

Soap Opera Inspired Story Collection
Presents

OCEAN LANDING

**A Serialized Novel by
Wesley Adams and Daphne McGee**

Series Created by Gary Brin

Episodes 1-7

A secluded scenic seaside village located on the California coast north of Santa Barbara appears to be the perfect haven for several people dealing with tragic events from their past. But not everything is what it seems as colorful townspeople deal with personal scandals and misfortunes, while a serial killer hides among them in plain sight.

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**Book 5 of the Soap Opera Inspired Story Collection
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Standish Press

The serialized story in this novel is fiction. Real persons, geographical locations, books, television shows, films, music, and specific events mentioned or which appears as part of the multi-character ensemble in this story were dramatized for entertainment purposes only and have no actual connection to fictional characters and created storylines in this book or reflects upon actual reality of things that may have happened previously or of which seems somewhat similar to real-life situations.

Names of real people mentioned in this book are in bold letters.

Select comments by fictional characters in this novel about historical figures, true crime cases, and, or pop culture icons are based on fact and additional information can be found online in reputable sites as well as numerous published books.

Several characters from *Glass Owl*, *Desperate Lives* and *Thomas Nix* appear in this story. *Glass Owl*, *Desperate Lives* and *Thomas Nix* are original publications from Standish Press and part of the Soap Opera Inspired Story Collection Series.

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Sometimes the person you'd like to be most of all is the last person you should ever want to admire.

Morals are more valuable than popularity.

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Intro

Ocean Landing was inspired by classic nighttime soap operas of the 1980s where the lives of select citizens always seemed in jeopardy because of some shattering event or the other that became part of the plot throughout the season or several seasons if need be. While the idea initially was to follow the usual storylines of long-ago popular soaps from decades previous—the reality of true crime interfered. As this book was being written the idea of a serial killer loose in a small town became the focus and then was melded into the serialized story. Some characters from *Glass Owl*, *Desperate Lives* and *Thomas Nix* were also added in order to connect existing unresolved plotlines from past titles that figure into the current story of a serial killer hiding in plain sight in a small picturesque seaside village.

This is a soap opera inspired episodic novel written specifically to continue similarly formatted themes from beloved daytime soap operas as well as memorable prime-time soap classics—but with mature adult storylines added. Nevertheless *Ocean Landing* was specifically written to resemble a filmed YouTube web series and though it occasionally imitates traditional classic soap operas to a certain extent—it was written

with the intention that it's playing to a visual audience and therefore will emulate a scripted format (without camera angle directions) rather than the usual storytelling methods displayed in popular full-length novels such as *Scruples* by Judith Krantz and *Ellis Island* by Fred Mustard Stewart. It should also be noted that each episode of this series were written in a brief span of 6-12 days or less and therefore shouldn't be confused with being great literature. The goal of this series of novels was to mimic episodes of modern-day soap operas or filmed YouTube web series dramas from independent film makers—by creating visual entertainment on a printed page—and not to create a literary masterpiece.

The storyline in *Ocean Landing* takes place approximately at the same time the frightening events in *Thomas Nix* occurred in a small town in Massachusetts just outside of the Boston area. Several characters from *Glass Owl*, *Desperate Lives* and *Thomas Nix* are featured in this book also as part of the present story.

Gary Brin
Series Creator

In an effort to have an accurate portrayal of the dialogue used for the *Soap Opera Inspired Story Collection Series* people were anonymously observed in shopping malls, schools, places of employment, and on public streets in order to capture a definitive portrayal of how people of various ages and cultures interacted and talked to each other when they thought no one was listening. While some select dialogue was exaggerated for dramatic purposes when needed—the manner and tone of which people were observed speaking to each other in casual and private conversations is accurate. Exact wording was not copied verbatim for the most part, but the way certain types of topics and conversations are addressed by characters in this serialized series is based on actual situations that were observed over a period of several dozen years.

Prologue

1

Two Years Before

“Get in the fucking car already.”

The man looks at his new bride and seems about to explode with rage as she continues looking at a corpse lying face down at the bottom of a ravine. Less than ten feet away she notices the raging surf from the Pacific Ocean continuing to splash water upon the dead woman. The bride turns away and faces her husband standing at the top of the hill. He signals to her and disappears from view. She climbs up the rocky hill looking back every few minutes as she sees the ocean starting to tug at the corpse lying in its path. She reaches where her husband is standing. He angrily grabs her as he looks at the rocks below.

2

Waves continue to build gradually as the corpse is sprayed relentlessly with water. The man turns to look at the woman.

