the king of A country let himself hope again.

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“All right. We’ll do as you say.”

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Leif VI nodded approvingly, relieved that Magnus had thought things through so carefully. After their private talk, Magnus wanted to ease his father’s longing and worry, so he sent him a few photos he had taken of Caitlin and her family. “You can look at these whenever you miss them,” he said softly.

While father and son spoke privately in the royal study, word of their meeting soon reached the queen’s ears.

Inside the queen’s apartments, one of Heather’s attendants knelt and reported, “Your Majesty, we discovered that His Highness recently sent someone to a genetic testing institute.”

“A genetic testing institute?” Heather frowned. “What for?”

“We tried to investigate, but the institute wouldn’t release any information. We’re not sure what kind of test the prince ordered.”

Heather’s mind immediately began to race. “Could it be about his lineage? Did he find out?”

The attendant didn’t answer, but Heather’s expression darkened. “If that’s the case, I need to see for myself. Where is the king now?”

“In the royal study, Your Majesty.”

Without another word, Heather left her chambers and went straight to the study.

Guards stood at attention outside the heavy doors. Seeing the queen approach, they bowed immediately.

“Your Majesty.”

“You may step aside. I need a private word with the king.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

The guards retreated a respectful distance. Heather didn't bother to knock. She turned the handle and walked straight in.

Inside, she found Leif VI and Magnus sitting close together, looking at something on a phone.

"Your Majesty," she said evenly.

Both men turned. Startled, Leif VI quickly put the phone away, his brows drawing together. "You should really learn to knock before you enter."

"Mother," Magnus greeted her, rising to his feet.

"I did knock," she said smoothly. "Perhaps too softly for you to hear."

As she stepped closer, Heather noticed the redness in Leif VI's eyes. He looked like he'd been crying. Her

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frown deepened. “Your Majesty, are you all right? Magnus, what were you showing him? Why does he look so upset?”

Magnus kept his tone steady. “Nothing important, Mother. We were just discussing some matters concerning D country.”

Heather’s sharp gaze didn’t miss a thing. A corner of a document peeked out from behind the king’s wheelchair, stamped with the unmistakable insignia of a DNA testing institute. Her heart skipped. She strode forward, snatched the paper, and demanded, “What’s this?”

Magnus’s eyes widened as he realized what she had taken. “Mother, please—give that back!”

Leif VI reacted instantly, grabbing the file from her hands and hiding it against his chest.

“What are you hiding from me, Your Majesty?” she pressed, suspicion rising. “I saw the institute’s name. What kind of test did you do? Why can’t I know about it?”

Leif VI’s expression hardened. His mind was a tangle of thoughts. If Heather discovered the truth—that Caitlin and James existed—there was no telling what she might do. She could easily interfere, even prevent him from ever meeting them.

He couldn’t risk that.

Before the tension could escalate further, Magnus spoke. "Mother," he said calmly, "it's not what you think. It wasn't a secret. The test was for me and Father."

Heather blinked. "You and your father?"

Magnus nodded and continued, his tone deliberate. "I've known for a long time that I might not be your biological son. I just never believed it. But lately I heard... certain rumors, and I needed to know the truth. So I arranged a paternity test with Father. The results were clear. I'm not your real son."

Leif VI felt an almost imperceptible wave of relief. Magnus had diverted her suspicion perfectly.

Magnus lowered his gaze, letting a trace of sadness show. "I didn't want to believe it, Mother. You and Father have always treated me with such love... but the truth is hard to ignore."

Heather's expression softened instantly. Her earlier suspicion vanished. She reached out and wrapped her arms around him. "Oh, Magnus. Don't talk like that. You'll always be our son. Blood doesn't change that. We love you as much as ever."

Magnus nodded, forcing a small smile. "Thank you, Mother. Thank you, Father. I'll be fine. I'll stay strong and focus on my duties."

"That's my good boy," Heather said, brushing his arm affectionately. She turned to Leif VI. "Your Majesty, don't let this trouble you. Magnus is an exceptional young man. It's time we started thinking about his future. I believe it's time for him to marry—settle down, start a family. Once he's king one day, he'll be a fine ruler."

Leif VI said nothing, unwilling to argue.

Heather pressed on enthusiastically. “In fact, why wait? I’ll invite Pamela and her family to the palace

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tomorrow. We can discuss the engagement.”

Magnus’s composure faltered. “Mother, please, there’s no need to rush. I’m not ready for marriage yet.”

“Young man, everyone says that,” Heather replied with a cheerful finality. “But it’s decided. Tomorrow it is.”

She patted his shoulder, smiled, and swept out of the room.

The moment the door closed, Magnus crouched beside his father’s chair. “Father, I can’t do it. I don’t love Pamela. I don’t want to marry her. There’s someone else I care about.”

Leif VI placed a hand on his shoulder. “You don’t have to. I’ll support you, whatever you decide. Don’t make the same mistake I did. Look at me—what good is power when it only becomes a prison? All I ever wanted was a simple life, a sound body, a warm home. That would have been enough.”

His voice carried the weight of years of regret.

Magnus nodded, his eyes steady. “Then you mustn’t lose hope, Father. You’ll walk again. I’ll help you. We’ll keep up your rehabilitation, every single day. Miracles happen when you don’t give up.”

Leif VI smiled faintly. “All right.”

He had never surrendered that dream. No matter how busy he was, he trained every day, hoping that one day, when he finally met his children, he could stand before them on his own two feet.

What a moment that would be. UPDATE FROM [find♦novel.net](http://findnovel.net)

Meanwhile, in D country, Caitlin and Zinnia were discharged from the hospital. Thanks to their resilience, both had made full recoveries.

After leaving the hospital, Caitlin and Sebastian went straight to Thompson Global Ventures to handle the division of assets.

The process was far from simple. Sorting through decades of fraud and hidden transfers took time, and much of the lost property could never be fully recovered. Using the ledgers and documents

Nicoletta had left behind, Caitlin's accounting team recalculated everything, and she personally signed the necessary papers. The rest she left to the professionals to finalize.

Once the bulk of the work was done, Caitlin, Sebastian, and their team prepared to return home.

Before leaving, they decided to stop by the Jonathan Family estate to bring Hector with them back to the

United States.

But when their car pulled up to the estate gates, they were met with flashing lights and several police vehicles parked outside.

Everyone got out of the car, tense and alert.

