

N Destiny 2141

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Tommy felt that Jasper would kill him if he stayed here any longer. Plus, this was the high seas. It would be a trouble if he died here. "What's up with Mr. Tommy? He seems like he is running away from something." Winston couldn't help but say.

Hearing his words, Willow looked at Tommy and felt the same. However, she soon realized something. Maybe he is running away from someone! As she thought about it, she turned and saw Jasper glaring oppressively at them. When he saw Willow looking at him, he panicked and quickly turned his head away. Still, Willow had noticed the murder intent he had. She thought it was funny and grabbed his wrist. "Follow me."

Jasper, who had got into a fight just now, obeyed and followed Willow. When they arrived at a secluded place, Willow raised her eyebrow and said, "Explain now. Why did you hurt Tommy?"

"He started it." "What did he do?"

"He and his bodyguards were stalking me." "What? Did they hurt you? Are you hurt? Let me see. As Willow spoke, she lifted his shirt, trying to look for any wounds.

"They can't hurt me." Jasper comforted her. "Damn it. Tommy better wishes that we won't meet again. Otherwise, I will give him a beating too." Willow glared at Tommy's ship angrily.

Looking at her reaction, Jasper was happy. He couldn't help but squeeze her cheek and said, "It's fine. It's not worth getting mad at such a thing." "He's lucky to be away now." Willow stomped her feet as the ship left the border.

Jasper thought her reaction was cute. He ruffled her hair and said, "Let's go back." Willow looked at him and asked, "Why do you hate him, Jasper?"

"Because he keeps clinging onto you. I hate that." Jasper squinted his eyes. Hearing his words, Willow smiled and felt a bundle of warmth surged within her. She could tell he was jealous, but she wouldn't force him to admit it.

On the other hand, Tommy gripped the railing with all his force. "I will make Jasper pay for what he did. If I don't avenge myself, I will bring shame to the family. F*ck! Tommy was furious. Since he was kicked out before having the chance to spend time with Willow. In the end, he gave the supplies for free, which frustrated him. 'Let's see how you'll react when I get a hundred people over.'"

On the island, no one knew what had happened. However, Morgan was on high alert as he knew that another group of people would be arriving. He didn't dare to say anything since he was the root of the trouble. Those people were extremely dangerous.

After kicking Tommy out, Jasper was full of the joys of spring. He had a smile on his lips when a female teammate greeted him. The female teammate was shocked since she didn't expect to find Jasper in a good mood. In the past, Jasper merely nodded when she greeted him.

Soon, they decided to look for more traces by the lake. Willow decided to go, so Jasper followed her. A group of eight people was divided into four pairs for the search. Willow and Jasper were a pair. There were no trees around but only high grass and stones. Thus, it would be easy to get hurt.

Because of this, Jasper walked in the front while Willow followed him. This was the carelessness. Her hand slipped from Jasper's. Her palm was sweating slightly when it came in contact with his warm palm.

"Ah!" Willow stepped on a hole and lost her balance, causing her to fall into the hole. In the meantime, her hand slipped from Jasper's since their hands were covered in sweat.

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Immediately, Jasper grabbed her wrist and pulled her over. Willow's face was pale from the shock, and she looked at the pit beneath her. Soon, she noticed something unusual. "Wait, this pit doesn't seem natural, it looks man-made."

After all, how could a perfectly round pit form on this deserted island? Thus, she crouched down and studied the pit, taking photos from various angles with the camera and using a ruler to measure it. As Jasper watched her work, his eyes were filled with adoration.

“Hand me a shovel.” She reached her hand toward him. “I’ll do it. Where do you want me to dig?” “No, I just want to see the soil underneath,” Willow explained. Jasper handed the shovel to her. Then, Willow crouched down and scooped up a spoonful of soil. After examining it from side to side, she concluded, “There should be an ancient tomb nearby.”

“Why is that so?” Willow put down the shovel and walked several feet away, separating the high grass. When she lowered her head, she knew she had guessed it right. There was a pair of symmetrically matching circular pits, likely where the tombstones were once placed. However, the wooden structures had disappeared, leaving behind two stone pits excavated long ago.