“Do you want to get arrested for murder?”

She gives him an odd look and sighs.

"No."

She wrings her hands.

"I didn't kill her."

Without warning he hits her with his fist.

"The cops are probably on their way."

He shakes his head and begins laughing hysterically.

"Stupid bitch called the cops before I broke her damn neck. She probably told them what we made her do. Told them how I killed her boyfriend at Three Flags Motel and then cleaned out his bank account. Let's just get the hell out of here before anyone sees us leaving. We've got a long drive ahead of us."

He forces her into the front seat of the car.

"This never happened."

He angrily gets into the car and slams the door.

"We were never in Oregon."

He looks at his wife.

"Is that clear?"

She nods.

3

The police car slows down and an officer steps out. He sighs loudly and looks around nervously. He runs his fingers through his hair as he slowly walks toward the broken guardrail a few feet away. He stops and looks back at his patrol car as he hears another car pulling up. He smiles as he sees his brother stepping out of the patrol car. He turns to look at the guardrail again and then notices a red rental car at the bottom of the treacherous-looking ravine. Huge waves lap at the edges of the rental car. As his brother approaches they face each other.

"Did she call back?"

The officer shakes his head.

"No."

He sighs loudly.

"She said they were traveling along the coast."

He notices something lodged between several rocks.

"I think we need to call the coroner."
They look at each other.

4

The reporter watches as the two police officers come toward her. She glances at the cameraman standing nearby.

"Did the victim finger her killer?"

She watches the reaction of both officers.

"No."

He sighs.

"No viable suspects at this time."

He watches as the coroner's van drives away.

"How was the victim murdered?"

"No comment."

"Was she raped?"

"No comment."

Both officers walk away without saying another word as the reporter seems somewhat upset as she continues to stand there curiously looking toward the broken guardrail nearby.

5

The couple drives along the Pacific coast and they look at each other every few seconds as live streaming news blare from the computer lying on the woman's lap. As she looks at her husband nervously he shoots her an angry look. He shakes his fist at her and warns her if she cannot control herself what happened to the couple will be her fate as well. Seeing her shocked look he begins laughing and threatens her yet again with death.

A Brief Look at the First Episode

A small seaside town on the California coast provides the perfect backdrop for a simple life away from the big city. But looks can be deceiving when it comes to what appears perfect when secrets from the past begin unraveling the lives of its townspeople.

Episode 1

Ocean Landing

1

Present Day

“Does your wife know about us?”

Carrie Woods glances at Tyler Hernandez slyly.

“Does she care?”

Tyler laughs as he watches Carrie’s fingers glide across the expanse of his stiff penis. He pulls her toward him and grins.

“We have an open marriage.”

Carrie reacts.

“That doesn’t sound like Gail.”

Tyler rolls his eyes.

“I haven’t told her yet.”

They kiss passionately for a few seconds.

“You bad boys never change.”

Tyler smirks.

“Got a problem with that?”

Carrie watches as Tyler moves into position between her legs. She grins broadly as he slips his finger into her vagina.

“I don’t have a problem with you—but what about Gail?”

Tyler looks at Carrie curiously.

"What about her?"

He kisses Carrie several times.

"I'm who I am. Why should I change?"

He laughs.

"I married her on a dare."

He grins slyly.

"Is it my fault she's lousy in bed?"

Carrie moans as Tyler penetrates her seconds later. She runs her fingers through his hair and kisses him several times as he pins her under his body. She kisses him again and grins.

"Is that how you really feel about my cousin?"

Tyler rolls his eyes.

"Uh-huh. Want to make something of it?"

Carrie shakes her head.

2

Carter Benning looks up from the resume he's reading and faces Jill Edmondson. His demeanor seems somewhat rigid.

"Your resume is a bit limited."

Jill reacts.

"Like I told you before I just finished college."

She wrings her hands.

"But I'm eager to learn as I grow."

Carter looks at Jill curiously.

"Normally I don't take chances but you seem willing."

Jill smiles broadly.

"I am."

They look at each other.

"Be here tomorrow at eight."

Jill sighs loudly.

"Thank you."

She stands up and faces Carter again.

"I'll work really hard."

Carter nods and watches Jill walk to the door.

3

"This can't be happening again."

Louise Wong looks at the computer screen in front of her and at her assistant Marlene Alderson. Marlene shrugs.

"I noticed it this morning when I started to process the receipts from yesterday. It looks identical—same numbers."

Louise turns away from the computer.

"It must be someone we know."

She sighs.