Something was wrong.

## **Billionaire's Regret: Finding Her**

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As Caitlin and her group entered the gates of the Jonathan estate, several police officers were leading a woman out in handcuffs. It was Jasmine.

The Jonathan Family had made their decision: despite her resemblance to Liliana, they would not keep her. Instead, they called the police, who officially charged her with fraud and arrested her on the spot.

Gone was the proud, elegant woman she once pretended to be. Jasmine looked disheveled and frightened, her hair messy, her face pale.

When she saw Caitlin among the group entering the courtyard, she froze mid-step. Her eyes filled with panic and desperation as she cried out, "Caitlin! Caitlin, please! Help me! I don't want to go to prison! Please, Caitlin!"

Caitlin stood where she was, unmoving, her expression unreadable.

She said nothing.

She wasn't going to save her. Jasmine's fate was of her own making. Every deceit, every choice had led her here. And now, no one could save her from the consequences.

When Jasmine tried to lunge forward toward Caitlin, the officers held her back and forced her toward the police car. Content originally comes from find~novel~net

Everyone watched silently as the police vehicles drove away, taking Jasmine with them.

Only when the sound of sirens faded did Caitlin turn back to her companions. “Let’s go.”

No one said a word of sympathy. To them, Jasmine’s downfall was nothing more than justice served.

Inside the main hall of the estate, they found members of the Jonathan family gathered together. Fallon was the first to come forward with a welcoming smile.

“Caitlin, you’re here! And this must be…” She looked at the tall, sharply dressed man beside Caitlin.

“This is my husband, Sebastian,” Caitlin introduced.

“Oh, the famous Mr. Sebastian himself! What an honor,” Fallon said, shaking his hand warmly.

“Pleasure to meet you, Fallon,” Sebastian replied politely.

“Please, all of you, come in, come in! Sit down!” Fallon ushered everyone toward the dining room, speaking quickly. “You probably saw it outside—police just took that imposter away.”

“We saw,” Caitlin confirmed.

“And my mother—she’s been seeing doctors. They say there’s hope for her recovery. She keeps asking about you, Caitlin. She really wants to see you again.”

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As they spoke, Fallon’s mother, Delilah, entered the room with Hector, who was now sitting in a wheelchair.

Delilah looked much better—her complexion healthier, her eyes bright. Without the toxins Nicoletta had been feeding her for years, she was slowly regaining her strength.

“Caitlin,” Delilah said gently, “thank you. If not for you, this family would have been destroyed.”

Caitlin shook her head. “You don’t need to thank me, Mrs. Jonathan.”

Delilah sighed. “That fake Liliana has already been taken away. Hector and I have decided to bring the real Liliana’s ashes home from K Country. Whatever happened, she was still part of the

Jonathan bloodline. It's not glorious, but it's the right thing to do. My son made his mistakes, and now he's paying for them."

Caitlin learned that Israel, unable to face anyone, had left the country for further study abroad.

Delilah's expression hardened slightly. "But what I want most now is for Nicoletta to be caught. That woman destroyed everything. She deserves the worst punishment."

"Don't worry," Caitlin said firmly. "We won't stop looking for her. It's only a matter of time before she's found."

"That's all I needed to hear," Delilah said with relief. "Hector's already packed. He's ready to leave with you whenever you are. I'll have Carson and Fallon accompany him—they'll look after him on the way."

"That works," Caitlin agreed. "We'll depart first thing tomorrow morning."

"I've had dinner prepared," Delilah said warmly. "Tonight, you'll all stay here. It's been too long since this house has seen peace. You're always welcome here, Caitlin—any time."

Her generosity and grace touched Caitlin deeply. Delilah, despite everything that had happened to her family, bore no resentment—only clarity and strength. It reminded Caitlin of what true dignity looked like.

Dinner that night was calm and full of quiet gratitude. Laughter mingled with soft conversation, a rare moment of peace after weeks of chaos.

The next morning, they met at the airport as planned. Sebastian had arranged for a private jet, and once everyone was on board, they took off together.

Although they were leaving D country, Sebastian had stationed men there to continue overseeing the TGV asset division and the ongoing search for Nicoletta.

After hours of flight, the plane finally crossed into U.S. airspace and descended smoothly onto the runway of New York International Airport.

They were home.

This journey—long, dangerous, and full of close calls—was finally over. Yet as each of them thought back on what they had survived, a lingering chill remained in their hearts.

Outside the terminal, a line of Vanderbilt family cars waited. Vincent, Hazel, and Faith were already there, along with other family members.

“Sebastian! Caitlin!”

“Yosef Hazel! Faith!”

Caitlin and Sebastian stepped off the plane, greeted with hugs and smiles.

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A moment later, Carson and Fallon helped Hector down the steps. The old man paused at the door of the aircraft, his eyes glistening as he looked out at the open American sky.

“Father,” Fallon said gently, “let’s go. We’re home.”

He nodded silently, his lips trembling. Carson steadied his arm as they descended.

As the cars drove them away from the airport toward the Thompson residence, Hector pressed his hand to the window, gazing out at the passing streets.

When they arrived at the estate gates, Caitlin turned to him. “You’ll stay here for now. This house once belonged to your family. It’s yours again.”

Hector’s eyes filled with tears. “Home...” he whispered.

The word broke something inside him. Memories rushed back—of being a boy walking these halls, of being cast out in shame, of looking back at this gate as it closed behind him. Now, decades later, he had returned as an old man.

But instead of triumph, all he felt was sorrow.

If only he had stopped Nicoletta back then, maybe none of this would have happened. Maybe The Jonathan Family wouldn't have been destroyed.

He bowed his head, his shoulders shaking. "I truly am the sinner of this family," he murmured.

Caitlin placed a hand on his shoulder. "Rest for now. Tomorrow, we'll go to my grandparents' graves together."

Hector nodded. "Yes. Yes, of course."

Everyone settled in for the night at the Thompson residence, while Caitlin and Sebastian prepared to leave.

Faith smiled at them. "Let's head home to the Vanderbilt estate. The children will be overjoyed when they see you."

Caitlin nodded, then her eyes hardened with resolve. “We’ll go home,” she said. “But first, we’re stopping at

DanCa Estate,”

Sebastian glanced at her, understanding immediately.

Caitlin’s voice was cold and steady. “I want to see my fake mother first.”

