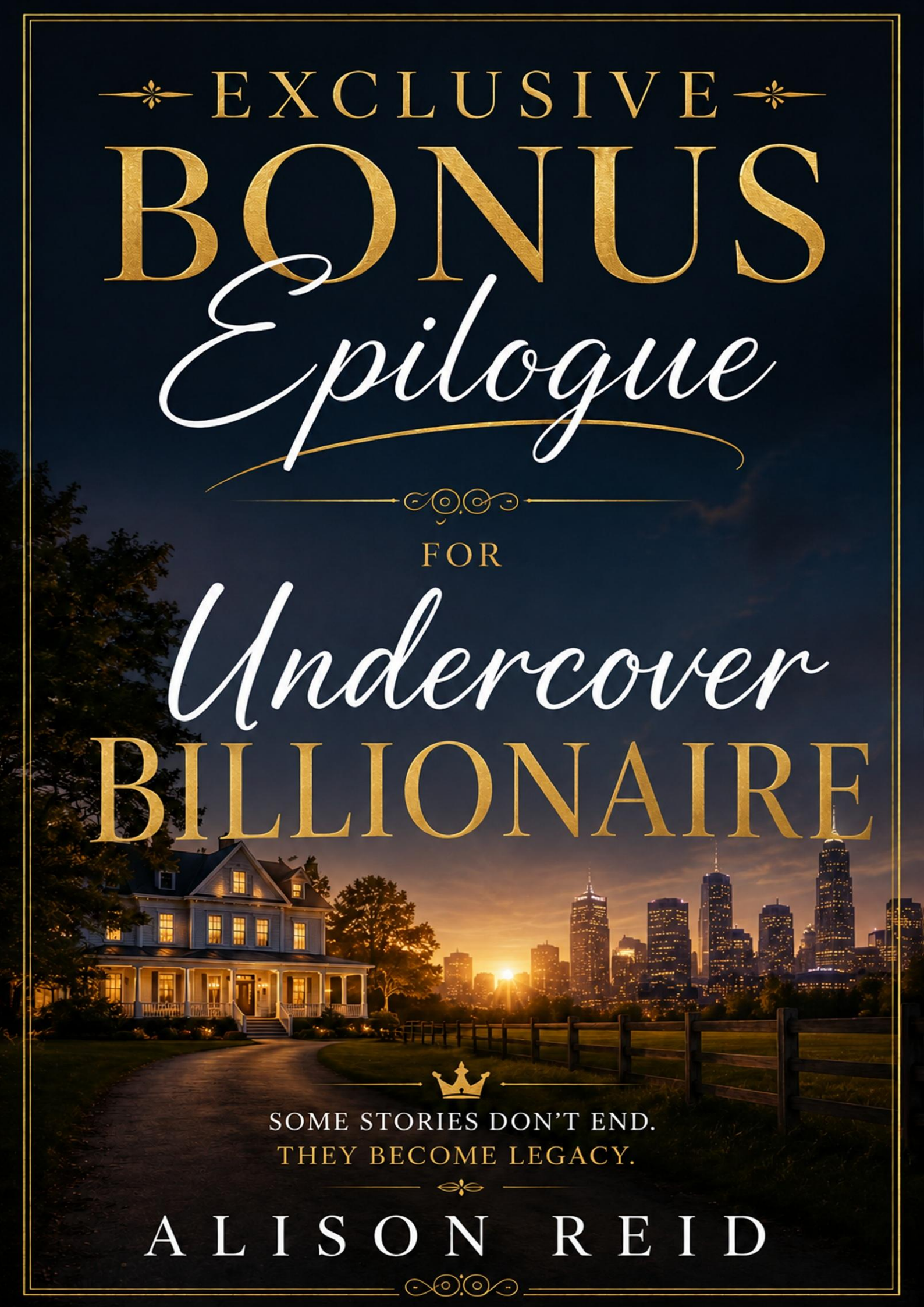
EXCLUSIVE

BONUS Epilogue

FOR

Undercover BILLIONAIRE



SOME STORIES DON'T END.
THEY BECOME LEGACY.

