

Soap Opera Inspired Story Collection
Presents

OCEAN LANDING **DANGEROUS GAMES**

A Serialized Novel by
Wesley Adams and Daphne McGee

Series Created by Gary Brin

Episodes 1-7

A village on the California coast seems like the perfect place for someone on the run to hide in plain sight, but events from the past refuses to stay hidden. Meanwhile, trouble looms for one particular person as local townspeople face unpleasant truths about each other when they learn things about those they know that are better left forgotten.

**OCEAN
LANDING**

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**A Serialized Novel by
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**Book 7 of the Soap Opera Inspired Story Collection
Series Created by Gary Brin**

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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 the novels *Glass Owl*, *Desperate Lives*, *Thomas Nix*, *Ocean Landing* and *Games People Play* appear in this story as part of the storyline.

All of the novels mentioned above are original publications from Standish Press and part of the Soap Opera Inspired Story Collection Series.

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MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Not everything is what it seems—but some things are more removed from reality than imagined.

If something seems too good to be true it's because it's exactly what it appears to be—unrealistic.

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Intro

Ocean Landing Dangerous Games continues the story of life in a small coastal town in California as local townspeople struggle with multiple dramas occurring at the same time resulting in complications that extend far beyond their picturesque seaside village. As with the earlier books in the Soap Opera Inspired Story Collection—existing characters and their stories from previous novels are intertwined in the present storyline of life in a small seaside village with plenty drama.

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 Dangerous Games* was 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 *Malibu* by William Murray and *Master of the Game* by Sidney Sheldon. 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 was simply to mimic episodes of modern-day prime time soap operas or filmed YouTube web series dramas—by creating visual entertainment on a printed page—and not to create a literary masterpiece.

The present storyline in *Ocean Landing Dangerous Games* takes place approximately at the same time the hunt for a mysterious key in *Games People Play* concluded. A few characters from the Soap Opera Inspired Story Collection Series are included in this novel as well to continue multiple unfinished storylines.

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

Six Months Previous

A woman looks at a large collection of jewelry lying in a plain brown box. She seems upset as she stares blankly at the box unwilling to touch the sparking diamonds. Her boyfriend comes toward her and with one swipe he whacks her across the face.

“What are you waiting for?”

He raises his hand again.

“I want you to shop these for me.”

The woman looks at him and seems uneasy.

“This isn’t right. There has to be another way for us to get money from your dying aunt. She doesn’t deserve to be robbed in her final days—how about we wait until she passes away.”

The man seems about to explode.

“I’m tired of you trying to tell me what to do.”

He sighs loudly.

“I have no intention of waiting until my aunt kicks the bucket. She could linger for months. I need money now.”

The woman stands up and faces the man.

“I’m not stealing anything from that sweet old lady.”

The man grabs her in a rage.

"I'll kill you—I swear I will."

He hits her hard across the face again.

"I've killed before—twice—one more time won't faze me in the least—I'm not the type of guy you want to insult."

He shoves her to the floor.

"Either you do what I say or I'll personally make sure you end up in a ditch somewhere with so many bruises to your face no one will ever figure out your identity without dental records."

He flexes his muscular arms.

"What's it going to be?"

The woman turns around and attempts to run to the door in a panic. But the man catches her and they struggle as he tries to wrap his arms around her neck. As they struggle she notices a metal vase on the table nearby and reaches for it. As he attempts to hit her again she whacks him with the vase. He falls backwards and whimpers briefly before he becomes still. The woman looks at the man lying before her for a few minutes and begins calling out his name. But there is no reply. She reaches over to touch his wrist and realizes he's dead. She screams and looks around the room. Tears stream down her face as she begins to cry.

2

"What will it be lady?"

The woman looks at the taxi driver and shrugs.

"San Francisco."

The taxi driver rolls his eyes.

"That's quite a ways away. It won't be cheap."

The woman sighs loudly and nods.

"I know."

The taxi driver looks at her and shakes his head. He looks at her again and seems confused by her erratic behavior. He gets into the cab and glances at her for a few seconds. He shrugs.

"I'll need half the money up front."

She looks at her purse.

“How much is it?”

The taxi driver looks at the woman oddly and silently begins checking rates on his computer and then tells her what he expects. She nods and hands him several hundred dollar bills. He slowly looks at her again and seems nervous. He sighs loudly.

“Are you in some sort of trouble young lady?”

The woman shakes her head.

“Of course not—I just want a fresh start.”

The man smiles slyly.

“Boyfriend messed up didn’t he?”

The woman nods and looks out the window.