## **Billionaire's Regret: Finding Her**

The black car rolled quietly through the gates of DanCa Estate. As soon as it stopped, Caitlin, Sebastian, and their group stepped out.

Kelly, having already received word of their return, came rushing out of the villa to greet them. Her face lit up in excitement. “Caitlin, Sebastian—you’re finally back!”

“Yes, Mom, Caitlin replied with a faint smile. The fatigue of travel showed in her eyes, but her voice was calm.

“That’s wonderful! I’ve been worrying about you every day. Come in, come in, let’s talk inside.”

Kelly's warmth seemed genuine as she reached for Caitlin's hand and led her inside the house.

Once everyone was seated in the living room, Kelly poured tea and asked about their trip. "How was it? Did everything in D Country go smoothly? Did you manage to see Hector?"

"It went well." Caitlin said. "We visited Hector's home too. He's come back to the US with us."

"Oh? Really? Where is he now? You didn't bring him here?"

"I arranged for them to stay at Thompson Residence for now. There'll be time to meet later."

"Good, good," Kelly said, nodding approvingly.

They chatted for a while before Caitlin asked, "How's my brother?"

"Harrison's doing fine. His condition has been stable," Kelly replied. Then she hesitated for a moment, her tone shifting slightly. "By the way, did you find the second half of the codex?"

"I did."

Caitlin took out a red cloth bundle from her bag and unfolded it, revealing the ornate box that contained both halves of the ancient codex.

Kelly's eyes lit up instantly. She reached out eagerly, but Caitlin pulled back slightly. "Before you look at it, tell me—now that I have both halves, how do I reveal the map hidden inside?"

Kelly's smile faded. "That's something I can only explain to you alone."

Caitlin glanced at the people around the room, understanding her meaning. She gestured to the house staff and bodyguards. "Leave us."

Everyone obeyed.

Sebastian gave Caitlin a meaningful look. "I'll go check on Harrison," he said, then turned and walked upstairs, leaving the two women alone in the room.

Once the room was silent, Caitlin faced Kelly directly. "You can tell me now."

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Kelly nodded slowly. "You'll need a cup of strong liquor. Add a few drops of your blood, then light it on fire until it boils. Take the seventh page of the upper codex and the seventeenth page from the end of the lower codex. Place them together above the rising steam, and the map will appear."

Her explanation was precise, almost rehearsed.

Caitlin narrowed her eyes. "Why does it have to be my blood? Can't anyone else's be used? Animal blood?"

"No," Kelly said firmly. "It must be yours—or your brother's."

"Why?"

"Because you're descendants of the Yuncey family," Kelly said solemnly, her tone grave. She offered no further explanation.

"Fine," Caitlin said evenly. "I'll try it your way. And if it works—if the map appears—what happens next?"

"Then you'll take me with you," Kelly said without hesitation. "Together, we'll go to the place the map points to—Atlantis."

Caitlin's expression remained calm, but inside, her mind was racing.

So that was it. Kelly—her so-called mother—wasn't helping out of love or curiosity. She wanted to use Caitlin to reach Atlantis.

And what she really wanted there was the Shard of Life.

Caitlin didn't reveal her thoughts. Instead, she kept her tone measured, a faint smile tugging at her lips. "All right, Mom. Be patient. Once I've found the map, we'll set out for Atlantis as soon as possible."

"Good," Kelly said, her eyes glinting.

Caitlin stood. "I'm going to check on Harrison."

"Of course. Go ahead," Kelly replied, watching her daughter walk upstairs. She didn't follow. She simply sat there, eyes distant, calculating. The codex was finally whole. The final stage of her plan was within reach. All she needed now was time.

Upstairs, Caitlin entered Harrison's room quietly. Her brother lay in bed, his chest rising and falling evenly. The soft beeping of the heart monitor filled the room.

Sebastian was standing nearby. When he saw her, he took her hand gently. "Everything all right?"

“Yeah,” Caitlin said softly. “Once I’ve seen him, we’ll go home.”

She moved closer to the bed, took her brother’s hand, and looked down at his sleeping face. “Harrison,” she whispered, her eyes stinging, “I’ll find a way to bring you back. Just hold on a little longer for me.”

With Quincy overseeing his care, Caitlin felt confident that her brother was safe for now. It was time to return to the Vanderbilt estate.

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At the Vanderbilt mansion, the family had already gathered in anticipation. Beatrice and her brother Aurelius sat at the head of the parlor, both full of excitement.

“I thought Caitlin and Sebastian were supposed to be here by now,” Beatrice said, craning her neck.

“They should be any minute,” Aurelius replied.

Eliza smiled. “Mom, don’t worry. They’re on the way. Yosef just called. Caitlin stopped at DanCa Estate first to see her mother and brother.”

“Oh, that’s fine, that’s fine,” Beatrice said eagerly.

The adults weren’t the only ones waiting. The children were practically bouncing with excitement.

When they heard that their parents were coming home, the four little ones wanted to run straight to the gate to greet them. Eliza had to stop them.

“Not outside,” she scolded gently. “They’ll drive in any minute.”

“Then let’s hide inside and surprise them!” one of them shouted.

“Yeah!” the others chorused.

They scattered around the living room, each finding a hiding spot.

Before long, the sound of car engines came up the drive. The family hurried outside just as the Vanderbilt cars pulled up to the villa.

Sebastian stepped out first, smiling. “Mom, we’re home.”

Eliza beamed. “Welcome back.”

She looked her son up and down, then took Caitlin’s hand warmly. “You must be exhausted, sweetheart.”

“I’m fine,” Caitlin said with a tired but genuine smile.

They all walked into the living room together. Beatrice rose immediately, tears glistening in her eyes. “Caitlin, my dear girl, you’re finally home. Every day without word from you, I’ve been so worried.”

Caitlin squeezed her hand gently. “We’re home now. Everything’s fine.”

To the Vanderbilt elders, Caitlin wasn’t just a daughter-in-law. She was the family’s hope, the one who had endured and held everyone together.

Soon, Raymond and Jasper arrived, followed by Richard’s family and even Faith. The house was alive with laughter and chatter again.

But Caitlin noticed something. “Where are the kids?” she asked with a smile. “I don’t see any of them.”

Eliza laughed. “They’re hiding. They said they wanted to surprise you.”

Caitlin chuckled softly. “Oh, really?”

She began to search the room, pretending to look around.

