

A close-up, profile view of a woman's face, showing her nose, lips, and cheek. The lighting is dramatic, with one side of her face in shadow. The background is dark. The text is overlaid on the image.

LEE TAYLOR

ONE GOOD  
BETRAYAL  
DESERVES ANOTHER

Cassie Winters's life was perfect or at least she thought..until fate helped her unravel a terrible secret that would change her whole life and leave her world shattered. A series of unfortunate events happened in her life, and she had no one to turn to but herself. She ends up going on an expected trip with a handsome billionaire Ethan Hunter that she has been trying so hard to get a business deal with, and ends up entangled in his family drama that she could cost her life. How will she escape danger? Will she be able to forgive and forget so she can start over?

## Cat out Of the Bag

Cassie Winters checked her diamond-encrusted watch and cursed under her breath. She kept her hands on the steering wheel and her eyes on the road. She stepped on the breaks suddenly and swerved the car and made a u-turn.

"Dammit! How could I forget my presentation?" Her Jaguar XF turned smoothly into her driveway and she hopped out and left the engine running. She ran into the house and frowned when she heard loud voices coming from her bedroom.

"Kace how could you??" That voice sounded like Scarlett, Cassie's best friend.

Cassie stilled outside the bedroom door and listened in. She removed her heels and padded barefoot towards the bedroom. She had left the house rather early today while Kace was still asleep. But what was Scarlett doing here so early in the morning and what had her fiancé done to her?

"Yes, Kace how could you be sleeping around with both me and my sister?! That's really messed up!" That sounded like Victoria, Scarlett's young sister.

Cassie clutched her chest and leaned against the wall and tried to compose herself. She couldn't give herself away until she got the whole story.

"What's messed up is that both of you came after me when you both know that I'm dating your best friend! What does that say about you Scar??" Kace shot back.

"Well, now we both pregnant what is your precious Cassie going to say about that? Huh, pretty boy??!" Scarlett poked him menacingly in the chest.

Cassie couldn't take it anymore. It was too much all at once. She raced her way downstairs, trying to keep a brave face; until she drove out of the gate and was back on the road. There was a lump in her throat and as she tried to furiously blink back the tears, they escaped her grey-blue eyes and slid down her perfectly made-up face. Never in her life did she ever think that Kace- her Kace Miles-would be capable of doing something like this to her. She thought he loved her? After all, he had told her countless times! She loved him more than anything-her world revolved around him. She ate, breathed and slept, Kace Miles. He was all she could think about. Her whole life revolved around him. She was beyond hurt, no words could explain how devastated she was. Cassie parked her car on the mezzanine floor and took a breather.

Try as she might she couldn't focus. She was going to make a mess of this presentation and she had been trying to snag this deal for the longest time. She felt like her heart was being squeezed by an iron fist; squeezing the life out of it and bleeding her dry. How could the love of her life betray her in this fashion? And with Scarlett?? She couldn't decipher that if it had been a total stranger, would the impact be any better or worse. Then there was Scarlett's young sister Victoria-well Victoria was a well-known tramp that would give it up to anything that moves-anything with blood. Those sisters were known for snatching each other's boyfriends so why would Cassie be surprised? Did she think they wouldn't cross the line when it came to her if they couldn't respect each other's boundaries?

Cassie sighed and rubbed her wet palms on her grey pencil skirt. She freshened up her make-up and fixed her white silk blouse and straightened her jacket. Her hair was neatly pulled back into a perfect bun, without a strand out of place. She took a deep breath and stepped out of the car, then made her way to the bathroom to check herself one last time before she went to do her presentation in the boardroom. She had alerted her colleague and close friend Chelsea to set up so long. They had been working on the project together so she was the best person to help.

She would have to take a couple of days to process the mornings' events. This was the ultimate betrayal. How would she face Kace? Scarlett? Any of them? She gulped down half a bottle of water and made her way to the presentation.

Cassie pasted her best crocodile smile and stepped into the room. Everyone was already seated and it seemed they had already started without her.

"Cassie, just the person I was hoping to see." Her boss Kevin Walters looked over his glasses. "My office now!" He growled as his chair screeched and he marched off ahead of her.

She gave a questioning look to her colleague and close friend Chelsea but she just smirked at Cassie. "Well run along then. You will find out soon enough what it's about..and I have already packed your things so no need to worry about that." She said her face written with malice.