3

Postcard perfect scenes of the Pacific coast whip by as a taxi drives past jagged rocks and bridges crossing scary-looking gorges. The woman in the backseat stares blankly out the window seeming to be looking at the scenery and enjoying the beauty before her but in reality she sees nothing as her mind continues to focus on the events that happened just a few hours before where her former boyfriend ended up dead. She finally snaps out of her self-induced nightmare as she sees words printed in block lettering on a sign at the side of a highway.

OCEAN LANDING

One Mile Ahead

“Wait. *Stop*. Take me to Ocean Landing instead.”

The taxi driver turns to look at the woman and seems annoyed at her sudden change of plans. He pulls to a stop.

A Brief Look at the First Episode

Events from the past create unexpected conflicts for several residents while the realities of small town life dims the joy of living where everyone knows your name—as grim details from a recent tragedy come to light with few acceptable answers.

Episode 1

Return Engagement

1

Present Day

"You actually lived here as a child?"

Wiley Wilkerson glances at his wife and grins.

"Yep—my folks made their living hopping from town to town all over the Pacific coast teaching stage acting to denizens of small villages like Ocean Landing. I was actually born in Santa Barbara but have no memory of it. Nice place to live though."

Yvette Wilkerson reaches out to stroke her husband's lips. At that moment there is a groan from the backseat.

"Oh God—not again—enough touching already. Go get a room ASAP—no one should have to see old people touch."

Wiley and Yvette turn to look at their teenage son. He rolls his eyes and yawns. Emerson Wilkerson seems annoyed.

"Do you know how embarrassing it is for a guy to see his parents touching each other like a pair of teenagers—*yuk*."

Yvette grins broadly.

"If it wasn't for us touching each other you wouldn't be here today young man—deal already—learn to accept it."

Yvette reaches out touch Wiley's face again and then looks at Emerson. He rolls his eyes and seems disgusted.

"I think I may need a shrink."

Yvette laughs.

"Be careful what you wish for—I might take you up on your offer. Might do you some good to stop being so rude."

Emerson makes a gesture with his finger.

2

Rebecca Martin knocks on the back door of a house and waits. Several minutes later David Kipling opens the door and smiles as he sees his neighbor standing there. He instantly notices the wrapped casserole in her hands. He grins broadly.

"You don't have to keep feeding me Rebecca."

She smiles slyly.

"I want to. Since I closed my cafe last year I've missed sharing my cooking with everyone. I hope you're not upset?"

David waves his hand.

"I could never be upset with you Rebecca. If it wasn't for your concern I'd never have been able to deal with what happened to Melissa. You've helped more than you know."

Rebecca hands David the casserole.

"I hope you enjoy it."

He laughs.

"Oh, I'll enjoy it no doubt. I've put on weight because of your tasty cooking—not even **Julia Child** could best you."

Rebecca blushes.

"Oh, I could never be as good as her."

David looks at the casserole.

"I say differently."

He motions for her to come inside the house and heads to the kitchen. She follows David into the kitchen and waits.

"Losing Melissa was a shock but finding out about her dealings with Father William was quite a blow to my ego."

He runs his fingers through his hair.

"I just want you to know how much I appreciate having you next door—making delicious meals and listening to me when I really needed someone to talk to that wouldn't judge me."

Rebecca reaches out to pat David on the shoulder.

"I'm glad I could help. You're like the son I never had. My late husband became sterile due to a painful war injury in Vietnam—and he refused to adopt after we married in 1975."

She seems about to cry.

"I've always wanted to have children of my own."

David reaches out to hug Rebecca.

"What would I do without you?"

They hug again.

3

Cyril Spalding leans back in his chair as he curiously looks at Jennifer Slater. She seems annoyed for some reason.

"What's going on with you? This is the third time in the last hour that you've reacted badly to hearing Susan's name."

Jennifer rolls her eyes.

"Susan Balfour is trouble with a capital T. That woman has a terrible reputation when it comes to seducing men. I just don't like the fact that she will be working so closely with you."

Cyril waves his hand in the air.

"I promised her already. I won't go back on my word."

He leans forward.

"You've got to trust someone at some point. Not everyone is out there lying and scheming behind your back."

Jennifer takes a sip from the mug of coffee in front of her.

"I'm trying—but it's hard after what happened."

Cyril sighs loudly.

"What happened with Peter Barkley is over. How could you know he was using you to support his addiction?"

He reaches out to touch her hand.

"I'm not perfect either—made plenty of mistakes."

He sighs loudly again.

"Ask any of my exes and they'll tell you how many times I screwed stuff up royally—but I'm trying to be a better man."

Jennifer pulls away.

"Let Susan know I'm watching her."

Cyril watches as Jennifer stands up. She walks toward the front door of the small diner without saying goodbye.

"A guy can only put up with so many mood swings."

As he turns around he sees Helene Jeffreys staring at him.

"I told you she had problems."

He shoots her a nasty look as she walks past him and heads to the door. Cyril slowly leans back in his chair again.