ALISON REID

Exclusive Bonus Epilogue

Undercover Billionaire

by Alison Reid

Twenty Years Later…

The city of Perth glittered beneath a cascade of fireworks, the midnight skyline shimmering gold and silver beyond the towering ballroom windows of the Crown Towers. Music swelled through the packed room—champagne glasses clinked, laughter echoed, and crystal chandeliers bathed the celebration in warm amber light.

The New Year's Eve party had become something of a tradition over the years. What had once started as a small gathering of friends had evolved into a full-scale family invasion. And tonight, the ballroom was overflowing.

At one long table near the dance floor sat enough history, chaos, and shared secrets to fill several lifetimes.

Harper Dawson leaned back in her chair, champagne in hand, watching the people she loved most fill the room with noise and life.

Her brother Nickolas was arguing with Julian over cricket scores while their wives, Mia and Rhonda, laughed at them openly. Clara sat beside her husband Harry, both looking effortlessly elegant while their youngest daughter attempted to sneak extra desserts from the buffet table. Jonathon and his wife Julia sat close together, talking softly between themselves, still very much in love after all these years. Both sets of parents occupied the far end of the table,

deep in conversation and looking suspiciously delighted to have every one of their children trapped in one room for the evening.

And then there was Theo. Still devastatingly handsome. Still utterly incapable of minding his own business.

Over the years, Theo and Kylie had made a tradition of flying to Perth with them every second Christmas. This year happened to be one of those years.

Kylie sat beside him looking resigned as Theo entertained Jason and Renee with what was undoubtedly a wildly inappropriate story judging by the horrified delight on Renee's face.

Harper smiled faintly before her attention drifted elsewhere.

To Alex.

Her husband stood near the table speaking with Julian and Jonathon, broad shoulders filling out a black tuxedo that still fit him unfairly well. Twenty years later and women still looked at him when he entered a room. Wealth, confidence, and devastating British charm tended to do that.

But Alex only looked at her.

Always her.

As though after twenty years he still couldn't quite believe she existed. His green eyes found hers across the table instantly, like instinct. The corner of his mouth lifted slightly. Warmth spread low in her chest.

God, she still loved that man.

"Harper."

The familiar voice pulled her from the moment. Her smile faded slightly as she turned. Billy Bailey stood beside the table. Older now. Softer around the edges. The smug arrogance that once clung to him had long since worn away, replaced by something quieter.

Regret, perhaps.

The conversation around the table dipped awkwardly. Across the table, Alex's posture went completely still.

Billy offered Harper a small smile. "Happy New Year."

"Billy," she greeted politely.

"We're doing old acquaintances and nostalgia tonight apparently," Clara muttered under her breath.

Jonathon snorted into his whiskey. Billy glanced toward the dance floor where slower music had begun replacing the upbeat party tracks.

"Would you dance with me?" he asked quietly. "Just one dance."

Silence settled around the table. Jason immediately frowned. Renee looked scandalised. Nickolas looked ready to physically remove Billy from the ballroom. But Harper surprised all of them.

She stood. Alex's gaze locked onto her instantly. Harper smoothed a hand over her emerald gown before giving Billy a small nod.

"One dance."

Billy exhaled softly, almost relieved, and guided her toward the dance floor. Theo let out a low whistle.

"Oh, this is dangerous."

Kylie elbowed him sharply.

"Behave."

But Theo was already watching Alex with unconcealed fascination. Because Alex had not taken his eyes off Harper for even a second.

Not once. Not when Billy placed a hand lightly at Harper's waist. Not when they began moving slowly across the crowded dance floor. Not when half the ballroom disappeared around them.

Jason noticed first.

"…Dad looks like he wants to kill someone."

"Jason," Harper's mother scolded mildly.

Theo leaned back in his chair with a grin. "No, no. That's actually his restrained face."

Alex ignored all of them. His gaze remained fixed entirely on Harper. Jonathon smirked into his drink.

"Twenty years later and the rich boy still can't hide it."

Alex finally looked over.

"It's been twenty years. Aren't you tired of calling me that?"

"No."

* * * * * * * *

Across the ballroom, Billy gave a quiet laugh as he and Harper swayed beneath the glittering chandeliers.

"He still watches you like that," Billy murmured.

Harper followed his gaze automatically. Alex stood near the table, jaw tight, whiskey untouched in his hand, eyes fixed entirely on her. Even now. Even after twenty years.

Billy shook his head softly.