Cassie followed Kevin Walters to his office and wasn't even offered a seat.

"Don't bother sitting I'll make it quick." He threw a bonded document on his desk and scowled at her. "I know that you have been planning to open your own advertising company and that you thought you would get away with stealing my clients."

"But I-" she tried to explain.

"Save it Cassandra!" he shouted, "Chelsea told us everything! At least she is a loyal employee-unlike you." He sneered. "I trusted you, Cassie. You were the best Account Manager that I had and this is how you thank me??"

"But Kevin, allow me to explain-" she stepped forward.

"I don't want to hear it. Just get out! Take your things and leave! Now- or I will get security to escort you out of the building."

"Fine. You can believe Chelsea but one day you're going to see the truth." She turned on her heel and strode out of his office with her head held high.

"I'll send someone for my things," She said to the receptionist as she pressed the elevator button.

Could the day get any worse? She thought to herself. Her wedding was in two months and now she was out of a job. At least if she was fired for a valid reason but that Chelsea twisted the truth and had Kevin wrapped around her finger.

Where would she go now? She certainly couldn't go home and her best-friend just proved that she wasn't. Her parents would fuss and fret and she had didn't want to burden them, so she was basically on her own. She glanced at her phone as it rang and Kace's

name flashed on the screen.

"Yes?" She barked.

"Hey honey, are you okay?" Kace tested the waters. He was sure he heard the housekeeper telling someone on the phone that Cassie had stumbled on the worst sight of her life. But she seemed oblivious of the morning's events so maybe he needed to brush up on his Spanish or his Cassie was a very good actor that was wasting her talent as in advertising.

"I'm perfect sweetie, just having a bad day." She said with exaggerated sweetness.

"Can I take you to lunch? It might cheer you up?" He smiled to himself, he was home and dry. Cassie was clueless.

"Yeah sounds good. I'll meet you at our usual spot?" She said.

"Great. See you soon baby. I love you." Cassie almost choked on her water.

"I love you too sweetie."

Cassie decided to see how long Kace would keep up this charade. After all, she had nothing to lose...

## Journey To The Unexpected

Cassie drove around aimlessly, uncertain where she should go. She couldn't call her best-friend Scarlett for obvious reasons and she definitely couldn't go back home. In actual fact she had to start searching for an apartment like yesterday, there was no way she was going to stay another day with Kace. In a split second, she had lost her home, her job, her friends, and the love of her life. When she woke up this morning, she never in her wildest dreams, thought her life could turn into such a horror show.

She was on her way to see an estate agent about a house when she heard the shrill ringing of her phone; that jolted her back to reality. She regretted not switching it off; she didn't feel like talking to anyone right now.

"Cassie Winters." She said in a flat tone as she balanced her Samsung S10 between her shoulder and ear, as she pulled over to the side of the road.

"Miss Winters, this Amanda from Ethan Hunter's office. Unfortunately, he won't be able to make today's meeting. However, he would like you to meet him at the airport in the next twenty minutes if possible? He has some time on his hands before his jet takes off, like half-an-hour or so. If you're willing you can dash over there and give him a brief run-down of your business proposal as quickly as you can. Will that be okay?" The personal assistant asked.

"Amanda I'm sorry...I know I nagged you for the longest time to set up this appointment and Mr. Hunter is a very busy man but I'm so sorry I can't make it. I don't work for-" Cassie started to explain and was abruptly cut off.

"Listen, Cassie, this is probably the only chance you going to get so don't mess it up." She reprimanded. "I've bent over backward to convince him to give you this opening-so just get your butt to the airport and re-schedule yourself if you have to. Mr. Hunter is leaving for Siberia in the next hour and won't be back until after three months. Don't waste this opportunity. Get over there." She rang off in a huff before Cassie could put in another breath.

"What do I now?" Cassie rapped her finger on the steering wheel as she contemplated her next move. She took a deep breath and smoothed back her silky blonde hair, checking her reflection in the rear-view mirror.

Amanda had every right to be upset. Cassie had bribed her with her favorite chocolate, bought her coffee and called her every day like a love-struck boyfriend. She would have to sort this mess somehow instead of allowing Amanda to take the heat from her boss.