"Some people really need to get their own lives."

He shakes his head several times.

4

Karen Ewing carefully wipes the countertop clean and then turns to face her daughter. Carly Spellman shrugs.

"It's just been two hours."

Karen ignores her daughter and faces the front door again as she watches people walking back and forth on the sidewalk.

"Maybe this wasn't such a good idea?"

Carly walks over to her mother.

"What if no one stops by?"

Karen shrugs.

"Thanks for the vote of confidence."

Carly rolls her eyes.

"I'm a realist."

Karen looks at the front door once more.

"How about we hire a real cook?"

Karen faces Carly.

"I'd like to—if I could afford someone."

Carly seems lost in thought for a second and then smiles broadly as she seems to realize something. She grins.

"What about some sort of gimmick to boost sales?"

Carly pulls out her cell phone.

5

Jill Edmondson stares blankly at the computer screen as she watches several images fly by in front of her. She shrugs and seems frustrated. She taps on the desktop for a few minutes.

“Father William—who was he actually? Why did he pick Ocean Landing—did he pretend to be a priest elsewhere?”

She gestures with her hand.

“Maybe I should revisit his case and the murders.”

She leans forward and begins typing.

“There are still plenty of questions left unanswered from what happened. Father William’s death did not bring finality.”

She pulls up a Google page and begins typing.

“It might be time to ask questions online.”

She smiles as her fingers fly across the keyboard. Seconds later several stories about Father William appear. Jill leans forward as she continues searching for cached material about his murderous rampage. At first nothing appears—suddenly a large trove of files materializes on the computer screen. Multiple sites link older stories together with newer ones. Jill gasps as she reads several of the headlines from Los Angeles and San Diego.

“I guess it’s time I chat with Colin Baxter.”

She shuts the computer off.

6

“This can’t be happening to me again?”

Daniel Williams seems upset as he nervously runs his fingers through his hair while he listens to the message on his cell phone from his girlfriend Cynthia Rodgers. He sighs loudly.

“Who breaks up on the phone?”

He shuts his cell phone off and leans against the doorway as he struggles to adjust to the bad news. He turns his attention to an orange tabby cat lying on the sofa. The cat gives him a curious glance as he approaches. He sits down on the sofa.

"Maybe it's time I spend time trying to figure out what I want to do with the rest of my life—before it's too late."

He looks at his cat.

"What do you think? What should I do?"

The cat gives an odd look and jumps down from the sofa and walks away. Daniel leans back on the sofa and sighs.

7

Jesse Malinger pulls away from Sabrina McCord after kissing her for several minutes. She gently slides her fingers across his lips and pulls him toward her. They kiss again.

"Who would've thought last year I'd be this happy?"

Jesse grins broadly.

"I could never have imagined."

Sabrina touches Jesse's face with her fingers.

"That's such a sweet thing to say."

Jesse pulls Sabrina toward him and kisses her.

"I've got a good life and a nice girlfriend."

He looks at the wooded area near a weather-scarred picnic table at the far end of Red Pine Regional State Park.

"When I first moved to Ocean Landing I really hated leaving all my friends and my life in San Diego. But you gave me a reason to like living in a small town—and it just took one kiss."

Sabrina reaches out to hug Jesse.

"I liked you from the moment I saw you."

Jesse notices several teenage boys entering the park.

"Here comes Lance Marler and his friends."

Sabrina turns to look and recoils.

8

Colin Baxter looks up from his desk and groans as Jill closes the door behind her. He wipes sweat from his brow and blinks a few times seeming to wish she was just a bad dream.

"How can I help you today?"

"I need info on Father William."

Colin seems disgusted as he sits back in his chair.

"I thought I made it clear previously that Dennis Bosley was not a priest and shouldn't be referred to as such. He was a cold-blooded killer and rapist. He came to Ocean Landing under false pretenses and then used the innocent guise of a dead priest to kill twenty-nine people over the course of two years."

He sighs loudly.

"As you recall he also killed his own his wife—whose bones we found on the outskirts of town. According to forensics she was badly beaten—bones broken in several places before he killed her using a block of concrete to crush her skull—then buried her body ten feet away from the highway leading out of town shortly thereafter. According to the secret diary he kept for years and of which we found hidden inside his house—he met the real Father William—William Thayer—about a mile down from where he had just killed his wife—and after the real Father William helped him fix a flat tire on his car, he killed the kindly priest and assumed his identity when he arrived in Ocean Landing later that day."

She watches as he stands up.

"Can I see the diary?"

Colin looks at Jill and shakes his head.

"No."

Jill seems irritated.

"Is there a reason why not?"

Colin walks toward Jill.

"I don't have it."

Jill reacts.

"What happened to it? Did you throw it away?"