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Then she spotted a little figure crouched behind the sofa. “Aha—Howard! I can see your little butt sticking out. Not much of a hiding spot, huh?”

The boy popped up instantly, eyes sparkling. “Mommy!”

He had done it on purpose—he wanted to be the first one she found.

And now that she had, his face broke into the biggest grin. He sprinted across the room and leapt into her

arms.

“Mommy, I missed you...” he said, his small voice muffled against her shoulder.

Caitlin hugged him tightly, her eyes softening as she whispered, “Mommy missed you too.”

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## Billionsaire's Regret: Finding Her

“I missed you too, sweetheart.”

Caitlin hugged her son tightly, kissing him over and over.

It felt indescribably good to hold him again—to be alive and home, surrounded by her family.

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After cuddling her eldest, she took Howard’s hand and began searching for the other kids. Behind another sofa and next to a cabinet, she soon discovered Bruce and Arthur.

“Mommy found you both!”

Howard cheered and jumped up and down while his brothers, Bruce and Arthur, came running out from their hiding spots, throwing their little arms around Caitlin's legs.

"Mommy!"

"Mommy..."

"Bruce, Arthur!"

Caitlin gathered the boys into her arms, holding all three close at once. Only she knew how hard-won this reunion was-how close she had come to never seeing them again.

Three sons found, but one daughter still missing. Caitlin scanned the room, wondering where her little girl could be hiding.

She called out playfully, "Where's Patricia hiding? She's too good at this game-Mommy can't find her anywhere! Come on, boys, help me look!"

Underneath a long tablecloth, Patricia stifled a giggle behind her tiny hands. She loved hide-and-seek and was sure that this time, no one would find her.

Caitlin had already spotted the faint outline of a small figure under the fabric but decided to play along. She walked closer and sighed dramatically. “No luck! I can’t find her anywhere. Maybe I should just stop looking.”

Hearing that, Patricia’s little heart sank. Her eyes welled up, and when she saw Mommy’s high heels turning away, she scrambled out from under the tablecloth.

“Waaah... Mommy!”

Caitlin turned immediately at the sound of her daughter’s sobs and rushed to scoop her up. “There you are, sweetheart!”

“Mommy doesn’t want Patricia anymore...” she cried, clutching her mother’s neck tightly.

“How could I not want you?” Caitlin whispered, holding her close.

She carried Patricia back to the sofa and sat down, rocking her gently. “It’s okay, baby. Mommy couldn’t find

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you because you were so good at hiding. See? That means you’re amazing at this game! How could Mommy ever stop wanting you?”

As Caitlin spoke, she peppered her daughter's face with kisses until the little girl began to smile through her

tears.

"Mommy, I just wanted to surprise you," Patricia said softly. "That's why I hid."

"I know," Caitlin replied, smiling. "And you really did surprise me. I thought I'd lost you, and then you popped out. You gave Mommy the best surprise ever."

Patricia's pout melted into laughter. She snuggled closer, and Caitlin kissed the top of her head.

Then Sebastian leaned in, resting his head against Patricia's small shoulder. "Hey, what about Daddy? Doesn't Daddy get a surprise too?"

Patricia burst out laughing, her giggles contagious. Soon everyone in the Vanderbilt living room was laughing with her. The house filled with warmth and joy.

Dinner that night was grand and lively. Nearly everyone in the Vanderbilt family attended, except Molly, who was still recovering in the hospital. The atmosphere was relaxed, cheerful, and full of life.

After dinner, Caitlin and Sebastian took the children to the family's private playground, letting them play until they were tired out. Later that evening, after baths and bedtime stories, the kids finally drifted off to sleep.

Only then did Caitlin and Sebastian retreat to their study to discuss the codex.

"The impostor told me how to find the map," Caitlin said.

She explained the process. Sebastian frowned. "Why does it have to be your blood?"

"She said it's because I'm a descendant of the Yuncey family. But I think she's just being mysterious on purpose."

"I agree," Sebastian said.

He gathered a few items—a bowl, a candleholder, and some vinegar—and began preparing for the experiment.

Caitlin pricked her finger, but before she could draw blood, Sebastian stopped her. "Let me. We'll use mine."

He couldn't bear the thought of her hurting herself, even for something so small. Find the newest release on [FindN\(\)vel.net](http://FindN()vel.net)

Caitlin gave him a soft, knowing smile and nodded. She watched as he pricked his own finger, letting a few drops fall into the bowl.

The candle flame burned brighter, heating the vinegar until it began to boil and steam.

“I found page eight,” Caitlin said. “But it’s blank.”

“I’ve got page eighteen from the end. It’s blank too.”

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They placed the two pages together above the rising steam and waited. Minutes passed. Nothing happened.

Caitlin lowered her aching arm and sighed in frustration. “See? I told you it was nonsense. There’s no way a map could be hidden in this thing.”

Sebastian frowned in thought. “What if we try with your blood instead?”

She hesitated, then nodded. “All right.”

They cleaned the bowl, poured in fresh vinegar, and Caitlin pricked her finger, letting her blood mix with the liquid. The vinegar bubbled and hissed, filling the air with a sharp scent.

They held the codex pages above the steam again.

“If this doesn’t work either, then the whole legend is fake,” Caitlin murmured.

Sebastian sniffed the air. “Do you smell that?”

Caitlin inhaled. “Yes. It’s sweet—almost floral. It’s coming from the pages.”

As the fragrance grew stronger, Sebastian’s eyes widened. “Look! Caitlin, look at the pages!”

She followed his gaze. The once-blank parchment now shimmered faintly. Thin red lines began to appear, twisting and branching across the surface like veins. They multiplied, connecting and crossing until the pattern resembled... a map.

“It’s real...” Caitlin whispered, stunned. “It’s actually real.”

Sebastian had already set up a camera to document everything. The lens captured the slow, mesmerizing transformation as the red lines bloomed across the

pages.

Caitlin studied the shapes intently. The lines formed a complex network of paths, rivers, or perhaps coordinates. Then faint inscriptions appeared—ancient characters, unfamiliar and strange.

“There’s writing too,” she said. “But I can’t read any of it.”

“Let’s record everything first,” Sebastian replied.

He took out his phone, snapping several close-up photos of the map’s details.

Within minutes, the map was fully visible. But as the steam faded and the vinegar evaporated, the red lines began to dissolve, disappearing one by one until the pages returned to their original blank state.

