

The Prison Made Queen

Chapter 1

“Leilani Sloan, you’ve served your time. You’re free to go.”

The iron gates of Alloy City Penitentiary slid open slowly, the metal grinding against metal with a harsh, ear-piercing screech.

Leilani took a deep breath and stepped out through the prison gates. Her only company was a plastic bag containing a few items of old clothing. After four years of incarceration, she was still wearing the same outfit she had arrived in—clothes that now hung loosely on her frame. This was everything she owned. She didn’t even have enough money for a cab back to the city.

The July sun was scorching. Leilani walked slowly along the highway, sweat quickly soaking her back. Her pace was slow, not just from exhaustion, but because she was wondering where she could go.

The Sloan family? The “prestigious family” that had made her take the fall for the adopted daughter, sent her to prison, and wouldn’t even pay for a lawyer?

Suddenly, the sound of a car horn honked behind her. Leilani instinctively stepped to the side, but to her surprise, a black Maybach pulled up right next to her.

The window rolled down, revealing a familiar face in the back seat—Josiah Sloan, her eldest

brother.

“Leilani?” Josiah’s voice held obvious surprise. “What are you doing here?”

Leilani suppressed the disgust rising in her chest, ignored Josiah, and continued walking. She had only taken a few steps when she was blocked.

“Leilani, it’s been four years. Have you forgotten how to speak?”

“If I weren’t here, where would I be? Did you hope I’d stay inside for a few more years?” Leilani sneered.

Josiah frowned. “I mean, why didn’t you notify the family to come pick you up?”

“Notify the Sloan family?” Leilani looked him straight in the eye until he guiltily looked away. “The same Sloan family that sent their own daughter to prison?”

Josiah was clearly stung by the remark. He averted his gaze, his tone stiffening. “Forget it. Get in. I’ll take you back. Now that you’re out, keep your nose clean and stay out of trouble.”

The phrase “keep your nose clean” instantly ignited the anger in Leilani’s heart. She spoke coldly, “Josiah, before telling me to ‘keep my nose clean, maybe you should think about who the real villain was in the first place.”

Josiah’s expression turned ugly. “Leilani, that incident is in the past. Why bring it up again?”

“In the past? Maybe for you it’s in the past. But for me, four years of prison is a humiliation I can never wipe away.”

Silence fell inside the car. Josiah was clearly feeling guilty, his fingers drumming

unconsciously on the steering wheel. He finally spoke, his tone softening. “Tamara... she’s blamed herself all these years. She cries at home often, saying if it weren’t for her, you wouldn’t have...”

Leilani cut him off, her voice icy. “Josiah, we both know exactly who pushed Yvonne down those stairs. The culprit was never me. It was your precious sister, Tamara Sloan!”

Four years ago, Leilani had explained this over and over, but everyone stood behind Tamara. No one listened to her defense.

“Enough! Leilani, shut your mouth!” Josiah interrupted sharply. “The evidence was conclusive, and the court made its ruling. How long are you going to keep denying it?”

“A stairwell with no cameras and a few so-called ‘eyewitnesses’-that’s your evidence?”

Josiah pressed his lips together tight, his face darkening. “Leilani, you... you’ve changed,” he said in a low voice. “You weren’t like this before.”

“Four years in prison is enough to change anyone. If you don’t believe me, feel free to try it yourself,” Leilani retorted calmly.

Josiah looked embarrassed but didn’t want to argue further. Suddenly remembering something, he changed the subject. “By the way, today is Tamara’s birthday. You can come home and celebrate with her.”

“Do you even remember my birthday? In these four years, did any of you visit me? Did you bring me a cake?”

Leilani’s words plunged Josiah into silence again. Not knowing what to say, he simply shut

As the car drove along the highway back to the city, Leilani looked out the window, her thoughts drifting back to that birthday party four years ago.

Switched at birth, Leilani had lived as a country girl for eighteen years. That day-her first birthday after being recognized by the Sloan family-was also her eighteenth birthday, her coming of age. But the family only cared about doting on their adopted daughter, Tamara, completely ignoring her. Leilani had comforted herself, thinking her parents and brothers just weren't used to her yet and would treat her better in time.

Halfway through the party, her high school classmate Yvonne suddenly visited, claiming she had a secret to tell her about Tamara.

Just then, Tamara appeared, having eavesdropped from somewhere, her face pale.

When Leilani returned to the stairwell, Yvonne had already fallen down the stairs and was lying in a pool of blood.

Everything that followed was a nightmare. The police found Yvonne's blood on Leilani's sleeve. Guests claimed they saw her arguing with Yvonne, and some even said they "saw with their own eyes" that she pushed her. She explained, but no one believed her. The Sloan family thought she was framing Tamara, and her father even slapped her in front of everyone.

In the end, she was sentenced to four years for aggravated assault.

"We're here. Put away your bad attitude. It's Tamara's birthday; don't make her unhappy."

Josiah's voice pulled Leilani back from her memories.

Hearing his warning, the rage in Leilani's heart threatened to burst out of her chest.

The Sloans, especially Tamara... she would make sure they paid a heavy price for what she had endured these past four years.

Inside, Tamara was chatting with friends when she heard a noise. Thinking Josiah had returned, she turned around with a smile.