She found herself driving to the airport. She parked her car close to the private strip, where Ethan Hunter's jet was getting ready for take-off. A guard was kind enough to drive her in his cart and deposited her close to the plane.

Ethan had just stepped out of his limo, his driver stood at attention as he held the door open for his boss. Cassie couldn't help but do a double-take of the handsome billionaire. Ethan could back up being generally elegant and expensive-looking with being the owner of a multi-billion tech brand that is every bit as tasteful in appearance as the man himself. His dark hair was tousled by the wind and there was stubble on his perfectly shaped jaw, giving him a rugged sexy look.

He looked fresh like he had just stepped out of the shower. His fragrance was a bold aquatic marine scent giving way to apricot and smoked beechwood; while the woody and fruity elements ground the scent in something more familiar. The way he smelt reminded Cassie of autumn, but on the coast. The art of slow seduction was the theme here, and his fragrance delivered on that promise. His indigo eyes roved slowly over Cassie's slim body

and he held out his hand in greeting.

At this very moment, Cassie understood why this gorgeous piece of flesh, standing in front of her was named The World's Hottest Billionaire many times over in almost every relevant, glossy, fashion magazine. Ethan Hunter was a babe, she thought as she blinked continuously, unable to hide her reaction.

"You must be the very persistent Cassandra Winters, I'm Ethan-as you are well aware I'm sure." A smile teased his full lips and Cassie felt her mouth filling with saliva.

"Yes...uhm- about that Mr. Hunter-" Cassie frowned as she remembered the reason she was here in the first place.

"Listen, sweetheart, I'm in a bit of a rush-so can we walk and talk if you don't mind?" Ethan continued to hold her hand as he led her up the ramp, helping her up the stairs. Cassie noted that his hands were soft and smooth, more than hers if possible.

"Can I take your coat?" Cassie allowed him to help her remove her pink woolen jacket.

"Thank you," she returned his smile, "but that won't be necessary. I-."

"Sit, please," he gestured to a plush seat opposite him. "Tea? Coffee? Or are you a water girl? actually I think a latte would be great for this weather." He remarked, deciding for them both. "Henry makes the best lattes and croissants, that's why I never leave him behind when I travel." Ethan pressed the intercom and ordered the refreshments.

"Mr. Hunter there's -" Cassie pursed her lips.

"Ethan, please." Ethan insisted. "Go on Miss Winters." He smiled.

"Cassie, please." She mimicked and Ethan flashed a teasing smile flashed, rendering her temporarily blind.

"Ditto sweetheart." Dimples peeked out from his mega-white smile. His teeth were the most perfect teeth Cassie had ever seen. They were even and as white as snow, his full lips screamed *'kiss me now'* and she just knew they would be soft to the touch. She found herself imagining what it would be like to be kissed by him...She sighed inwardly and tried to concentrate on what he was saying.

"Cassie, are we still together?" Ethan waved his hand in front of her and laughed softly, a twinkle in his blue eyes.

"Your latte Sir," the hostess placed a tray on the table and left quietly.

"Look- Ethan, I'm sorry for wasting your time but I'm no longer working for Walters Advertising...I was fired this morning because I was stabbed in the back by someone I considered my friend!" she ranted. "Today has just been the worst day ever and it's not even noon." She sighed deeply.

"Care to share? It always helps to talk about it with a neutral party. Especially with a newly acquired friend like myself." He said, passing her cup across the table. "Go ahead. I'm a good listener-I promise."

"So you're not mad?" she looked at him in surprise.

"Sweetheart! Why would I be mad? Your boss is a jerk. That's the main reason I didn't want to do business with you in the first place-it had nothing to do with your negotiation skills. That's the honest truth."

"So why did you agree to this meeting?" She asked, baffled.

"To meet you, dear Cassandra. Your reputation exceeds itself, Miss Winters. I wasn't going to pass up the opportunity to meet you in person and...I was kind of hoping I could lure you to come and work for me instead... So am I making any headway? Or do I have to turn on the Hunter's charm?" He winked swiftly at Cassie, who started to choke on her drink.

He put his mug in the cup-holder, strode over to her side and started to gently pat her on the back. "Are you okay?"

"You might have turned on the charm a little too much," she admitted with a strangled laugh.