"This has to stop."

Marlene looks at her cell phone.

"My brother's college buddy works for a firm in Los Angeles that deals with hackers every day. He's really good."

Louise walks toward the window.

"How expensive is he?"

Marlene shrugs.

"I could ask."

Louise looks out the window.

"OK."

Marlene reaches for her cell phone.

4

"This room looks like a shrine."

Larisa Lopez glances at Lana Collins oddly and shakes her head several times as she looks at seven huge, framed, glossy photographs of **Lana Turner** adorning the walls of the tiny room. Lana smiles broadly as she walks toward one of the oversized photographs. She stares at the photograph for a few seconds unaware of Larisa's reaction. She turns to face the other photographs and repeats her awestruck behavior. She points proudly toward the largest of the photographs and grins.

"I was named after her."

Larisa makes a gesture with her hand.

"I was named after my aunt but you don't see me devoting an entire room with photographs of her like you've done with this actress. It's seriously creepy and weird—like really creepy."

Lana seems insulted and shrugs.

"There's nothing creepy about this room."

Larisa walks to the door.

"Keep telling yourself that."

Lana turns to look at the photographs again.

5

"Do you think she's lying?"

Alan Wong turns to face his best friend Todd Zimmer.

"I don't know."

He looks back at the entrance of a high school parking lot and runs his fingers through his hair. He seems visibly upset.

"She said she was on the pill. Said us having sex in the backseat of her father's car two months ago was her way of showing me she was no longer a girl. Then today she told me."

He clenches his fist.

"I'm so fucked."

Alan looks at his watch.

"What are you going to do?"

Todd shrugs.

"No idea whatsoever."

Alan looks at his watch again and at the street.

"I'll talk to you later."

At that moment Todd's girlfriend Serena Jackson slowly pulls up alongside on the sidewalk. She seems nervous.

6

Jesse Malinger rolls his eyes as he turns to look at the narrow street up ahead. His mother pulls the car to a stop.

"We've arrived at our new home."

Jesse turns away in disgust. Carol Malinger notices.

"It's not that bad—much better than San Diego."

"Says who?"

Carol ignores her son's rudeness and steps out of the car. She looks up at the small house directly in front of her.

"It looks just like the brochure."

Jesse steps out of the car and makes a barfing gesture with his finger. He looks up at the tiny house and grimaces.

"This blows chunks."

Carol faces her son and sighs.

"It's Ocean Landing or juvenile hall."

She seems upset.

"You decide."

Jesse looks back at the car.

"I'll be dead in a week from boredom."

He sighs loudly.

"My life is so over."

Carol watches as her teenage son walks toward the entrance of their new home. She looks up toward the sky.

7

"Are you sure no one saw me?"

Astrid Thomas turns to face Ben Allington.

"No one saw you."

They look toward the deserted beach again as they pull out of the parking lot. Astrid pulls out her cell phone and sighs.

"There was no one anywhere around."

She reaches out to stroke Ben's hand gently.

"What's the big deal anyway?"

She looks at her cell phone.

"It's not like you did anything wrong Benji."

Ben sighs loudly.

"I thought I told you not to call me Benji anymore."

Astrid leans over to kiss Ben.

"You'll always be Benji to me—*my* Benji."

Ben recoils and sighs loudly.

"You promised."

He turns to look at Astrid.

"Benji is a little boy's name—I'm almost an adult."

Astrid leans over to kiss Ben again.

"That reminds me."

Ben grins as Astrid begins to tousle his hair and lets her other hand slide down toward his belt buckle. He grins.

8

Gail Hernandez places a bouquet of roses on a grave and steps back. She wipes a tear from her eye and looks at her mother. They hug briefly and look down at the roses covering the headstone. Maureen O'Bannon leans down to brush away a few leaves covering the plain-looking brass marker. She sighs.

"He would've been twenty-four next week."

Gail nods.

"I still can't believe it."

She wipes another tear from her eye.

"It still feels like yesterday."

They hug again.

"If only he hadn't gotten into that truck."

Maureen looks at the grave again before turning to face her car parked a few yards away. Gail follows her mother.

"How's Andrew?"

Maureen stops.

"I talked to him yesterday."

She pushes a wisp of hair out of her face.

"He likes Boston."

Gail grabs her mother by the arm.

"Is he ever coming back?"

Maureen shakes her head and sighs.

"I don't think so."

They look at each other.

"Losing his twin brother changed him."

They reach the parked car.

9

Laura Stryker looks up at the imposing building for a few seconds then slowly walks toward the entrance. She stops briefly to look at several large potted plants on the wooden steps.