The two of them sat in silence for a long time.

Sebastian reviewed the images and video, frowning. “Now that we have the map, we’ll still need to decipher the writing before we can figure out where it leads.”

It wasn’t as simple as finding a map and following it. What lay ahead was another labyrinth of mysteries.

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Finally, Caitlin lifted her gaze, her expression thoughtful. “The map isn’t what puzzles me most. What I can’t understand is why it only appeared when my blood was used—and not yours. Why does the paper react that way?”

“I don’t know,” Sebastian admitted. “There’s no logical explanation.”

Caitlin lifted the pages to her nose and inhaled again. The faint trace of that mysterious fragrance still lingered.

“What kind of material is this made of? Why does it release that scent when heated? Could it be connected to the Yuncey family’s Fragrance & Dye Studio?”

Sebastian's eyes suddenly brightened. "Wait... what if that's the key? What if this is the real secret behind the legendary Fragrance Garments?"

"What do you mean?" Caitlin asked.

"I mean the fabric's scent—it might not come from any dye at all. Maybe it comes from your family's blood. Doesn't it make sense? That would explain why the technique vanished. It was tied to the Yuncey bloodline itself."

Caitlin froze, staring at him, her mind racing. The thought sent a chill through her.

Following his reasoning, she came to a terrifying realization of her own.

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## **Billionaire's Regret: Finding Her**

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“I understand now. So what made the Yuncey family’s Fragrance Garments so unique was that they were created by mixing the family’s own blood into the perfume blend, wasn’t it?”

The more Caitlin thought about it, the more her skin crawled. “No wonder those garments were said to be worth their weight in gold. No wonder the craft disappeared. The blood of the Yuncey family was limited, and the ancestors must have realized that continuing the process would destroy their descendants. That’s why the Fragrance Garments vanished.”

“This can’t get out,” Sebastian said, gripping her shoulders and pulling her into his arms. “If anyone ever found out, it would put you in incredible danger.”

“But that impostor already knows,” Caitlin replied, her voice tense. “If she knows this much about the Yuncey family, she must be connected to them somehow.”

“We can’t wait any longer,” Sebastian decided. “She’s dangerous. As long as she’s living freely at DanCa Estate, we have no idea what she might do next.”

They exchanged a quick glance. Minutes later, the couple left the Vanderbilt manor and headed into the night.

At DanCa Estate, in one of the guest rooms, Kelly was fast asleep when the sudden sound of footsteps startled her awake. She turned on the bedside lamp just as a loud crash echoed through the room.

The door flew open.

Startled, Kelly sat up, her eyes wide as Caitlin appeared in the doorway. “Caitlin? What are you—”

“Take her!” Caitlin ordered coldly.

Her tone was sharp enough to cut glass. Tyler and the others stormed in and subdued Kelly before she had time to react.

“Caitlin, what are you doing? Why are you having me arrested?” she cried as the guards dragged her out.

“Bring her to the living room,” Caitlin said, not looking back.

The living room lights blazed brightly. Caitlin returned to Sebastian’s side and sat down as the guards forced Kelly to stand before them.

“Caitlin, why are you doing this to your own mother?” Kelly asked, trying to sound calm.

Caitlin looked up and laughed coldly. “My mother? Are you really?”

“Of course I am! You’re my daughter. I’m your mother. What’s going on with you?” Kelly’s voice trembled slightly, but she tried to sound convincing.

“Stop pretending. I figured you out a long time ago—I just hadn’t bothered to expose you.”

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Caitlin pulled a folder from the table and tossed it in front of her. “This is a DNA report. It proves that you’re not my mother. Now tell me—who are you really?”

“How did you find out?”

The woman didn’t panic. Her voice was eerily steady, as though she had expected this moment all along.

“You underestimated how well I know my real mother,” Caitlin said, standing up. Her eyes were cold and sharp as glass. “Maybe you’re working with Black Hawk, maybe not, but I know for sure you replaced my mother when I went looking for her.

“You studied everything—her face, her mannerisms, her history with the Yuncey family, the Jonathan family, even me. You prepared meticulously, even going so far as to have surgery to look like her. You did your homework well enough to fool anyone... except me.

“When I told you the codex was found at Sakura Ridge, you nodded and said yes—but that wasn’t true. My mother had given the codex to Xavian for safekeeping. When I said Xavian was dead, you barely reacted. You didn’t even recognize his only son, Blake.

“You thought you’d covered every detail, but you slipped up. When I took you for a medical checkup, I secretly had a DNA test done. That’s how I knew for sure—you’re not my mother.”

The impostor’s lips curved into a faint smile. “You really are clever. Smarter than your mother ever was. I chose the right person.”

“So you finally admit it,” Caitlin said coldly. She stepped forward and slapped the woman hard across the face -once, then again. “Now tell me. Where is my mother?”

“I’m not ready to tell you that,” the woman replied, still smiling, her expression disturbingly calm.

Sebastian stepped closer, his voice like ice. “If you tell us the truth, maybe we’ll let you live. But if you don’t, you’ll learn exactly what it means to be interrogated by me.”

Before he could act, Caitlin stopped him and turned back to the impostor. “Fine. You’re not ready to tell me yet. Then tell me this—what will make you talk? You want me to take you to Atlantis, don’t you?”

“That’s right.”

“Why? Why are you so obsessed with finding Atlantis? What do you want with the Shard of Life? Who’s pulling your strings?”

“You’ll know when the time comes.”

“I already have a guess,” Caitlin said quietly, taking a step back. Her face darkened. “Who else could know this much about the Yuncey family’s history? About the Jonathan family? There’s only one person who fits that description—you. Quarta.” Chapters first released on [findnovel.net](http://findnovel.net)

Even Sebastian froze at that. The realization hit the room like thunder.

“She’s Quarta?”

16:54 Sat, Oct 18 A

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165 vouchers

you because you were so good at hiding. See? That means you're amazing at this game! How could Mommy ever stop wanting you?"

As Caitlin spoke, she peppered her daughter's face with kisses until the little girl began to smile through her

tears.

"Mommy, I just wanted to surprise you," Patricia said softly. "That's why I hid."

"I know," Caitlin replied, smiling. "And you really did surprise me. I thought I'd lost you, and then you popped out. You gave Mommy the best surprise ever."

Patricia's pout melted into laughter. She snuggled closer, and Caitlin kissed the top of her head.