"Oh really? I didn't even try this time around." He gave her an intense look as he rubbed circles on her body. "I wonder what would happen if I did."

"I think I'm okay now.." she said under her breath, with furtive glances to right and to left.

"So tell me...have you ever been to Siberia Miss Winters?" Ethan's hazel eyes twinkled with mischief.

"No, I haven't.." In her perplexity, she was appealing to him who was practically a stranger

"Well I suggest you buckle up sweetheart; because we're about to soar the skies" With that, he leaned back and strapped his seat belt.

"But-but-" She stuttered.

"Buckle up sweetie, we can discuss the small print later." Every word fell from him with a quiet and steely deliberation.

The jet swooped off the ground and into the sky gracefully and to the bewilderment of Cassie, the pace of the jet never slackened. Could this day throw any more curveballs at her? She stewed quietly in her chair, while Ethan sat back and enjoyed a laugh courtesy of her of course. She didn't know whether to be mad or relieved.

"Relax Cassie! From the looks of it, you could use some time off. Take this as an opportunity for self-reflection or self-discovery. Honestly, you look like you need to escape from it all. You can thank me later." Ethan observed quietly, she didn't even need to tell him anything, he just knew.

"You're right Ethan, but I didn't tell anyone where I was going..and I don't have any clothes-."

"You can call your parents once we land. As for clothes I have lots of money at my disposal so I can take care of that." He offered.

"I don't have parents-they're late.." She hoped he wouldn't ask any further questions.

"So everyone else is irrelevant." He said with finality.

"You know what? You're right?" The more she thought about it, the better it seemed for her to leave. This was perfect timing. "I think I'll thank you now. Thank you, Mr. Hunter." She smiled at him and he reciprocated.

"We have a long journey ahead of us. So why don't you start by telling me about your disastrous day? Start at the beginning, don't leave anything out." Ethan rubbed his hands in anticipation.

"Are you sure you want to hear it?" She rolled her eyes.

"I love a good story sweetheart. Spill!" He demanded, and they laughed at the irony of it. They made themselves more comfortable as he refilled their cups and handed her another croissant.

"Okay here goes," she took a deep breath and sat back, "It all started when...."

## Parting Shots

"Gosh!" Cassie said, lifting her hand to hide a yawn. "Why am I suddenly so tired?" She blinked and rubbed her eyes with her fingertips.

"Talking can be tedious." Ethan smiled lazily. He was feeling slightly drowsy himself and couldn't understand why.

Fatigue and the want of sleep were heavy upon him, and his feet were as lead. Cassie went limp in her seat and her hands fell over the armrest. Surely she wasn't that tired?? She was out like a light and Ethan felt like his surroundings were spinning.

All at once something jogged his memory and he remembered a similar scenario. He summoned the little energy he had in his reserves and amidst his weakness; he was sustained by his strength. He unbuckled his safety belt then threw himself on the floor, then crawled to his overnight bag, where he found what he went for; the antidote to the drug that might have been laced with their coffee, trusting the efficacy of the remedy.

He took a double dose and hoped it would give him the strength he needed to keep them safe from impending danger. He shuffled over to the compartment that housed the mini-kitchen and found Henry knocked out of the floor.

As he turned to go over to the cockpit he came across his ex-girlfriend Janice and the pilot. "Janice??"

"Hello Ethan," Janice smirked deprecatingly as she exited the door of the cabin. "I'd really like to stay and catch up but unfortunately, I've got a sky-diving appointment with your pilot."

Suddenly the plane shook, somewhat unsteadily, and Ethan lurched across to the window. A nose-dive seemed inevitable, but once more the plane shifted its position. Janice and her accomplice seemed unperturbed as they got into their gear.

"Unfortunately there are only two parachutes darling," Janice said with a dramatic sigh. "Any last words for Daddy before I love and leave you-again?" she asked scornfully, with a distaste she didn't propose to lessen. "No?" she leaned forward tried to kiss him but he pushed her away. "All the best to you and your new girlfriend. Some relationships are just doomed to fail. Take care darling." She blew him a kiss as the traitorous pilot opened the exit door and they leaped out.

"I hope you burn in hell!" Ethan screamed at their retreating backs and grappled his way to the cockpit.