"I've been away so long."

She seems worried.

"Time heals all wounds."

She nervously looks back at her car.

10

"Is that all you can say?"

Tyler looks at Carrie and laughs.

"What do you want me to say?"

Carrie seems upset.

"I want to know you care."

Tyler rolls his eyes.

"Of course I care."

Carrie walks over and slowly slides her arms around Tyler's waist. She tugs at the buttons on his Levi's. He smirks slyly.

"I've really got to go."

He kisses her.

"You and I are quite the pair."

Carrie pulls Tyler closer to her and kisses him.

"I really like you Tyler."

She seems upset.

"I just wish you weren't married to my cousin."

Tyler laughs loudly.

"Some things couldn't be helped."

Tyler kisses Carrie.

"How about we get together tomorrow?"

Carrie nods.

"What about tonight?"

Tyler grins.

"I'll see what I can do."

Carrie notices the outline of Tyler's penis under his jeans.

"Your penis has a hold over me."

Tyler smirks.

"Tell me something I don't know."

He kisses her again and leaves. As the door closes Carrie turns to look at the narrow hallway leading to her bedroom.

11

Larisa shuts off her cell phone and looks at Lana. She seems upset. She stands by the kitchen door for a few seconds in shock. Larisa gestures with her hand several seconds later.

"He did it."

Lana seems confused.

"What are you talking about?"

Larisa looks at the cell phone in her hand.

"My father left my mother."

Lana seems shocked.

"I thought they were happy?"

Larisa shrugs.

"Mom said he called from Seattle an hour ago and told her he had met someone—said he wanted a quickie divorce."

Lana watches as Larisa clenches her fists.

"Is there anything I can do?"

Larisa turns to face Lana.

"No—my father just ruined my mother's life."

She leans against the marble counter.

"This just can't be happening."

She looks at her cell phone again.

"What is my mother supposed to do now? What about how she feels? How can anyone be such a cold bastard?"

Larisa sighs loudly.

"She devoted her life to him."

She takes a deep breath. Lana walks over to where Larisa is standing. She seems unsure of what to do. Larisa faces her.

"I hate him. I really do."

She silently walks to the door and stops.

"I think I'm gonna call and tell him exactly what I think of his behavior—lay into him about the kind of man he's become."

Lana nods in agreement.

12

Boston

Andrew Latimer glances at the message on his cell phone and looks away. He shuts the cell phone off and leans back in his chair with a dejected look on his face. He faces the window.

"I can't. I just can't."

He notices his cell phone flashing again.

13

"No one is safe in this world."

Colin Baxter looks down at a partially decomposed body lying in a ditch several feet away on a steep cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. He turns away in disgust as he faces Simon Andrews. They watch as a coroner and his assistant make their way down the steep incline toward the body. Colin sighs.

"This is the sixth one this year so far."

Simon nods.

"Same deal like the rest. No ID."

They look toward the highway about ten feet away.

"Think it could be someone local?"

Colin shrugs.

"I hope not. But you never really know."

They watch as the corpse is loaded into a body bag.

"Poor woman never had a fighting chance."

Colin wipes sweat from his brow.

"Hope we can get something from the fingerprints."

Simon watches as the body bag is carried up to the road.

"Terrible how some people behave."

Colin clenches his fists.

"Not enough justice for people like that."

They watch as the body bag is loaded into the back of the coroner's van. From a few yards away they notice a few overly curious onlookers stopping to see what the big deal is about.

14

"I don't like sharing you with the likes of Carrie Woods."

Tyler laughs as Andrea Byron pulls him toward her and they kiss passionately. She tousles his hair as he grins slyly.

"Not much you can do about it."

She seems upset as she pulls away.

"I just don't like sharing your penis. It's wrong."

He laughs loudly.

"You don't own me Andrea. You know I'm not going to change. I've always been this way. I like playing the field."

He pulls her toward him again.

"I can't help myself."

He kisses her.

"What's the big deal anyway?"

He looks down at his swelling erection.

"We've got a good thing going between us. Don't ruin it with petty jealousy. Not exactly a good scene to play out."

Andrea looks down at Tyler's erection.

"Carrie is a whore. I hate her."

Tyler rolls his eyes.

"What does that make you for sleeping with a married man? Especially knowing I got married on your advice."

Andrea tousles Tyler's hair again.

"Why can't I say no to you?"

He laughs as they both look at his erection.

"I can think of one reason."

He kisses her again and gives her an odd look.