Realizing this, Willow turned toward Jasper and said excitedly, “My mentor once said that this is a form of ancient tomb burial. When people were away from home and couldn’t provide proper burial conditions, they would create two simple tombstones to show respect for the dead. Someone with a high status must be buried here, perhaps a prominent official or a noble. We may have discovered something!”

As she spoke, she hugged Jasper. At the same time, Jasper extended his arms and embraced her. After Willow laughed while being in his embrace for a few seconds, she blushed and said awkwardly, “I... I got too excited. Could you put me down?”

When she was a child, she would lunge herself into her father’s and brother’s embrace whenever she got excited. Jasper frowned and stared at her, asking, “Do you always jump into a man’s arms when you’re excited?” He wondered if she would’ve done the same if he weren’t the one standing here right now.

Willow giggled and replied, “Not always! It’s just that when I was little, I would always ask my dad and brother for hugs. Apart from them, you’re the third person.” Hearing her words, Jasper huffed and said, “There will be a fourth person, then.”

Willow was startled and asked, “Are you jealous?” Jasper was dumbfounded and quickly looked the other way. “No!” His voice was slightly hoarse. Willow smiled and patted his shoulder. “It’s fine. I promise I won’t ever hug another man.”

Jasper glanced at her without saying a word. To comfort him, Willow crossed her fingers and swore, “I swear.” A hint of amusement appeared at the corner of Jasper’s lips, but he managed to suppress his laughter. He held her hand and said, “Don’t make promises so easily next time.”

Seeing that he finally smiled, Willow was happy as well. Then, she said, "Let's split up and search nearby. The ancient tomb might be around here somewhere." Just as she was about to walk away, Jasper grabbed her hand. "No. Let's search together."

"Okay!" Willow smiled. The area was full of scattered rocks, making it challenging to find a tomb that could be over two thousand years old. However, Willow forced herself to be patient and continued searching. After two hours of searching, she felt disappointed because she found no traces of the tomb..

"Did I make a mistake? It's all because of my lack of experience. How could I misjudge something like this?" Willow questioned. After all she was still young and had entered this field at twenty-three years old. Just as she thought she had learned something, reality gave her a heavy blow.

"Don't be disheartened. Luck plays a significant role in your field of expertise. Perhaps your judgment is wrong at all," Jasper comforted her as he sat beside her.

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Willow looked at the sunset and said, "I know that a big part of my current status comes from my family's support and reputation. Still, I want to achieve something to showcase my efforts."

Jasper understood her feelings and patted her hand reassuringly. "You have done more than enough." He looked through her background, and whether it was because of her identity or family, she had contributed far more to society than most people. Feeling encouraged, Willow raised her head and tried to seek his approval. "Really? Am I doing well?"

"You are a brave girl," replied Jasper. It wasn't ordinary for a 23-year-old girl to assemble a group of people to search for cultural relics by herself. Plus, she had already started recruiting participants a year ago, which showed her passion. Willow grinned and said, "My dad used to say I'm fearless since I was little. My parents were always worried about me."

"I can tell." Jasper chuckled. "My mother used to say that no man would dare to be with me since I am such a wild girl. She even said I will never get married if I keep on being naughty." Willow changed her voice, acting like her mother. Jasper's eyes darkened, and he asked, "How did you respond, then?"

"I told her I would not be getting married if that's the case! Isn't it fun to live a free life?" Willow smiled sweetly. At that moment, Jasper's eyes widened, and he wondered if Willow was actually being serious about it.

He couldn't help but ask, "Aren't you planning to get married?" As Willow looked at the sunset in the distance, she replied, "The world is magnificent! I haven't had enough fun yet! I'll think about it when I've had my fill."

Jasper looked at her adoringly as he thought, Sure. I will wait until you are ready. Willow held his hand and said, "Let's go! We should head back now." She picked up her bag and was about to stand up when she noticed cracks on the ground. Feeling surprised, she approached it, wanting to examine the cracks. However, as soon as she stepped on the soil, it creaked as if it couldn't bear the weight.