Then Sebastian leaned in, resting his head against Patricia's small shoulder. "Hey, what about Daddy? Doesn't Daddy get a surprise too?"

Patricia burst out laughing, her giggles contagious. Soon everyone in the Vanderbilt living room was laughing with her. The house filled with warmth and joy.

Dinner that night was grand and lively. Nearly everyone in the Vanderbilt family attended, except Molly, who was still recovering in the hospital. The atmosphere was relaxed, cheerful, and full of life.

After dinner, Caitlin and Sebastian took the children to the family's private playground, letting them play until they were tired out. Later that evening, after baths and bedtime stories, the kids finally drifted off to sleep.

Only then did Caitlin and Sebastian retreat to their study to discuss the codex.

"The impostor told me how to find the map," Caitlin said.

She explained the process. Sebastian frowned. "Why does it have to be your blood?"

"She said it's because I'm a descendant of the Yuncey family. But I think she's just being mysterious on purpose."

"I agree," Sebastian said.

He gathered a few items—a bowl, a candleholder, and some vinegar—and began preparing for the experiment.

Caitlin pricked her finger, but before she could draw blood, Sebastian stopped her. "Let me. We'll use mine."

He couldn't bear the thought of her hurting herself, even for something so small.

Caitlin gave him a soft, knowing smile and nodded. She watched as he pricked his own finger, letting a few drops fall into the bowl.

The candle flame burned brighter, heating the vinegar until it began to boil and steam.

“I found page eight,” Caitlin said. “But it’s blank.”

“I’ve got page eighteen from the end. It’s blank too.”

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They placed the two pages together above the rising steam and waited. Minutes passed. Nothing happened.

Caitlin lowered her aching arm and sighed in frustration. “See? I told you it was nonsense. There’s no way a map could be hidden in this thing.”

Sebastian frowned in thought. “What if we try with your blood instead?”

She hesitated, then nodded. “All right.”

They cleaned the bowl, poured in fresh vinegar, and Caitlin pricked her finger, letting her blood mix with the liquid. The vinegar bubbled and hissed, filling the air with a sharp scent.

They held the codex pages above the steam again.

“If this doesn’t work either, then the whole legend is fake,” Caitlin murmured.

Sebastian sniffed the air. “Do you smell that?”

Caitlin inhaled. “Yes. It’s sweet—almost floral. It’s coming from the pages.”

As the fragrance grew stronger, Sebastian’s eyes widened. “Look! Caitlin, look at the pages!”

She followed his gaze. The once-blank parchment now shimmered faintly. Thin red lines began to appear, twisting and branching across the surface like veins. They multiplied, connecting and crossing until the pattern resembled... a map.

“It’s real...” Caitlin whispered, stunned. “It’s actually real.”

Sebastian had already set up a camera to document everything. The lens captured the slow, mesmerizing transformation as the red lines bloomed across the pages.

Caitlin studied the shapes intently. The lines formed a complex network of paths, rivers, or perhaps coordinates. Then faint inscriptions appeared—ancient characters, unfamiliar and strange.

“There’s writing too,” she said. “But I can’t read any of it.”

“Let’s record everything first,” Sebastian replied.

He took out his phone, snapping several close-up photos of the map’s details.

Within minutes, the map was fully visible. But as the steam faded and the vinegar evaporated, the red lines began to dissolve, disappearing one by one until the pages returned to their original blank state.

The two of them sat in silence for a long time.

Sebastian reviewed the images and video, frowning. “Now that we have the map, we’ll still need to decipher the writing before we can figure out where it leads.”

It wasn't as simple as finding a map and following it. What lay ahead **was** another labyrinth of mysteries.

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Finally, Caitlin lifted her gaze, her expression thoughtful. "The map isn't what puzzles me most. What I can't understand is why it only appeared when my blood was used—and not yours. Why does the paper react that way?"

"I don't know," Sebastian admitted. "There's no logical explanation."

Caitlin lifted the pages to her nose and inhaled again. The faint trace of that mysterious fragrance still lingered.

"**What** kind of material is this made of? Why does it release that scent when heated? Could it be connected to the **Yuncey family's** Fragrance & Dye Studio?"

Sebastian's eyes suddenly brightened. "Wait... what if that's the key? What if this is the real secret behind the legendary Fragrance Garments?"

"What do you mean?" Caitlin asked.

"**I mean** the fabric's scent—it might not come from any dye at all. Maybe it comes from your family's blood. Doesn't **it** make sense? That would explain why the technique vanished. It was tied to the Yuncey bloodline itself.

Caitlin froze, staring at him, her mind racing. The thought sent a chill through her.

Following his reasoning, she came to a terrifying realization of her own.

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## Billionaire's Regret: Finding Her

“You already have two bargaining chips in your hands! You’re the only one who knows where my mother is, that should be enough! Why are you making things hard for my brother? You know he was kidnapped when he was five. It’s been twenty years since then. I finally reunited with him. All I want is for him to live a few peaceful days. Why do you have to go after him?”

Caitlin’s heart twisted with anger and desperation. Her usually calm eyes shimmered with tears.

Cecilia hadn’t done it to oppose Caitlin. She just needed James as a piece in her plan. Now that she had successfully found both parts of the codex, she believed the map would soon appear. Which meant she no longer needed to use James as leverage.

“My offer still stands. Take me to the ancient kingdom, and I’ll heal your brother first.”

Cecilia looked at Caitlin, her gaze softening as she studied the young woman’s face—so much like her mother’s. It made her heart ache.

If only she really were her mother. If that were true, how happy would they all be, reunited at last?

Caitlin finally nodded. “Alright, I’ll do it. I’ve already found the map. I can take you to the ancient kingdom. But you have to save my brother first!”

Hearing that she’d found the map, Cecilia’s eyes lit up, excitement flickering in them. “Deal.”

Caitlin added, “You’re doing all this to find the Shard of Life, aren’t you? If that thing really exists, once you find it, you’ll tell me where my mother is. Can you promise me that?”

“I can. Caitlin, once I find the Shard of Life, I’ll tell you everything. There are things only I know.”

“What things?”

“I told you, when the time comes, you’ll know.”

Neither of them spoke again. Caitlin’s mind kept spinning. Could Cecilia really be the one behind everything? The mastermind who had been controlling it all?

Maybe the Yuncey family, the Jonathan family, even Zorro—all of them were just pawns in her grand plan.