Colin looks at Jill and grimaces.

"It's at the FBI offices in Los Angeles."

Jill sighs loudly.

"Didn't you make a copy?"

Colin shakes his head and sighs.

"Of course not—why would you think I would?"

Jill glances at the empty office.

"I never said you did—I was only asking."

Colin walks to the door.

"The FBI closed the case after government sanctioned DNA tests confirmed the identity of Dennis Bosley and the fake Father William as the same person. His diary is at their offices in West Los Angeles. They took everything I had—all gone."

Jill seems upset and shrugs.

"Thanks anyway. I appreciate it."

She leaves. Colin closes the door behind her.

9

Larisa Lopez closes the back door of Pine Lodge Inn and walks out to the pavilion where her mother is sitting alone. Marta Lopez looks up and sees Larisa slowly coming toward her.

"I thought you said you'd take a break?"

Marta shakes her head.

"I lied."

She gestures with her hand.

"I'm almost done with the invitations anyway."

Larisa sits down next to her mother.

"How are you doing?"

Marta shrugs.

"I'm adjusting best I can."

Mother and daughter share a glance.

"I can't believe he actually sent you divorce papers."

Marta looks away.

"I'm over it—honestly I'm not in the least bit upset that your father wants to get married again to that cheap slut he left me for. They rightly deserve each other if you ask me."

Larisa stifles a laugh.

"I haven't spoken to him since he left town and moved to Seattle—and neither has Enrique from what he told me."

Marta shakes her finger at Larisa.

"He *is* still your father."

Larisa rolls her eyes and looks away.

"In name only as far as I'm concerned—that man brought shame to our family. A father—a real father would never willingly insult his family the way he did to us. He's dead to me."

Marta reaches out to touch Larisa's hand.

"How's Ward doing?"

Larisa smiles broadly and giggles.

"Wonderful—couldn't ask for a nicer boyfriend."

She gestures with her hand.

"He called earlier to say he was on his way back from a meeting in San Francisco. He seemed pleased that the condo deal went exactly as he wanted it to go—got a cool two million."

Marta raises an eye.

"He sold the condo on Nob Hill?"

Larisa nods.

"Uh-huh—he said it took too much money to properly maintain it year round. Sold it to a film director I think."

She glances at her watch.

"Oh-oh—I've got to go—got a meeting to attend."

Marta nods and watches Larisa walk toward the back door of the inn. She shakes her head and turns to look at the rose garden a few feet away. She smiles broadly and stands.

10

"Of course it matters that you slept with my brother a while back Nancy—why would you think I'd be fine with it."

Greg Williams digs his hands into the front pockets of his Levi's. He seems upset as he faces Nancy Baker. She sits down on the sofa without saying a word. He shuffles his feet.

"How long were you going to keep it from me?"

He slowly walks toward her.

"This *is* a small town—people talk."

He runs his fingers through his hair.

"What do you think would happen when I found out?"

Nancy turns to face Greg but remains silent.

"Do you think I wouldn't care?"

Nancy seems about to cry.

"It was only four times. We slept together four times and then decided we were better as friends. It wasn't anything that matters. There isn't anything going on between us now."

Greg walks back and forth.

"Is that supposed to make everything right?"

Nancy shakes her head.

"I'm sorry—how many times do you want me to say it."

Greg stops and faces Nancy.

"Sorry that you got caught or sorry you did it? There's a big difference in case it didn't occur to you beforehand."

He runs his fingers through his hair again.

"I need some air."

He walks to the door and stops.

"I don't know which is worse. The fact you slept with my brother or the fact you weren't going to tell me about it."

He leaves. Nancy looks at the door for a few seconds and begins to cry. As tears slowly fall from her eyes she notices several torn photographs lying on a table nearby and reacts.

11

Natalie MacDonald slides her hands across her boyfriend's chest and smiles as he notices. He reaches out to kiss her hand as they look at the waves crashing on the rocks a few feet away.

"Still think this was a lame idea?"

Natalie smirks and kisses Hardy Wheeler.

"Do you still think the two of us spending time together was a bad way to enjoy a day off from your crappy job?"

Hardy grins.

"I never said it was lame."

He brushes strands of hair away from Natalie's face.

"I clearly stated I was extremely busy."

Natalie glances at the ocean.

"Likely story if you ask me—you just wanted to spend the day sleeping. That's the real deal and you know it."

Hardy sighs loudly.

"I hate it that I can't pull the wool over your eyes and get my way—terrible for a guy who thrives on being sneaky."

Natalie kisses Hardy again.

"Do I hear you admitting to being sneaky?"

Hardy laughs.

"Got a problem with that?"

Natalie pretends to choke Hardy.

"What do you think?"

Hardy grins as he pulls Natalie toward him.

"I'm not sorry I lied."