"Ah!" Willow's eyes widened as she waved frantically. "Help me!" "Willow!" Jasper immediately grabbed her hand and lifted her into his arms. Soon, the two disappeared right on the spot, what was replaced was a loose pit.

In the dim and dry soil, Willow's face was pressed tightly against Jasper's chest while he wrapped his arms around her securely. "Are you hurt?" Jasper ignored the fact that he was covered in dirt and quickly checked on Willow.

"I'm fine. What about you?" asked Willow as she tried to raise her head. "I'm fine. Don't move. Let me clean up a bit," said Jasper as he covered her head. He pushed away the soil around them and patted the dust off his head before helping her sit up.

Willow lifted her head from his embrace. Her face was clean, save for some dust in her hair. Jasper reached out and smoothed out her hair, cleaning it up. On the other hand, Willow hurriedly took out some wet wipes from her bag and started wiping his face when she saw him covered in dirt. "I'll do it myself."

“Don’t move. I got this.” Willow insisted as she gently wiped his face. Jasper sat still like a well-behaved child, allowing her to clean his face. Once Willow was finished, she looked around. At that moment, her eyes widened in excitement. “It’s the tomb! We fell into the tomb!” she exclaimed. The light outside illuminated what seemed to be a well- preserved and dry chamber.

It turned out that they had fallen into an underground tomb. The rainwater must have seeped the soft soil from the slope, eroding the tomb and forming a thin layer of soil on top of it. That was why it couldn't withstand their weight, causing them to fall in.

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“We're so lucky,” Willow said happily, turning her head to look at Jasper. Jasper glanced at the time, then looked up at the nearly nine-foot-high opening. “It’s getting late.”

“Are we able to climb up?” asked Willow. The pit was too high, and the soil above was soft. There was no way to climb out of this large pit. “It looks like we'll have to spend the night here.” Jasper sighed. “We'll have to wait for rescue.”

Willow nodded. “Alright, we’re not in a hurry either. I have water, biscuits, and even a mat!” Then, she took out a communication device. “Strange. Why isn’t there any response? Where did the signal go?”

Jasper also noticed that the time on his watch was displayed wrongly. It seemed like the magnetic field had gone berserk as they entered the cave.

“There must be something affecting the magnetic field here. That is why we can’t contact the outside world,” Jasper said calmly. Willow looked surprised. “Does this mean something is going on in this tomb?”

The tomb behind them was also covered in soil, revealing only a few faintly visible murals and nearby stone stumps. Jasper didn’t want her to stay here. He jumped up and touched a stone, but it soon

collapsed, causing him to step back to avoid the falling rocks Willow grabbed his arm and said, "Stop it. Let's wait for the rescue team to arrive! This island isn't that big, so they'll surely find us soon."

Jasper had no choice but to stay in the cave with her. He didn't mind the surroundings, but he was worried about Willow and couldn't bear to see her suffer.

There was still some light coming into the cave, so it wasn't too dark. Jasper cleared a clean spot while Willow spread out a surprisingly clean mat. Then, she rummaged through her bag and took out a bottle of water. "We only have one bottle of water left." "You drink it first."

"I'm not thirsty. You drink it." Willow gave the water to him. "I'm not thirsty either." Jasper refused since he wanted to keep the water for her.

'I'm not thirsty either,' Willow replied truthfully. After all, she had just drunk water before climbing down. Then, she continued taking photos of the surroundings. After some examination, she was certain they had indeed found the tomb they were looking for.

As darkness fell, the cave gradually became pitch black. Jasper took out a flashlight and shone a small area around them. Still, the rest was in complete darkness. A sense of fear rose within Willow, and she subconsciously moved closer to Jasper, snuggling up against him. Sensing her fear, Jasper pulled her into his embrace and comforted her. "Jasper, can you tell me something about yourself?"

"What do you want to know?" Jasper's deep voice resonated in the quiet space. In such a serene place, Willow found his voice captivating as she listened to him speak. It was as if his voice was the sound of a cello, calming her nerves.