"I don't want to hear another bad word about Carrie."

Andrea seems upset.

"But you promised me?"

Tyler laughs.

"I lied."

He looks at his erection again.

"I'm a liar."

They look at each other for a few seconds.

"I'm dead serious about Carrie. Not another word."

Andrea nods in agreement.

15

Enrique Lopez watches Laura walk around the lobby for a few seconds before she turns to face him. She rubs her eyes.

"It's as if it was just yesterday."

Enrique looks at Laura curiously from behind the front desk. Laura slowly walks toward Enrique and sighs loudly.

"I never thought this place would open again."

"Excuse me?"

Laura turns to face Enrique.

"My mother was forced to close down this place and leave town. It broke her heart. But she had no choice after what happened that summer—the accident destroyed our lives."

Enrique seems confused.

"You must be Laura Stryker."

Laura nods.

"Twenty years."

He glances at the spiral staircase.

"What exactly happened?"

Laura turns to face Enrique.

"There was an accident. This retired couple came for a vacation. Then everything went wrong—horribly wrong."

She seems upset as she turns away.

"He fell in his room and his wife blamed my mother for the accident. Threatened to sue so my mother settled. Then she closed the inn and we left town. We had no choice but to move in with my aunt and uncle in Solvang. It was less than perfect."

Enrique walks over to Laura.

"My parents bought this place about eleven years ago. I was really young at the time. They added another wing to the building—as well as a backyard area for summer parties."

Laura looks at the lobby again.

"It's perfect."

Enrique nods.

16

"Baxter and Andrews found another body?"

Kyle Garland leans back in his chair as he talks on his cell phone. His eyes widen as he listens. He sits up suddenly.

"This is the sixth one so far this year—most definitely the work of a serial killer. Cause for alarm no doubt. Terrible."

He stands up.

"Keep me updated."

He shuts off the cell phone and looks at Greg Williams sitting at his desk at the far end of the room. He shrugs.

"It's just a matter of time."

"What's just a matter of time?"

He looks at Greg.

"Before whoever is killing people begin killing more than just random teenage hitchhikers or truck stop prostitutes."

He runs his fingers through his hair.

"I think it's time I have a talk with Colin Baxter."

"Are you sure that's a good idea given your history?"

"We went to high school together. Played football for two years—I qualify that as us being close friends. No grudges."

Greg makes a gesture with his hand.

17

Colin looks at the photographs in front of him and seems about to gag. Simon stifles a smirk as he notices Colin's reaction to the ghastly images. He taps Colin lightly on the shoulder.

"Didn't you say you wanted to be a coroner?"

He smirks broadly.

"Said that was your true calling initially?"

Colin looks at Simon disdainfully.

"How about I take you outside?"

Simon rolls his eyes.

"Should we bring the photos too?"

Colin closes the folder and faces Simon again.

"I *did* want to be a coroner when I was in college. That was then and this is now. Rotting bodies are not my thing. Ugh."

"That and the fact you flunked out."

Colin seems upset.

"That was a long time ago."

"Was it?"

They look at each other and then Colin glances at the window. He slowly walks over and pulls the old-fashioned glass pane windows open. He faces Simon once again and sighs.

"I think we need to face reality about this serial killer situation. This is no longer just something that's been happening on the outskirts of Ocean Landing. Some nut is on the loose."

He grimaces as he paces back and forth.

18

Andrea watches as Tyler drives away. Seconds later she grabs her cell phone and begins dialing. She seems pleased.

"I'll make Carrie sorry she ever made a move on Tyler after I warned her he was mine. She'll pay. Then I'll deal with Gail."

She looks at herself in a mirror and grins.

19

"Enrique and I are here for you."

Larisa hugs her mother warmly and turns to look at the door to the small cottage. Marta Lopez stands up and walks to the front door. She stops and wipes a tear from her eye.

"Enrique doesn't know yet."

"Where is he?"

Marta wipes another tear from her eye.

"He's working the front desk."

Larisa walks over to her mother.

"I'll tell him."

Marta seems about to cry.

20

Astrid strokes Ben's cheek gently and kisses him. They kiss passionately for a few seconds as his fingers fumbles with the steering wheel. He pulls away suddenly and sighs loudly.

"No more kissing while I'm driving."

Astrid slides her fingers across his legs.

"What about other things?"

Ben laughs.

"Are you trying to cause an accident?"

Astrid pulls her hand away.

"Last week you liked it."

Ben smirks.

"Last week we were parked at Rocky Cove when you took it upon yourself to get really, really friendly with my dick."