God.

Just thinking about it sent chills down her spine. What kind of person could spend decades weaving such a massive web, all for one hidden purpose?

Would Cecilia only reveal the truth once she truly found Atlantis?

But what if Cecilia wasn't the real mastermind either?

What then?

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Both women sat in silence for a long while before Caitlin finally stood up. "Can you save my brother now?"

"You can all go back for now. Come again tomorrow morning. I'll make sure he's healed."

Cecilia's identity was already exposed, and her goal was clear. Their deal had been struck. She had no reason to run or play tricks.

"Fine. We'll come back tomorrow morning. But if you try anything, don't blame me for what happens next."

Caitlin left DanCa Estate with Sebastian and the others.

That night, after they returned, Caitlin and Sebastian talked for hours—about everything that had happened, the tangled web of events and people involved.

It all fit together now, like an enormous spiderweb—no one in it was innocent or irrelevant.

“Cecilia’s been hiding for so many years, mastering medical arts, and still she’s after the Shard of Life. What’s driving her?”

“Only she knows.”

“But I can’t stop wondering—who’s the person hiding behind her?”

“Don’t overthink it. Once we get the Shard of Life, we’ll know everything.”

“Yeah.” Latest content published on [find\(N\)ovel.net](http://find(N)ovel.net)

Caitlin couldn’t guess any further. There was only one path left, and only by walking it to the end could she uncover the truth.

The next morning, Caitlin hurried through breakfast and rushed back to DanCa Estate to check on James.

In the manor’s living room, she ran into Quincy. “How is he? Has my brother woken up?”

“Harrison’s still unconscious, but Cecilia’s with him now. She told me to wait outside.”

“Come on, let’s go.”

With Quincy leading the way, Caitlin went upstairs and pushed open the door. Inside, she saw Cecilia in the middle of treating James.

Caitlin moved closer to the bed and watched in silence.

Cecilia knew they had arrived but didn’t turn around. She continued her work calmly.

A strange, almost intoxicating fragrance filled the room—it was the scent of Scentbane.

James was bare-chested, several acupuncture points along his body pierced with needles. Over each point sat

a transparent cup heated by flame, drawing out dark clots of poisoned blood.

His fingertips had been pricked as well, allowing more tainted blood to drip into a basin below.

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It was clear from Cecilia's methods that she wasn't holding back. Her techniques were far more extreme than anything Aurelius or Alicia had ever used.

Perhaps Scentbane's toxicity was too strong, forcing her to rely on such brutal methods.

When the time came, Cecilia removed the cups one by one, wiped away the poisoned blood, and applied a thick layer of special detoxifying ointment.

When she was done, she packed away her tools, buttoned James's shirt, and pulled the blanket over him.

"So that's it? My brother's going to be fine now?" Caitlin asked.

"He's fine. He'll wake up soon."

Cecilia gathered her instruments and left the room.

Caitlin sat beside the bed, gently taking her brother's hand. She cleaned the small wounds and carefully bandaged them.

Looking at his face, she noticed that his complexion had improved—the gray pallor was gone, his lips returning to their normal color.

“Harrison, can you hear me? It’s your sister. Wake up, please.”

Her voice trembled as she called to him again and again.

At that moment, Sebastian, Zeke, Alicia, and old Master Aurelius arrived at DanCa Estate. Aurelius had insisted on coming the moment he heard that Quarta had been found.

They entered the living room, and Sebastian gestured for them to sit.

Aurelius asked, “Where’s Quarta? Where did you find her?”

“Don’t worry, you’ll see her soon,” Sebastian replied.

A few minutes later, Cecilia descended the stairs. Sebastian spotted her immediately. “There she is.”

Everyone turned to look.

Alicia froze, shock written across her face. “Wait, isn’t that your mother? How could she be Quarta?”

Aurelius’s eyes widened. “What... what’s going on?”

Zeke turned to Sebastian. “You’re saying Caitlin’s mother is actually Quarta? Aurelius’s first disciple?”

Sebastian didn’t answer. Cecilia reached the bottom of the stairs. Seeing them all gathered there, she knew it was time to face them as herself.

“Master, it’s been a long time.”

She no longer bothered imitating Kelly’s voice. She spoke in her real one.

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Aurelius stood abruptly, disbelief clouding his face. “You... you’re Quarta? How... how is that possible?”

“I’ll explain,” Sebastian said, stepping forward. “Yes, she’s Quarta. Her real name is Cecilia. She’s not Caitlin’s mother. She had plastic surgery to look like her. Her plan was to use James, poisoned by Scentbane, to control Caitlin and make her help find the Shard of Life mentioned in the codex.”

“What...” Aurelius breathed, stunned.

Alicia frowned, staring coldly at the woman who had impersonated Kelly—the real Quarta.

Zeke tensed, watching Cecilia closely. The woman who had deceived them all was dangerous, and he stayed alert, ready for anything.

“I never imagined this,” Aurelius murmured, looking at his former disciple with a mix of sorrow and disappointment. “For the Shard of Life, you went this far?”

“I’m sorry, Master,” Cecilia said quietly. “That’s all I can say.”

Aurelius sighed deeply. “You don’t owe me an apology. You owe it to Caitlin and her brother. You pretended to be their mother, gave them false hope, and poisoned her brother with your own creation, Scentbane. Was that really worth it?”

Cecilia stayed silent. Her eyes dimmed. She had her own reasons—reasons she could never bring herself to explain.

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## Billionaire's Regret: Finding Her

Cecilia, you promised to detoxify Caitlin's brother. Is it done?" Sebastian asked.

"It's done, but when James wakes up depends on his own willpower."

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Upstairs, Caitlin had just finished washing her brother's face. She was about to carry the towel and basin away when James slowly opened his eyes.

Noticing the subtle movement, Caitlin froze, watching closely. When she realized he really was awake, she dropped the basin and cried out in shock and joy, "Harrison, Harrison, you're awake!"

James's eyelids lifted wider, and he slowly came back to himself, his eyes focusing on the ceiling and the lights above. His limbs were weak but gradually regaining strength.

Hearing Caitlin's voice, he turned his head slightly and saw her tearful, beautiful face.

"Caitlin..."

His hoarse voice came out weakly, but to her, it was the most beautiful sound in the world. Caitlin burst into tears, gripping his hand tightly. "You're okay now. You're really okay. You're awake!"