He opened the throttle wide, and advanced the sparking lever a little, afraid to lose control, lest it breaks and drops away. It was kind of difficult to control the plane with the cabin door wide open and the wind blasting in every direction. And so they were, for only fifteen minutes, with the speed set moderately, on autopilot. It would give him a bit of time to get them off before the plane crash-landed.

He opened up a hidden compartment under the pilot's seat and retrieved his sky-diving gear. He knew he was working on borrowed time so he got to work right away. He managed to secure the gear on both himself and Cassie at record speed. The plane swayed and took a dive downwards, throwing them off balance, as it was making its way straight for the island beneath. Fortunately, Cassie was securely strapped to him so Ethan fought his way to the exit and the jet jerked forward, sending them spiraling into the cold air in a tangled mess.

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Cassie woke up to the sound of birds chirping sweetly in the trees. She couldn't remember where she was and her body was throbbing in pain. All of a sudden it came flashing back to her...She got up gasping as she recalled last night's events.

Where was Ethan??!

"Ethan!" She screamed at the top of her lungs. "Ethaaaaan!!!"

Cassie scrambled to her feet and saw that she was still entangled in what looked like the remains of a parachute. Her head was still groggy and the last she could remember was talking to Ethan until she felt drowsy, then she blacked out after that. Did Ethan lace her drink and why? What would he benefit? Where was he?

She managed to untangle herself from the straps and looked around her. From what she could make out, she was deep in some strange forest but still clueless about her whereabouts. There were a few bruises and cuts on her body but everything else seemed fine. However, when she tried to stand a sharp pain shot through her leg, causing her to wince.

"Cassandra!" she heard a desperate voice calling out her name but it sounded distant. She crawled towards a tree and leaned against it as she broke off a dry branch to use as a crutch. The voice got closer as she limped along the narrow path.

"Ethan! I'm over here! Where are you?!" Cassie cried out. she felt relieved that Ethan was alive and that she wasn't in a dark forest all by herself. The path finally broke out into the light and she spotted Ethan running towards her, relief all over his face. He grabbed her and crushed her against his chest.

"Cassie! Thank goodness you're alright!" He kissed her forehead and held her at arms

length, probably assessing the damage the accident could have inflicted. "Sweetheart are you okay??" he held her face between his hands, wanting to confirm that she really was standing in front of him.

"Yes. Are you?" she couldn't help but smile. His elegant clothes were torn and his face was matted with dirt but she still found him sexy. Her hands flew to her disheveled hair and patted it softly, she must have been a sight. What was left of her blouse only covered her chest and her skirt looked like she was a hula dancer. How could she be thinking of her looks at a time like this? She reprimanded herself.

"I was never going to forgive myself if anything happened to you. I'm sorry you had to get caught up in my messed up family drama." Ethan apologized, his voice filled with remorse.

"What do you mean?" She said taken aback by his loaded statement.

"First things first I need to take a look at your leg and then check for a few supplies in the wreckage. I always tell the pilot to keep an emergency kit in case something like this happens. Come." He lifted her off her feet effortlessly and led them to a large tree, that was close to the shore, which signaled they were marooned on an isolated island.

## Trapped

"Sit here okay? I'll be right back. Promise." He placed a gentle kiss on her forehead as he placed her against a tree.

"Were there any other survivors?" She asked.

"I don't know if I can call them that -I'll be back," Ethan said without further elaboration.

"Mark?"

"He didn't make it sweetheart."

What had she really done to deserve any of this? Her life seemed to go from bad to worse. She could have easily lost her life in a split second...She didn't even know how the plane crashed or how they ended up here. She had no recollection of it whatsoever. None of this was making sense. When she woke up yesterday morning everything was right in the world, but now everything was in total chaos. What was she even thinking, going with a total stranger all the way across the world? She didn't even have her wallet...she burst out laughing at the irony of it all.

"Care to share? I could really use a laugh right now." Ethan smiled as he dumped a tent and a bag of supplies on the ground.

"I was just thinking on the irony of it all.." she mused. "When I left home yesterday, I never thought I'd find myself stranded on an island with a hot billionaire..."

"So you think I'm hot?" His eyes twinkled as he smiled.

"Pffft! You don't need me to answer that?!" she rolled her eyes.

"I managed to find a tent, a sleeping bag, change of clothes and some food. We will be good for a couple of days."