"Do tell."

Natalie watches as Hardy stands.

"I think I'll go for a swim."

Natalie watches as Hardy runs toward a rocky cove several yards away. She quickly stands and runs after him.

12

"You were my girlfriend until *he* came along."

Lance Marler glares at Sabrina as Jesse seems ready for a fight with his rival. Lance faces his friends briefly as Sabrina makes a gesture with her hand and turns to look at Jesse.

"I've moved on—get over it already."

Lance turns to face Jesse.

"She's used goods buddy—sampled her wares plenty."

Sabrina seems disgusted by Lance's remark.

"You're a toad—a toad prince."

Lance laughs loudly.

"I'll take that as a deserved compliment."

He makes a lewd gesture with his finger.

"But better a toad than a slut who gives it away to any guy that pretends to care about her—I should've asked you how much the first time we fucked—might have made more sense."

Jesse takes a step forward.

"I think it's time for you to leave."

Lance laughs and clenches his fist.

“What if I don’t?”

Jesse turns to look at Sabrina and then at Lance’s friends who seem ready to fight. He faces Lance again and smirks.

13

Morro Bay

Jacob Allington leans back in his chair as Kyle Fairgate closes the folder in his hands and faces Jacob. He shrugs.

“It’s the best I can do at the moment.”

Jacob stares blankly at Kyle.

“What I gather from that very dull report is that I can’t sue the State of California for what happened to my brother?”

Kyle nods several times.

“There are no loopholes in the law pertaining to Dennis Bosley and his murderous rampage which took your kid brother’s life. He was just in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

Jacob slams his fist down on the table.

“There’s got to be a way.”

He angrily shakes his fist at Kyle.

“I want my brother’s death avenged. That freak killed my brother because California has lousy laws. I want action.”

Kyle seems upset.

“What do you think I should do?”

Jacob sits up.

“That’s what I pay you for—earn your fucking pay.”

He walks over to where Kyle is standing.

“Or else I’ll find someone else.”

He walks to the door and motions for Kyle to leave. They look at each other briefly as Kyle walks to the door. He sighs.

“I can only do so much.”

Jacob roughly shoves Kyle out the door.

“Tell it to someone who cares.”

He slams the door to his office shut.

"It's nice to meet you."

Karen glances at Carly as Travis Penwick extends his hand.

"Karen Ewing."

They shake. He looks around the diner and shrugs.

"Not bad in general—but a little dull."

Karen looks at Carly again.

"Like I told you I have a limited budget."

Travis sighs loudly.

"It's not always about money. Making this place seem a little more inviting is free. Photographs on the walls are always helpful—even if those pictures are of you and your friends. Brings a warmer feel to a diner—live flowers is also a winner."

Carly slowly walks over to where Travis and her mother are standing. She turns to face the diner again and smiles.

"I think he's right."

Karen seems confused.

Maureen O'Bannon shrugs as she places the last box on the shelf. She turns to look at the overstuffed attic and sighs.

"One of these days I have to organize."

In the doorway Rebecca nods in agreement.

"I agree."

Maureen smirks as she faces Rebecca.

"Easy for you to say—your attic is spotless. The last time I was there it looked absolutely perfect—nothing out of place."

Rebecca rolls her eyes.

"What can I say—having lots of time on your hands make for a spotless attic year round—especially since I lost Langley to cancer. Quite therapeutic if you must know the truth."

Rebecca gives Maureen a knowing look.

"How are Gail and Andrew doing?"

Maureen shrugs.

"Andrew loves Boston and Gail is adjusting to life in Thousand Oaks. Said after what happened with Tyler she couldn't live here anymore—said the scandal was too much to face."

Rebecca nods.

"Did anything ever come from the investigation that Colin Baxter promised into Tyler's connection to the Russian mob?"

Maureen shakes her head.

"They came to a dead end with suspects. Tyler Hernandez was in deep with every criminal type on the coast. As far as they're concerned this is just another cold case in the making."

Rebecca reacts to the revelation.

16

Los Angeles

"I told you I'm tired of this crap."

Laird Cooke slams the copy of a script down on the desk in front of him. Jeffrey Webber sits up and seems annoyed.

"You can't say no to Bastian Rego."

Laird shrugs.

"Watch me."

He walks to the door.

"I'm done with bad scripts. Tell Bastian he can shove this lousy script up his ass and then some. I'm out of here."

He grabs the doorknob.

"He'll ruin you Laird."

Laird sighs and faces Jeffrey. He makes a lewd gesture with his finger and grins. He watches Jeffrey's reaction.

"Ask me if I care."

He leaves. Jeffrey leans back in his chair.

"Sometimes I really hate being an agent—so many prima donna actors to deal with everyday—always complaining."

He looks at the scripts on his desk.

