

CHAPTER 78: GRAYSON

Grayson spends the night decoding his father Sheffield Grayson's encrypted journal, meticulously transcribing the contents into his own notebook. Initially, the journal appears to be a ledger documenting embezzled funds, providing enough detail for authorities to trace the illegal transactions. However, as Grayson progresses, the entries shift from financial records to personal confessions, revealing Sheffield's simmering anger rather than guilt. The tone grows increasingly volatile, hinting at deeper family conflicts and unresolved vendettas.

The journal entries expose Sheffield's rage following his mother-in-law Cora's funeral, where his wife Acacia learns damaging secrets from a man named Trowbridge. Sheffield resents Acacia's compassion and interference, particularly regarding a mysterious "son" connected to the Hawthorne family. His bitterness intensifies after Tobias Hawthorne's death, as he fixates on Avery, the unexpected heir to the Hawthorne fortune. Sheffield becomes obsessed with proving her connection to Toby Hawthorne, whom he believes is still alive and deserving of retribution.

Grayson uncovers his father's escalating vendetta, including his decision to spy on Avery in hopes she would lead him to Toby. Sheffield's entries grow more unhinged, culminating in a chilling admission: he plans to murder Toby, believing he can evade consequences since Toby is legally dead. The journal also reveals Sheffield orchestrated the public confrontation during Grayson and Avery's interview, aiming to destabilize the Hawthornes. Grayson processes these revelations without pause, though the weight of his father's malice is undeniable.

The chapter concludes with Grayson recalling his impulsive kiss with Avery during the interview, a moment that shattered his usual control. This memory intertwines with the journal's revelations, emphasizing the cyclical nature of chaos in his life. As he decodes the final entries, Grayson confronts the unsettling truth: his father's vendetta

against the Hawthornes is deeply personal, and Avery is now entangled in its dangerous legacy.