"That's great. What would I ever do without you?" She gently nudged him with her elbow as he sat next to her.

"Oh I don't know but I'm pretty sure you would be lost without me." Ethan winked at her and opened up the first aid kit. "This is probably going to hurt? I'm sorry.."

"I'm a big girl. I'm sure I can handle-OUCH!"

"You were saying?" He raised an eyebrow and cleaned up her wounds with great gentleness, finally covering it with a bandage. He distracted her from the pain by filling her in on the events that led to the plane crash.

"You see my ex-wife, Janice, cheated on me with my Step-dad, who she went on to marry never the less. Needless to say, I cut both of them out of my life but they won't let me go without a fight." He grunted and went on. "My mother was an only child like myself, and her parents were filthy rich, and left her an undisclosed amount of wealth. My mother, in turn, left everything to me when she passed on tragically in a car crash. You can guess from my status that it was millions- and my dearest father only walked away with a mansion in the hills. The will stipulated that all that wealth goes to my Dad should anything happen to me. So naturally, they want me dead." Ethan shrugged noncommittally.

"Your step-father wants you dead?!" Cassie's blue eyes widened in disbelief. "Along with your ex??"

"Cassie sweetheart, you're not the only one that suffered betrayal at the hands of your loved ones. At least yours have limits." He said dryly.

"I'm sorry Ethan." She rubbed his arm and he gave her half a smile, "and here I was ranting about my stupid life."

"The guy married my mum for her money. Everyone knew that..including her. But I guess she thought he would change but guess the joke was on her...anyway back to the matter at hand." He straightened up and continued narrating the ordeal.

"My dearest ex-wife Janice managed to not only seduce my father but my employees as well. Our drinks were laced but I think it was meant solely for me. I think somehow you got caught up in this mess through association with Yours Truly... They were not expecting you to join me but they had to go ahead with their plan. They had strapped parachutes onto their bodies and were kind enough to fill me in on the plan before they jumped off the plane. You see Janice is a professional pilot FYI-and was the co-pilot yesterday. She gave me a beautiful parting speech before she dived out of the plane..." He grimaced as if he had a bad taste in his mouth.

"I maneuvered the plane to auto-pilot for a while and got my sky-diving equipment-I know but I'm always prepared sweetheart." He chuckled, "You had already passed out so I secured the gear around you and leaped out of the jet; as it took a dive and landed on no man's land. I knocked out after that and somehow we got separated, which brings us here..." He gestured around them.

"Wow and I thought my life had drama! That's quite a story, Mr. Hunter." Cassie laughed trying to lighten the mood. "I've worked out quite an appetite just listening to all of that."

"I'll gather some sticks and get a fire going. Don't move." He ran back into the woods and emerged with a bundle of twigs in his arms. He busied himself making a fire and Cassie hopped over to offer her help.

"Don't worry sweetheart I got this. Besides I don't want you putting too much pressure on that leg." He indicated to his handiwork. "Sit, please."

"Maybe I should go and take a bath?" She looked longingly at the clear blue water as it kissed the shore.

"A swim you mean?" He laughed.

"Yeah...I feel sticky and stuff."

"You need help? There's a smaller waterfall over there, I can carry you over and you can shout once you're done." He offered.

"No, it's okay. I'm sure I can wobble my way there if you just point me in the right direction. Besides I'm not in a hurry, it seems we like have all the time in the world," she looked around pointedly.

"Yeah, I can see what you mean but I will remain positive. We will get off this island sweetheart." Ethan said vehemently. After all, he had a few scores to settle and he would live to see the day his enemies got their penance.

## The Huntered

It was a little over three weeks and Cassie and Ethan were still stuck on the island. There was no sign of any other form of life so far. Fortunately, they had a small, cozy tent and food supplies but they were dwindling to almost nothing. Ethan made use of his hunting skills and caught them dinner once in a while. Cassie didn't know that game meat tasted so good until now.

Ethan and Cassie's bond grew stronger by the day and they told each other everything there was to tell about each other. That's how they passed the time, talking and listening and talking... It's like they had known each other for eons, they were so in sync. It would be difficult for them to go their separate ways when help eventually came.

"I'm glad this happened Cass, it's given me a whole new perspective on life. I see things differently now," Ethan said one night as they snuggled in the single sleeping bag.