Astrid reaches out to stroke Ben's cheek again.

"How about we make a return visit?"

"Not happening today."

She seems upset and turns to look out the window.

"You're just lucky you're so cute."

Ben grins broadly and slyly gestures with his fingers.

"I promise I'll make it up to you tomorrow."

Astrid faces Ben again.

21

"I think you know why I'm here."

Colin looks up to see Kyle standing in the doorway.

“Got nothing for you—slim pickings.”

Kyle closes the door behind him.

“How long are you going to play this game?”

Colin leans back in his chair and shrugs.

“I know as much as you do.”

Kyle glances over at where Simon is sitting.

“I think not.”

Colin and Simon look at each other.

“Six is not a good number.”

Kyle glances at Simon and a deputy sitting in a chair by his desk. David Kipling turns away when Kyle focuses his attention on him. Kyle notices and turns to face Colin again. He shrugs.

“I’ll find out with or without your help.”

He turns around and stops.

“I always do.”

He leaves. As the door closes behind Kyle, Colin and Simon look at each other nervously. Colin rolls his eyes.

“He’s more trouble than he’s worth.”

Simon laughs.

“Seems to me someone still has a few issues with their former college roommate—maybe it’s time to let the past go.”

Colin glares at Simon.

“If I want your opinion I’ll ask.”

Simon makes a lewd gesture with his finger.

“Is that before or after you and Kyle beat the crap out of each other—most likely in the parking lot of Gerald’s Bar.”

Colin clenches his fist.

“Kyle Garland disrespected me with my girlfriend. That bastard slept with her right after we got engaged. He knew how I felt about Jean but he still made a move on her anyway.”

“Seems to me he did you a favor—from what you said it didn’t take much for Kyle Garland to seduce your girlfriend.”

Colin glares at Simon again.

“I loved her.”

“But did she love you?”

Colin seems annoyed and stands up.

A young woman walks along a busy highway clutching a backpack in one hand and a bottle of water in the other. From across a deserted parking lot about thirty feet away someone watches her as they tap on a steering wheel with their finger.

Two Days Later

Sounds of laughter echo as Tyler and Carrie intensify their lovemaking. They finally part after a few minutes and look at each other. Tyler leers at Carrie. At that moment Carrie's cell phone begins to ring. She seems annoyed as she glances at it for a few seconds. Tyler looks at Carrie curiously and sighs loudly.

"Aren't you going to answer it?"

Carrie shrugs.

"It's only Andrea. Probably wants a favor."

Tyler seems upset.

"I thought you hated Andrea?"

Carrie rolls her eyes.

"I don't hate her. I just don't like how she uses people."

Tyler sits up in bed and sighs.

"I could talk to her?"

"I'll handle it."

She climbs out of bed and grins.

"I think she's been seeing someone on the sly."

Tyler reacts.

"I thought she was happy with Ronald?"

Carrie rolls her eyes in dismay.

"That's how she plays it. But he's a dud in bed from what she said. Last year she told me she hooked up with Father William—said he was really something else in the sack—wild."

Tyler seems about to laugh.

"She slept with a priest?"

Carrie gives Tyler a strange look.

"He's been quite the man about town."

Tyler laughs.

"Who knew?"

Carrie makes a lewd gesture with her finger.

"Father William wasn't her only conquest either."

She sighs loudly.

"She also played house with Juan Lopez."

"Isn't he like forty-eight or so?"

Carrie shakes her head.

"Uh-huh."

She winks slyly.

"His wife never found out. Then there was Kyle Garland from the newspaper. She said he was really into kinky sex."

Carrie begins brushing her hair.

"I swear if she ever made a play for you."

Tyler seems upset.

"She hasn't."

Carrie looks at herself in the mirror.

"It better stay that way."

She walks over to Tyler and shakes her fist at him.

"I already hate having to share you with Gail. I absolutely won't ever tolerate you dallying with the likes of Andrea."

Tyler smirks.

"Andrea and I are definitely not involved."

"Good."

Tyler seems nervous as his cell phone begins to ring. He picks it up and sees Andrea's name. He shuts it off quickly.

24

"We'll be right there."

Colin turns to face David and sighs loudly.

"We've got another murder."

He wrings his hands.

“Out along the bluffs by Larkspur Point—at the bottom of a ravine—this makes seven—most definitely a recent kill.”

David follows Colin out the door.

25

Astrid watches as Ben places several containers with food and water in front of about twenty-five feral cats. As they circle him, he places the trays in a cleared area and watches as they begin eating. He grins as he faces Astrid. He leans over to pet some of the cats before walking away. He smiles broadly.