"That reminds me, I have to call Alden Washington. Got to keep him happy—especially with what happened before."

He picks up his cell phone.

"I'm not going to ask again."

Susan Balfour looks at Gary Barrington coldly as he stands in front of her completely naked. He grins broadly and winks.

"I don't like wearing a condom when I have sex."

"You'll wear a condom or else."

Gary looks down at his penis sticking out in front of him and makes a lewd gesture with his finger. Susan notices.

"What's the big deal—you're on the pill—aren't you?"

Susan points to the door.

"Get out."

Gary hesitates.

"I didn't bring any with me."

Susan glances at a ceramic box on top of a small table several feet from where Gary is standing. She smirks.

"I've got plenty—grab a few."

Susan watches as Gary reluctantly walks to the table.

"Pick one."

He begins combing through the tiny wrapped condoms inside the box. Susan walks over to him with a satisfied look on her face. She wraps her arms around his naked waist. He grins as he turns to face her. They kiss for a few seconds. He sighs.

"For the record I'm not a fan."

Susan rolls her eyes.

Carly closes the door and watches Travis walk down the sidewalk. Karen turns to look at the diner again and sighs.

"Maybe he's right."

Carly nods.

"He is—knows his deal—good reputation."

Karen notices Carly still looking out the window.

"Is he that guy you've been seeing on the sly?"

Carly turns to face her mother.
"I don't know what you're talking about."
Karen gives Carly a knowing look.
"Uh-huh—how long?"
Carly grins and turns away.
"Since Thursday—I met him at Safeway."
Karen sighs loudly.
"What about David Kipling?"
Carly shrugs.
"There was nothing there."
Karen walks over to her daughter.
"But I thought you said he asked you out?"
Carly seems uneasy.
"He did—but we never set a formal date when we'd get together for dinner. I think he's still hung up on Melissa."
Karen rolls her eyes.
"I still can't believe she was fooling around behind his back—and of all people—a demented serial killer to boot."
Carly makes a gesture with her hand.
"David is a nice guy—but way too trusting."
Karen nods.
"He would've been perfect for you."
Carly shakes her head.
"It's old news—OK."
They look at each other.
"Bring Travis by for dinner."
Carly smiles broadly and hugs her mother.
"He's a nice guy."
They look at each other again.
"He's from Ventura County originally."
She hugs her mother once more.
"His family relocated to Monterey when he was ten."
Karen leans close to Carly and smirks.
"Just be careful—I don't want you to get hurt. Not everyone is who they appear to be—men can be charming."
Carly nods in agreement and sighs.

Gary lies back on the bed and sighs loudly. He glances over at Susan and grins broadly. He touches her hair.

"A guy could appreciate moments like this every day."

Susan sits up in bed.

"I'm not breaking up with Jared Wycroft."

Gary seems annoyed.

"Why not—you're just stringing him along—using him because he's got a ton of cash in the bank—but no game."

Susan rolls her eyes.

"He's a dud I admit—but a rich dud."

Gary pulls Susan toward him.

"I don't like being used."

Susan smirks.

"You have no choice in the matter—I call the shots—and don't you forget it. I'd pick Jared over you any day—easily."

Gary seems stung by the comment.

"Ouch."

He pulls away from Susan.

"You're cold—an ice cold bitch if you must know."

Susan climbs out of bed.

"I think you'd better leave right now."

Gary scratches his beard.

"I thought we'd go a second round?"

Susan points to the door.

"You thought wrong—one time is enough—I've got things to attend to—and people to meet—one of which is Jared."

Gary grabs his clothes.

"It would be a really sad shame if sweet Jared found out you and I was spending a lot of time between the sheets."

Susan reacts.

"Is that a threat?"

Gary makes a lewd gesture with his finger.

"I'm just pointing out a fact."

Susan watches as Gary pulls on his sneakers. Her anger is clearly evident as she walks over to him a few seconds later.

"Don't cross me Gary—you'll regret it."

Gary looks at Susan and stands up. He points his finger at her and seems enraged by her antics. He takes a step forward.

"That game works both ways in case you forgot."

He walks to the door and stops.

"I'm quite a popular guy with women in Ocean Landing."

He angrily slams the door and leaves.

20

Sabrina kisses Jesse for several seconds and then looks at him. She smiles broadly and kisses him again. He grins.

"I'll see you tonight."

Sabrina nods.

"Count on it. By the way, forget about the idle threats Lance made—he's just pissed he got dumped. His ego is bruised and he's just trying to deal with it at the moment best he can."

Jesse smirks.

"I'm not bothered—if he makes good on what he said he'd do—I'll be forced to teach him a lesson—San Diego style."

Sabrina nods in agreement.

21

Laura Stryker glances nervously at the envelope in her hand. She slowly twists it back and forth between her fingers.