"Yeah, I know what you mean...It's like I've discovered a whole new purpose to life and all that I've been stressing about seems so frivolous now." She placed her head on his shoulder as he put his arms around her. "You were right this was a perfect way to escape the whole mess." That's how close they had become. There was no need for words, they both knew how the other felt without having to ask.

"I've come up with a plan to get back at everyone that has ever hurt us. I will put it into action as soon as we touch base. It's going to need careful planning and execution. You're in?" He asked.

"Are you going to let me in on the plan?"

"Sweetheart, you are part of the plan," he chuckled.

"Then I'm in," she winked at him.

"One good betrayal deserves another don't you think?" He quirked an eyebrow.

"Oh, I like the way you think Mr. Hunter." She smiled at him.

"You know what's the best part of this whole ordeal?" He turned to face her, his face serious.

"Tell me?" She held her breath.

"Meeting you." There was so much emotion in those two simple words.

"You're just saying that because you're stuck with me Hunter," she laughed softly but she knew he meant it. She felt it. She saw it in his eyes.

"Somehow I knew you would say that," he twisted his mouth and drew closer until their lips were a breath apart, "but I can't imagine not knowing you. In fact, I want to court you properly once we get off this island. But I know you're not over that jack-Kace. So I'm going to give you time and space to sort out your feelings." He gave her a questioning look.

"Ethan Hunter are you asking me out?" she grinned.

"Yes. Cassandra Winters, will consider being my girlfriend?" he asked

"Well-I don't know what to say-I've never dated a billionaire before," she pouted playfully.

"How about we don't use words?" A flirtatious smile played on his lips.

"I-uhm.." she turned her head down, her cheeks coloring.

"Don't worry Cassandra," he drawled. "When I kiss you-and you will let me kiss you-you will want to more than anything you've ever wanted in your life."

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Meanwhile somewhere in Manhattan...

"What could have happened to Cassie?? You're her best-friend you should know." Kace interrogated Scarlett for the umpteenth time.

He had summoned her to his office, hoping she would finally cave in. He knew that Scarlett was more than capable of withholding information from him in the hopes of marrying Kace instead, but he wouldn't even consider that. Not if she was the last woman on earth. He only had an affair with her and her slutty sister because Cassie wanted to wait until after marriage and he respected that. But a man had needs, pressing needs and Scarlett was more than willing to satisfy them.

"You were almost marrying her so you should know better!" Scarlett scowled at him.

"I am still going to marry her, the wedding is still going on as planned." He stated. "Why am I even asking you?? You've proven time and again that you're not her friend. I can't understand why she was even friends with you in the first place." Kace retorted.

"Look who's talking," Scarlett scoffed and folded her arms.

"Despite what you may think, I love Cassie," he said with conviction, "I love her okay? You can give me triplets or a whole legion of babies but I will never love you! Ever!"

"So why did you have sex with me?!" She shot back.

"At least you called it for what it was-sex. That's all it was to me. Just a roll in the hay." Kace walked towards Scarlett and looked at her like she was the scum of the earth.

"Well, in case you've forgotten I-am carrying your child Kace-and, not your precious Cassie." She pounded her chest.

"Hmm, and you think that's a huge accomplishment do you??" Kace said with disdain, "In case you've forgotten-your slutty sister is also carrying my child. Now, what do you have to say about that?"

"I'm leaving! I don't need to stay here and listen to your insults!" she grabbed her bag and made for the door. "I hope you never find her!" She screamed at him before she slammed the door behind her.

Kace put his hands in his pockets and stared at the closed door for a while. He had to do something about Scarlett and Victoria-fast. Cassie would come to her senses and be back in his arms any day from now. He just knew it. That's why he needed to handle this situation before it spiraled out of control.

"Dr. Wayne, Kace Miles here. Look I need to call in that favor..."

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Meanwhile somewhere in Beverley Hills...

"Are you sure the plane crashed Pookie??" John Henderson asked Janice White for the umpteenth time.

"John darling, it's almost a month and there is no sign of Ethan or his girlfriend," Janice rolled her eyes, "we made sure that there were no other parachutes on board and there was no way he could control the plane. Plus we had drugged his coffee. Your son is history and we get the inheritance after all," she purred as she put her hands around his neck.

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