James's memory was still stuck on that day at Ebonreach Isle. He remembered glimpses of finding their supposed mother and quickly asked, "Where's Mom? Did you see her?"

Caitlin nodded, then shook her head, forcing herself to tell the truth. "Harrison, the woman you and Tyler found—she wasn't our real mother. She was an impostor. I've already exposed her."

James's eyes widened in disbelief. He was silent for a few seconds before whispering, "No wonder... No wonder when she first saw me, she called me by name right away, knew exactly who I was. I should've realized..."

He clenched his fists weakly. He had been careless. He'd been separated from his family since he was five. Twenty years later, he reunited with someone claiming to be their mother. How could she possibly recognize him at first glance and call him by name without hesitation?

And another thing—he and Tyler had fought their way into that building. There had been gunfire all around. Yet when he found “her,” she’d been calmly sitting at an easel, painting, as if nothing was happening. Who would behave like that in the middle of a firefight?

“Not only you,” Caitlin said softly, her eyes brimming with tears. “Even we didn’t realize she was fake. We were all fooled. We finally found her, only to discover it was a cruel lie—and you ended up poisoned because of it.”

“I’m fine now. Don’t cry.” James tried to comfort her, his voice still weak. “Once I’ve recovered, we’ll keep searching for Mom. We’ll find her, I know we will.”

“I believe that too.” Caitlin nodded firmly, wiping her tears.

James pushed back the blanket, trying to sit up. “Where’s that impostor? Where is she?”

He couldn’t stand the thought that someone had dared to impersonate their mother and deceive them all so completely.

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Just then, Cecilia entered the room with the others. The moment James saw her, anger flared in his eyes. “Caitlin! Have her arrested! Don’t let her get away!”

“Calm down.” Caitlin said quickly. “She knows where Mom is. We still need her to find her.”

Her words made him stop, though his glare didn’t soften. He turned away, jaw clenched, staring at the woman who had fooled them.

“Harrison,” Sebastian said, stepping closer. “You’re awake. Finally.”

“Sebastian...”

Sebastian squeezed his hand. “Focus on recovering. Don’t think about anything else right now. Once you’re better, there’s still more we have to do.”

“Got it.”

James nodded. Soon after, Aurelius, Zeke, and Alicia also came in to see him. Aurelius checked his condition and confirmed that the toxins were gone.

He couldn’t help but be impressed. Quarta’s medical skills far surpassed his own.

Alicia, curious about the detoxification process, asked Cecilia, “Can you share your antidote formula with me? If I ever encounter someone poisoned like this, I could use it to help them.”

Cecilia's tone was calm. "You won't need it. As long as I don't poison anyone again, there's no need for an antidote."

"No need? The queen consort of S Kingdom was poisoned by your Scentbane last time. If it hadn't been for Master's help—and the fact her case was mild—she'd have ended up like James."

Cecilia said nothing.

Aurelius's expression darkened. "So it really was you? Why would you do such a thing?"

No matter how they pressed her, Cecilia refused to explain.

Caitlin stood up. "If that's true, then what were you plotting in S Kingdom? Is your plan connected to Graystone Castle? Or are you working with Zorro?"

At the mention of Graystone Castle, both Zeke and Alicia's faces tensed.

"I don't know what you're talking about. I'm just me. I have nothing to do with anyone else."

After saying that, Cecilia turned and walked out.

The room fell into silence. Caitlin finally spoke. “For now, we don’t have proof she’s tied to Zorro. We’ll have to wait and see.”

Caitlin and Sebastian had to visit the cemetery later that morning. Before leaving, Caitlin told her brother, “Just focus on resting. I’ll have people look after you. Don’t think about anything else for now.”

“Alright. Go ahead. I’ll be fine.”

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Around ten in the morning, Caitlin and Sebastian arrived at the cemetery.

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EX **55** vouchers

Fallon and the others were helping Hector out of the car when they pulled up. Caitlin and Sebastian got out as

well.

Hector stood still for a moment, gazing at the quiet rows of gravestones before Fallon urged him gently, “Dad, let’s go.”

“Yes.”

Whether it was age or guilt weighing him down, each of Hector’s steps was heavy, slow, and full of exhaustion.

When they reached the front of the burial grounds, Caitlin was already standing before the tombstones of Walter and Eleanor. “Grandpa, Grandma, Hector is here today to personally apologize to you.” THIS CHAPTER IS UPDATE BY Find\*Novel.net

She placed a bouquet of flowers before the graves, then turned toward Hector, who was slowly approaching.

“Hector, look around you. This entire cemetery is filled with the innocent victims of the Jonathan family massacre. My grandfather, my grandmother, my uncle’s entire family, and all the servants of the Jonathan family—they’re all buried here.”

Hector’s eyes filled with sorrow as he looked at the endless rows of tombstones. Tears streamed down his wrinkled cheeks as he trembled, walking to Walter’s grave. Slowly, he knelt before it, placing a trembling hand

on the stone.

“Walter... I’m sorry... I’m so sorry...”

His voice broke into sobs.

After a while, he continued through his tears, “It was my fault. I sinned. I’m the one who destroyed the Jonathan family.”

Hector’s grief came pouring out. His words were filled with raw remorse and guilt, a confession that came from deep within.

“Since that massacre, I’ve never had a peaceful night’s sleep. Every time I close my eyes, I see you, covered in blood, asking me why... why I betrayed you.

“I never wanted it to happen. I was foolish. When my mother took me to see your family back then, your mother wouldn’t let us in. But you spoke for me, and I’ve never forgotten that.

“If only I hadn’t trusted the wrong person, if only I hadn’t raised a viper at my side, none of this would have happened. Walter, I’m sorry. I was blind.”

Everyone watching the old man kneeling in the dirt could feel the heavy sadness that surrounded him.

Caitlin's heart ached. She could almost see her grandparents' faces in her mind.

She told them silently, Grandpa, Grandma, you can rest in peace now.

The Jonathan family massacre has finally been answered for.

Looking at the sobbing old man, Caitlin said softly, "Fallon, help Hector up."

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Afterward, she arranged for Hector and his companions to be taken back to the Thompson Residence. If Hector wished to stay longer at the cemetery, it would be his choice.

Then Caitlin and Sebastian headed to the hospital. Today was Molly's discharge day.

When they entered the hospital room, they found Simon and Molly locked in a kiss.

AD