“Someone has to feed these cats.”

Astrid rolls her eyes.

“Sooner or later someone will figure it out.”

Ben seems terrified.

“No one can ever know.”

He stops.

“You can never tell.”

Astrid slides her arms around Ben’s waist.

“I can be persuaded to remain silent.”

Ben rolls his eyes.

“Is that so?”

Astrid glances at the cats eating hungrily.

“Uh-huh.”

Ben pulls away from Astrid.

“You said you’d never tell anyone what I’ve been doing out here—never tell anyone I’ve been keeping these cats alive.”

He runs his fingers through his hair.

“Everyone in town thinks I’m just a step away from jail. I prefer they think I’m trouble and a **James Dean** wannabe.”

“Who’s he?”

Ben looks at Astrid with a shocked look.

“Are you serious?”

Astrid shakes her head.

“No clue.”

Ben pulls out his cell phone.

"Oh Father."

Father William grins slyly as he slowly undresses Marla Rodgers. He leads her toward the bed and sighs loudly.

"He approves."

Marla looks at a photo on the table.

"What about my vows?"

Father William laughs.

"What about them?"

Father William looks at his erection.

"This is what has to happen."

He winks.

"You want a baby don't you?"

Marla nods.

"I do—more than anything else."

Father William pulls Marla toward his naked body.

"I'm doing the Lord's work."

He laughs again.

"Obviously George can't do what's expected."

He kisses Marla several times.

"You've been trying for a year and still no baby."

He kisses her again.

"It's God's will."

He pushes her down on the bed.

Larisa looks at a picture of her father and angrily throws it against the wall of her bedroom. She seems upset as she walks over to the window and looks out. She shakes her head.

"There's no way to fix this mess now."

She clenches her fist angrily.

"No way whatsoever. It's much too late. I don't think I can ever forgive him for deserting us the way he did. Damn him."

She notices her mother outside at one of the pavilions in the backyard. She shrugs and heads to the door in a rush.

28

"This place blows chunks."

Jesse looks at the street ahead of him and seems to be deciding what to do next when he notices a teenage girl walking her dog at the corner. She turns to face him and waves. Sabrina McCord watches as Jesse walks toward her. He shuffles his feet as he approaches. The dog, a beagle, gives him a cold look.

"Hi. You must be new in town."

Jesse nods.

"Two days ago."

Sabrina glances at the beagle.

"My name is Sabrina McCord and this is my dog Duke."

Jesse glances at the dog for a few seconds.

"Jesse Malinger."

He shuffles his feet.

"I live up the street a bit."

Sabrina nods.

"How about we walk over to Bailey Park? It's about two blocks away. There's an old house at the far end that everyone says is haunted. It might be but I've never seen anything."

Jesse looks at his watch and nods.

29

"Who was that?"

Tyler shakes his head.

"It was nobody."

Carrie turns to look at Tyler suspiciously.

"Was that Natalie MacDonald?"

Tyler rolls his eyes.

"I'm not playing twenty questions with you."

Carrie grabs Tyler by the arm.

"She has an STD."

Tyler laughs.

"Natalie doesn't have an STD. You just don't like her."

Carrie lets go of Tyler's arm.

"Her boyfriend is a cage fighter from Fresno."

Tyler laughs loudly.

"Ask me if I care."

He grabs his Levi's and grins.

"You don't own me and if I want to sleep with the town slut, that's my deal. I'm not husband material by any means."

Carrie seems stung.

"But they don't care about you?"

Tyler smirks.

"I don't care about them either—it's just sex."

He pulls on a T-shirt.

"I'm a married man. That won't change anytime soon—so this fantasy you have about us getting together is DOA."

Carrie sits down next to Tyler.

"What if I become pregnant? What then?"

Tyler seems enraged.

"Don't you dare play that sick game with me Carrie—there is no us ever—baby or no baby. There's nothing more to say."

He walks to the door and faces her.

"I'll see you tomorrow."

She nods.

30

Father William grins broadly and helps Marla to her feet as she appears still in shock from their encounter. He winks.

"I guarantee you I'll impregnate you by week's end."

He laughs.

"Your prayers to be a mother will be heard."

Marla nods.

"I believe you speak the truth."

Father William smirks.

"I do. I do."

She watches as he pulls on his uniform and looks at his watch. He has a nervous look on his face. Marla notices but says nothing as she quickly slips on a pair of high-heeled shoes.