"No return address—how odd?"

She slowly opens the envelope and gasps.

"This can't be real—what do I do now? I have nothing left after what happened. They took everything already."

She seems visibly upset.

"How did they know I was in Ocean Landing?"

She looks at the piece of paper again.

22
San Francisco

Ward Brady crosses a street at Nob Hill and is about to hail a taxi when he notices his ex-wife coming toward him. Claire Brady seems angry as she approaches Ward. He sighs loudly.

"Are you following me Claire?"

She shrugs.

"I've been trying to reach you."

Ward seems annoyed.

"I thought I made it clear about where I stand."

Claire rolls her eyes.

"We need to talk this thing out."

Ward shakes his head.

"There's nothing for us to talk about."

He tries to hail a taxi.

"You cheated—not once—not twice—but throughout our sham of a marriage. I'm done playing games with you."

He notices a taxi coming toward them.

"My lawyer is handling everything. There's nothing for us to talk about anymore. We're done. Have a nice life Claire."

Claire watches as he gets into the taxi.

"I'm not done with you yet Ward."

She watches as the taxi pulls away from the curb.

"You'll be mine again—all mine. That I promise you dear husband—count on it. I'm going to get you back on my terms."

She clenches her fist angrily.

"But if I can't have you—no one will—especially *her*."

Claire slowly opens her purse and pulls out a cell phone.

"That whore can't have what belongs to me."

She begins dialing.

"That bitch is going to regret chasing after you."

She sighs.

"But first things first—revenge play."

She smiles broadly.

Laird nervously glances at his sister Cheryl Cooke as they drive along the coast heading north. She looks at the map in her hand and shrugs—then glances at her brother and smirks.

“I hope you know where we’re going.”

Laird rolls his eyes.

“Of course I know. We’re still quite a ways away from what Simon said. He described it being past Oxnard on the coast.”

Cheryl laughs.

“Ocean Landing is nowhere near Oxnard.”

Laird sighs loudly.

“My bad—next time I’ll know better.”

Cheryl jabs her brother.

“I hope it was worth it to tell Jeffrey off. He’s probably royally pissed at you right now after the way you behaved.”

Laird sighs loudly again.

“He had it coming. I’m tired of the stupid scripts he gets for me. He knows I want to be taken seriously. Like really, how many times can they remake *Halloween*? It’s laughable.”

He glances out the window.

“Besides, I need to switch things up. Simon said Ocean Landing is real laid back—said it would be a nice change.”

Cheryl makes a gesture with her hand.

“Is this the same Simon that got you into trouble every weekend at UCLA—the one who slept with every girl on campus and then couldn’t figure out why he flunked a semester?”

Laird begins laughing loudly.

“Yep—one in the same—bet he hasn’t changed. He probably spends more time on his back than any guy I know.”

Cheryl seems upset and looks at Laird.

“I see I’m going to have to keep an eye on you just like when we were kids—and that goes for your friend also.”

Laird gestures with his hand.

“Don’t worry about me—I’m good—don’t have time for a relationship—too much drama with Bastian at the moment.”

Cheryl gives Laird a knowing look.

"That remains to be seen—I've seen what happens when you have too much time on your hands—seen plenty."

"This time is different."

Laird looks out the window.

24

"Where's Natalie?"

April Estes glances at Hardy curiously as he leans against her car. He rolls his eyes and reaches out to touch her. His hands slip under her blouse seconds later. He grins broadly.

"She's at home—so what—whatever. How about we talk about what the two of us can do together for the next hour."

He smirks.

"I can think of a few things the backseat of your car could be used for—exactly the same thing we used it for last week."

April pushes Hardy away.

"What if Natalie found out about us?"

Hardy rolls his eyes.

"What if she does—she knows we're not serious."

"Did she tell you that?"

Hardy makes a lewd gesture with his finger.

"Of course I did."

He grabs April without warning and pulls her toward him as she pretends to be upset. They look at each other and kiss.

"A dude has needs—you of all people should know that especially after what happened with you and that priest."

April pulls away from Hardy.

"Don't mention that man again to me—he ruined my marriage. He lied to me about who he really was just to get me into his bed—I almost ended up being one of his victims."

Hardy runs his fingers through his hair.

"Maybe it was a good thing your husband left. Leaves plenty of room for me to show you what good sex is about."

He pulls April toward him again.

"You're not supposed to be married so young anyway. Life has to be lived before you get tied down with marriage."

He kisses April.

"Take me for example—I got married in my freshman year in college and was divorced right after I graduated. It was a huge mistake from the beginning—like seriously, my bride actually expected me to be faithful. How could I be with just one woman when so many of my classmates were trying to get my attention each and every day I stepped out of our apartment? I was horny all the time. What did she think would happen? Of course I slipped up and began sleeping around. My wife didn't find out until she caught me screwing her younger sister in our bed."