"I used to hate him for that."

Harper looked back at him calmly.

"And now?"

"Now I just know I deserved to lose."

The honesty in his voice startled her slightly. Billy smiled faintly, sadness lingering around the edges.

"Losing you was the stupidest thing I ever did, Harper."

Twenty years ago, those words might have shattered her. Tonight, they barely stirred the surface. Because the grief Billy caused no longer lived inside her. It had long ago been replaced by something bigger. Something stronger.

Love. Family. Alex.

She smiled gently.

"Yes. It probably was."

Billy laughed quietly under his breath.

"Still brutally honest. Some things don't change."

The music began winding down. Billy stepped back slowly.

"For what it's worth… I'm glad you found happiness."

Harper glanced toward Alex again.

"He was always the better man."

Billy followed her gaze toward Alex standing beside their children, toward the family gathered around him, toward the life Harper had built. And for the first time, there was no bitterness in his expression.

Only acceptance.

"So he was," Billy admitted quietly.

Harper squeezed his arm lightly before turning back toward her table. The moment Alex saw her approaching, he immediately set down his glass and straightened.

Still protective. Still attentive. Still hers.

"You okay?" he asked softly as she reached him.

Not jealous. Not demanding. Just concerned. Always concerned. Harper smiled up at him warmly.

"I'm fine."

Alex's hand settled automatically against her lower back as she sat beside him. And Theo chose that exact moment to ruin everything.

“You know,” Theo announced loudly to Jason and Renee while swirling champagne in his glass, “this entire marriage was all my doing.”

Renee laughed.

“And how exactly do you figure that?”

Theo grinned shamelessly and pointed at Alex.

“Because if I hadn’t bet your father a million pounds, the two of them never would’ve met.”

Silence. Absolute silence.

Jason blinked.

“What?”

Alex closed his eyes briefly.

“Theo.”

“No, no,” Theo said cheerfully. “The children are old enough now.”

Renee stared at her father in horror.

“Dad.”

Harper immediately hid her smile behind her champagne glass. Jason looked deeply alarmed.

“What kind of bet?”

Theo pointed dramatically at Alex.

“Your father believed women only liked him because he was disgustingly rich.”

Jonathon lifted his drink.

“Still true.”

Alex sighed.

“Thank you, Jonathon.”

"So," Theo continued gleefully, "I told him he couldn't make a woman genuinely fall in love with him without the money, the suits, the billionaire nonsense—"

"You made Mum part of a BET?!" Renee gasped.

"It sounds worse when you shout it," Alex muttered.

"It sounded worse at the time too," Nickolas informed the children.

Jason stared at his father.

"Wait. You pretended to work in IT?"

Julian burst out laughing.

"Oh, he was terrible at it."

"Painfully terrible," Nickolas agreed.

Clara grinned.

"He kept asking where the server room was."

"In fairness," Alex defended, "there were several rooms."

Theo wiped tears from his eyes.

"By week two he was calling me every night completely obsessed."

Alex pointed at him.

"I shared selective updates."

Theo ignored him completely.

"One night he spent forty minutes talking about the way your mother held a coffee mug."

Renee looked horrified.

"That is so embarrassing."

"It truly is," Kylie agreed.

Jonathon smirked.

"Rich boy never stood a chance once he met her."

Alex slid an arm around Harper's waist, pulling her closer against his side.

"To be fair, she was terrifying."

Harper raised a brow.

"Terrifying?"

"You rejected me repeatedly. It was deeply traumatic."

The entire table erupted into laughter. Jason shook his head slowly.

"So let me get this straight. Dad came to Australia pretending to be an IT guy because Uncle Theo dared him to?"

"Correct," Theo said proudly.

"And then he accidentally fell in love with Mum?"

Alex looked down at Harper then. Really looked at her. Twenty years later and the sight of her still hit him with the same impossible force.

"No," Alex said quietly, eyes never leaving hers. "There was nothing accidental about that part."

The noise around the table softened slightly. Harper's expression gentled instantly. Even Theo went quiet for a moment.

"We hated him at first," Nickolas said dryly.

Jason looked genuinely shocked.

"You hated Dad?!"

Julian laughed.

"He turned up looking like he'd stepped off the cover of GQ and lied to our sister. When he first came to the house, we were this close to cultishly sacrificing him in the backyard."

