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## Always Been Yours Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Who Are You Calling a Mongrel?

Gregory appeared to be considering the proposition, then nodded with a hum. "Daddy, I thought about it, and you're right. I can't just stick to the pretty lady and get in the way of her work if she has a busy day ahead."

Next to him, Tessa broke into a bemused smile. He's so well-spoken for his age that it's hard to remember he's just a toddler.

Having heard his father acceding to the lunch request, Gregory grinned, the sadness fading from his eyes as he cheered, "Yay! That means I get to have lunch with you, pretty lady!"

Tessa's lips curled into a gentle smile as she crouched down and wiped away the boy's tears. In the process of her doing so, Gregory pelted her with an endless stream of questions, one of which was, "Pretty lady, is this where you usually work? Can I have a tour of the place?"

Not waiting for Tessa to respond, Trevor interjected immediately, "Of course, you can, Young Master Gregory!"

Tessa agreed readily. "Well, of course, you can have a tour if you'd like. I'll be your personal guide." With that, she picked up the little one and propped him on her hip as she showed him all the different departments of the orchestra company building.

That being said, her impromptu tour guide duty came with immense pressure, given that Nicholas was behind them the whole time.

She knew he didn't like Gregory getting too comfortable with her, so she merely held the boy without encouraging affection.

However, Gregory seemed to think differently, for he took to her like a fish to water. He had one arm wrapped around her neck like it was the

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most natural thing in the world to do as he glanced around curiously and asked about anything he was remotely interested in, and Tessa answered him patiently.

It was nearly noon when they were finally done with a full tour, and Tessa thought it was time for lunch. Just as she was about to voice this out, the receptionist walked up to her and said quietly, "Miss Reinhart, there's somebody here to see you."

Tessa raised her brows in mild surprise. Who could look for me during lunch hour?

Nonetheless, she set Gregory down and addressed Nicholas politely, "Just a moment, please, President Sawyer. I'll go and take a look at who it is." Then, she walked toward the front desk to do just that.

Tessa had not expected to be greeted by the sight of her stepsister, Sophia, and her stepmother, Lauren, the moment she rounded the receptionist's desk.

When she saw them, her expression immediately turned grim, and unconsciously, she clenched her fists even tighter. She could already guess what the both of them were doing here even before they explained themselves. They must be here because they're seething over the six million compensation!

True enough, her guess was correct, and they were indeed here to confront her about the six million compensation.

Aggressively, Lauren reached out and grabbed Tessa by the arm, her nails digging into the latter's flesh as she shrieked like a maniac, "You little b\*tch! I didn't peg you for the heartless sort. I can't believe you actually framed Sophia and pinned six million worth of damages on her, even though she was innocent!"

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Lauren had spent a small fortune getting Sophia onto that yacht, hoping that she could introduce her daughter into high society and bag a rich man of prestigious background. However, instead of achieving that end, Sophia ended up having to fork out six million in damages! The sum alone was of astronomical proportions, and it was a smidge away from crushing the Reinharts altogether.

Tessa smirked when she heard this baseless accusation and retorted icily, "I suggest you clarify this, Lauren. It was your daughter who messed up and broke Madam Sawyer's precious violin before the banquet started, so it only makes sense that you have to pay for it."

With her rage provoked, Lauren snapped, "How dare you speak back to me? You were the clumsy little fool who couldn't even walk without tripping over your own feet, and after you broke the violin, you decided to pin the blame on your sister! Where the hell is your good conscience, Tessa?!" Seething, she paused to catch her breath, then warned shrewdly, "You little wh\*re, if you don't cough up the six million by the end of the day, then don't blame me for making you do it the hard way!"

"Hah! Let's just see if your bark is worse than your bite!"

Upon seeing the disdainful look in Tessa's eyes, Lauren grimaced menacingly and shouted, "Get in here and take her away!"

Having heard this, the two burly bodyguards dressed in black hurtled into the lobby of the building to do as they were told.

Lauren had hired the two men earlier today to take Tessa by force. In addition to demanding the six million from Tessa, Lauren came with an ulterior motive in mind.

As things were, the Reinharts were having a hard time tiding over the steady regression of the family business, and in an attempt to salvage the company, they had come to a collective agreement to form an alliance through marriage. Among their clientele was a man whose family

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was powerful enough to help the Reinharts get their business back on track, but his son, to whom Sophia was initially arranged to marry, had suffered a terribly high fever during his childhood, and his brain was damaged as a result.

When Sophia learned of this, she refused to

make good on the arranged union, and Lauren thought that now would be the perfect opportunity to force Tessa to take her place instead.

Presently, the two bodyguards restrained Tessa in their vice-like grip, and she realized with horror that she could not possibly take them down. Struggling to break free of the men's hold, she eyed her stepmother mutinously as she demanded, "What do you think you're doing, Lauren? Let me go right now!"

The receptionist panicked as well when she saw how quickly things had escalated, and she frantically cried, "Security! Security!"

The security guards were several floors down, so they wouldn't get to them that soon. Unexpectedly, Gregory beat them to it, and when he came out to see Tessa being apprehended by two aggressive men, he rushed over angrily. "Let go of the pretty lady right now! You can't just take her away!"

Sophia heard him shouting and turned to look at him. When she saw that it was Gregory, all the color drained from her face.

Before she could snap out of her daze, Lauren stepped forward and reached to shove the child. "Where the hell did this mongrel come from? Get out of my sight!"

Gregory had been shoved with no small amount of force, and his little body staggered backward before he toppled to the ground.

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Mortified, Tessa shouted, "Are you out of your mind, Lauren? Why would you do that to a kid?!"

She broke free of her captors and hurried to help Gregory up to his feet, looking pained as she asked worriedly, "Sweetheart, are you okay? Does it hurt?"

He shook his head, looking cherubic as he answered quietly, "No."

He might be saying that, but Tessa saw that there was a red patch on his arm that was proof of how hard he had fallen.

Lauren, on the other hand, seemed oblivious to the trouble she had stirred up as she grew even more incensed, yelling, "I will not hesitate to hurt anyone who gets in my way today. What are you going to do about it?"

Tessa eyed her balefully. "You'll pay for what you did today!"

Lauren merely smirked contemptuously when she saw how Tessa so vehemently defended the child. "All I did was push him. There's no need for you to be so defensive. What, is he your mongrel or something?" she sneered.

Just then, a tall and lean figure approached the ruckus ominously, and a voice as cold and frigid as ice descended upon Lauren like the warning breeze of a snowstorm. "Who are you calling mongrel?"

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