He laughs slyly.

"I impregnated her sister by the way—which led to the two of them fighting over me and finally having her kick me out of our apartment—but whatever—best move I ever made."

He kisses April again.

"I saw her about a year ago in Las Vegas. She was still pissed at me. Said her sister kept the baby—said she wouldn't get an abortion despite the fact I wasn't in the picture anymore."

They look at each other.

"You've got a kid out there?"

Hardy nods.

"Uh-huh—must be a teenager now. Probably about fifteen or so—bet he's quite the looker because of who his father is. I'm quite a hot guy if I do say so myself—always been pleasant on the eyes—best thing about being me is my good looks—well, that and the fact I'm really a wonder in bed—chicks totally dig me."

April pushes Hardy away and sighs.

"You've got a gigantic ego don't you?"

Hardy laughs loudly.

"Got a problem with that?"

He reaches out to stroke her neck.

"How about we get together like I suggested? I could show you a really good time—explore all sorts of positions."

April looks back at the supermarket.

"I like Natalie. I feel bad about stepping out with you behind her back. She's been through a lot in the last year. Losing her brother was a terrible shock. His death really put her in a bad way for weeks—she doesn't deserve anymore bad news."

Hardy waves his hand in the air.

"Warren MacDonald got what he deserved. All he did was blackmail people his entire life. Sooner or later that kind of crap catches up with you—and apparently for him it did. From what I heard he got snuffed out royally somewhere in Utah. He was blackmailing this rich bitch who was fooling around behind her husband's back with a whole bunch of dudes and one of them apparently took Warren out when he found out what kind of sick game he was playing. When I heard about it I wasn't shocked—I expected it sooner if you must know the truth—he was playing a dangerous game and it caught up with him—end of story."

April reacts.

"How can you be so cruel?"

Hardy seems shocked at the comment.

"Cruel? I'm not cruel April. I'm just stating facts."

He leans against the car again.

25

San Francisco

"That's right. He did it. He beat me up several times during the time we were married. He's a lunatic—a nutjob."

Claire sits back on the sofa and smirks.

"I know what I'm up against."

She sighs loudly.

"I want more money."

She gestures with her hand.

"Don't talk to me about this sounding like a plot right out of that old TV series *Pasadena*. I want him to pay dearly."

She looks at the large clock on the wall.

"If I have to find another lawyer to help me I will."

She stands up and walks to the window.

"I'm going to make Ward pay—and I'll start with that whore he's been shacking up with in a dinky town called Ocean Landing. I was told it's somewhere on the coast north of Los Angeles from what my friend said—near Morro Bay I think."

She rolls her eyes.

"I'll be expecting a call tomorrow."

She looks at her cell phone.

"I want Ward to know I mean business."

She laughs.

"I'll crucify him if need be."

She pauses for a few seconds.

"Call me at eight."

She nods a few times and hangs up.

26

Todd Zimmer glances at the baby in the stroller and smiles broadly as he looks up. Dorothea Wong seems pleased as she faces Todd. She watches as he begins playing with her infant daughter as a few onlookers walk by. They stop and notice the scene briefly and then keep walking. Todd looks at Dorothea.

"I still can't believe it."

Dorothea nods.

"Neither can I—Sean and I made a baby together and created a whole new life. It seems unreal—like a fairy tale."

Todd's face clouds over suddenly.

"How did Sean's parents take the news?"

Todd looks at the baby again.

"I bet they were not pleased at first."

Dorothea shrugs.

"They were better than my mother. She blew her top when she found out. But things happen. She's adjusted."

Todd seems upset at the comment.

"Things are just starting to calm down with me and Serena. Her folks are still in shock over Hailey's death though. It still seems like a bad dream—it's been really, really tough."

He looks at the stroller again.

"I was scared—what teenage boy my age wouldn't be when told he's going to be a father. It was a massive shock. I didn't know what to do—I felt trapped with no escape."

Dorothea pushes several strands of hair away from her face and sighs loudly as she faces Todd again. He looks away.

"It only seems hard at first."

Todd nods.

"Thanks."

Dorothea looks at the stroller again.

"Sean's parents want us to get married. Sean isn't so keen on the idea. Things it's silly to bother with a piece of paper."

"Serena thinks differently on that issue."

Todd wipes sweat from his brow.

27

"We're here."

Laird turns to face Cheryl as they see a small village bordering the Pacific up ahead. Several houses come into view as they drive toward the town. Laird grins broadly and sighs.

"It looks exactly like Simon described."

Cheryl seems less thrilled as she stares at the narrow road up ahead. She turns to face her brother with a worried look.

TO BE CONTINUED



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