Nickolas nodded solemnly.

"It was briefly discussed."

Jonathon took a slow sip of whiskey before adding,

"We assumed he was either a serial killer or an accountant."

Alex looked offended.

"Those are wildly different things."

"Not to your future brothers-in-laws," Jonathon replied calmly.

* * * * * * * *

Later, outside on the grand river terrace, fireworks exploded over Perth skyline in brilliant bursts of gold and silver, illuminating the night sky as midnight finally arrived.

The city below pulsed with celebration. Music drifted faintly from the ballroom behind them while cheers echoed from boats scattered across the water. The summer air carried the scent of salt and champagne, warm against Harper's skin as glittering reflections danced across the swan river.

But Alex barely noticed any of it. Because Harper was smiling at him exactly the way she had twenty years ago.

Soft.

Warm.

Completely capable of undoing him.

And after everything—after the lies, the ridiculous bet, the mistakes, the fights, the years, the children, and the life they had somehow built together—he still felt exactly the same.

Hopelessly.

Completely.

Obsessively in love with his wife.

The noise of the party faded around him as he reached for her.

Harper came willingly, sliding effortlessly into his arms like she still belonged there after all this time. Because she did. Her hands settled around

his neck while his wrapped tightly around her waist, pulling her against him beneath the glow of the fireworks.

For one suspended moment, it felt strangely familiar. Like the rest of the world had fallen away. Alex lowered his head and kissed her.

Slowly.

Thoroughly.

Without the slightest concern for who might see.

Twenty years later and kissing Harper still felt like coming home. A whistle sounded faintly from somewhere behind them. Probably Theo.

Alex ignored it completely.

When he finally pulled back, Harper was smiling against his mouth, eyes bright beneath the exploding lights overhead.

"You look gorgeous tonight," he murmured, his gaze sliding deliberately over the emerald gown hugging her body. "That dress should honestly be illegal."

Harper laughed softly, fingertips brushing through the dark strands at the nape of his neck. Alex's mouth curved into something wickedly familiar.

"Although," he added in a lower voice, "I can't wait to take it off you later."

She laughed again, warmer this time, her forehead falling lightly against his. "You think I'm going to let you?"

"Oh sweetheart," he said smoothly, tightening his arms around her, "after twenty years, I know exactly when you're bluffing."

Harper rolled her eyes despite the colour warming her cheeks. God, he still flirted with her like they were in their twenties. And somehow it still worked.

Inside the ballroom, the band launched into another song while another wave of fireworks erupted over the river, bathing Alex's face in gold. Harper studied him quietly for a moment.

The same green eyes.

The same impossible smile.

The same man who had once walked into her office pretending to be an IT engineer and accidentally changed her entire life.

Only now there were softer lines around his eyes from years of laughter. More warmth in him than arrogance. More peace.

Time had not diminished him. If anything, it had simply stripped away everything unnecessary until only Alex remained.

Her Alex.

"You know," she said softly, "Theo is never going to let you live this down now that the children know."

Alex groaned. "I'm aware. Your entire family looked delighted by my suffering."

"They do enjoy humiliating you."

"They really do."

Harper smiled. Then Alex's expression gentled, his thumb brushing slowly across her waist.

"Happy New Year, sweetheart," he murmured. "I love you more every year."

Emotion tightened unexpectedly in Harper's chest. Twenty years. Twenty years since heartbreak. Twenty years since a ridiculous bet. Twenty years since one arrogant British billionaire walked into her office and turned her world upside down.

And somehow, after all this time, he still looked at her like she was the best thing that had ever happened to him. Maybe she always would be.

Harper cupped his face gently before kissing him once more beneath the fireworks exploding across Perth skyline. And somewhere behind them, Theo's voice rang out across the terrace.

"Honestly, after twenty years this is still disgusting."

Kylie sighed.

"Leave them alone, Theo."

"I'm just saying," Theo continued loudly, "the man still looks at her like she invented oxygen."

Alex didn't even glance back.

"Not helping your case, mate!"

Julian shouted from the doorway. Harper burst into laughter against Alex's shoulder.

And surrounded by fireworks, family, chaos, and the kind of love neither of them had expected to find twenty years earlier, Alex held his wife a little tighter as the new year began.

— The End —

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