"I'll come by tomorrow at seven."

She nods and follows him to the door.

30

Colin looks as a covered body is loaded into the back of a coroner's van. He turns to face David. The coroner shuts the door and turns around. He seems a bit upset as he shrugs twice.

"This has to end."

Robert Widdemer turns to look at the bluffs.

"Thrown away like trash."

He sighs loudly.

"Was there any markings?"

Robert shakes his head.

"No."

He wipes sweat from his brow.

"But there was some sort of stain on her clothes."

Colin and David look at each other.

"What kind of stain?"

Robert shrugs.

"Not sure. But it definitely wasn't semen—sort of a light blue liquid that was splashed near one of the jacket cuffs."

Colin and David look at each other again.

"No ID either?"

Robert shakes his head.

31

"We've known each other for several months now but I don't recall you telling me you were from some dinky town."

Sandra King reaches out to playfully slap Scott Malone.

"Ocean Landing isn't a dinky town."

Scott grins.

"Is that so? We've just arrived and I feel like we're lost in some old painting. You actually lived here? Like really."

Sandra rolls her eyes.

"I want you to be on your best behavior."

Scott grins slyly.

"I'll make no such promise."

Sandra pulls up in front of a small picturesque inn.

"Not one bad word out of you."

She leans over to kiss Scott.

"This town was my home until a few years ago."

Scott looks toward the inn.

"Why aren't we staying with your folks?"

Sandra slides her fingers between Scott's legs.

"You want to have sex right?"

He nods several times.

"That's exactly why we're not staying with my folks."

He pulls Sandra toward him and hugs her.

"We've been through a lot together."

She nods.

"What happened in the Virgin Islands is in the past."

She sighs loudly.

"It was the worst nightmare anyone could face."

Scott reaches out to hug Sandra again.

"If it wasn't for what happened we'd never have the bond we do. Even Roland was happy to see me after I got back to New York. Said he couldn't care less but he did. He's a total softie."

Sandra kisses Scott.

"It was nice of him to give you a vacation."

Scott rolls his eyes and smirks.

"Uh-huh—Roland Parker is up to something. I know it without a doubt when it comes to that dude. He wants something from me and wants to make sure I'm in a really good mood when he springs his plans on me. Probably wants me to do a story on some actor with a drug problem hanging out at a rehab clinic in case he falls off the wagon and creates a public scandal."

Sandra jabs Scott playfully.

"I assume you'll set him straight if he tries to push you into doing stuff that is below the belt—especially after the wonderful story you gave him about what happened in St. Thomas."

They both laugh.

"You'd think that would be how Parker would think but he thinks in dollar signs only. Quality isn't on the top of his list."

Sandra jabs Scott again.

"I'd be happy to pay him a visit."

Scott wags his finger at Sandra and laughs.

32

"The Lord says it is right. He knows best."

Father William cups his hand under a young woman's breasts and sighs loudly. He kisses her several times.

"I just want to be a mother."

Melissa Kipling turns away from Father William.

"If David finds out he'll leave me."

Father William grins.

"He won't find out. The Lord tells me so. It is said."

Melissa looks at Father William curiously.

"I'm so confused."

Father William tugs at her clothing as he leads her toward a bed nearby. He looks around the bedroom and laughs.

"Today it begins."

Melissa looks at a recent photo of David and herself. She seems about to cry as Father Williams pulls her closer.

"I love him dearly. But we have issues."

Father William pushes her down on the bed.

"He'll thank you later."

He laughs as he moves into position between her legs. As Melissa sighs loudly Father William penetrates her and hungrily begins ramming her mercilessly. Loud moaning sounds echo throughout the small bedroom. On a carved wooden table nearby is a photograph of David and Melissa on their wedding day.

“The lord says it is so—so shall it be.”

He laughs loudly as her moans echo throughout the small room. Melissa looks at Father William and begins to cry.

33

Larisa hugs Sandra warmly.

“I can’t believe you’re really here in Ocean Landing.”

They look at each other for a few seconds.

“I said I’d come visit and I did.”

Larisa turns her attention to face Scott.

“And who is this handsome devil?”

Scott grins slyly.

“Scott Malone.”

Larisa looks at Scott curiously.

“Oh my God, *it’s you.*”

Larisa glances back and forth between Sandra and Scott.

“He was the *guy* with you on the *island.*”

Sandra nods.

“Uh-huh.”

Sandra watches as Larisa hugs Scott warmly. Larisa winks at him as they turn to face Sandra again. He grins broadly.

TO BE CONTINUED



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