"Anything will do," Willow replied, simply wanting to hear his voice. She curled up like a small animal, nestling in his embrace entirely.

Jasper lowered his head and saw her in his embrace. Her soft and plump face rested against his arms as she looked at him with clear eyes. In that split second, Jasper's mind went blank, forgetting what he wanted to say. He was captivated by her beauty.

On the other hand, Willow was still waiting to hear his uncle was lo King, at ken Wi is dark plipils: His eyes emitted a glow as if trying to look through her.

The atmosphere was so quiet that the sound of Jasper gulping became unusually clear. Wika blinked and reagedNntd Nerbag. Then, she handed him the bottle of water and said, "Are you thirsty? Have some water!"

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"I'm not thirsty." Jasper turned his head away. "I think you look thirsty, though! It's okay. The rescue will come soon. Come on, have some water!" Willow insisted, twisting open the bottle cap while sitting up straight. Then, she grabbed his face and turned it toward her. "Here. I'll help you."

He could not do anything but drink the water she forcefully gave him. After a few sips, he pushed away the bottle and said, "That's enough."

Only then did she put down the bottle. At that moment, some soil got loose and fell, which startled her. She quickly curled back into the man's embrace. "It's fine. It's just the soil." He comforted her.

"With you, I'm not afraid of anything," said Willow. She was expressing her feelings to him. Jasper lowered his head and gulped. Although he had just drunk water, he could not control himself as he looked at the girl in his arms. Does she know what she's saying? Confessing her feelings to a man who has been single for 28 years with such a pitiful appearance... Isn't she afraid that | might take advantage of her?

"Why?" he asked hoarsely. "Because you make me feel safe!" She smiled, her laughter incredibly charming. At her words, he sighed softly as he gulped again. Willow noticed it, yet she was unaware it was because of her. Thus, she handed him the water bottle and asked, "Are you still thirsty?"

"No," Jasper replied hoarsely. "Do you want me to help you?" She smiled and was going to twist open the bottle cap. He took the bottle and handed it to her. "You drink it."

"I don't want to." She wanted to reserve the water for him. "If you don't drink it, I won't either," he said, staring at her. Willow blinked and thought, Wait a minute. Isn't this the same trick I used to force him to eat? How did he learn it so quickly? He's using my tactic to make me drink the water.

"I'll take a few sips then. You'll drink it next," she said. Then, she brought the water to her lips and drank it. Under the dim light, she seemed to be drinking seductively. Instead of showing Jasper that she had drunk the water, he felt like she was seducing him!

As the man watched, his throat tightened, and his breathing became unsteady. Quickly, he turned his face to the ground.

"I'm done. Your turn." She held the bottle close to his lips. Jasper pushed her hand away gently. "Save the rest for yourself." "Are you disgusted by my saliva?" Willow felt hurt. She could not believe that he would be a nuisance to her.

Yet, he felt nothing like that sentiment. He knew the rescue team would not be here any sooner. Plus, transmitting signals toward the outside world was a problem with the magnetic field isolator. He needed to make sure they were prepared to spend the night here. "I didn't mean it that way," he explained hastily.

"You just did!" She pouted.

"I didn't!" He was flustered. "How can you prove that you're not disgusted by me?" Willow stared at him as if this was an important matter. She was determined to have him prove it.

Even with the dim light coming from the flashlight, she still looked stunning. Her long hair cascaded down her waist, and her pink sun-proof clothing made her skin a subtle pink hue, which made her look beautiful. Her bright eyes and cherry-like lips were captivating. Looking at her, Jasper struggled to keep himself in check.

"Prove it to me then—" Before she could finish her words, he grabbed her chin in one hand while the other held the back of her head. Then, he pressed his warm lips against her slightly parted ones.

At that moment, her mind went blank. It was as if time had frozen, and she could qaly Yedldhe'sensation of his ps {ouching hers. The kiss was not anything intimate but just a peck.

The man also realized what he had done and quickly pulled_aw yHtis\ breath hitched stightly\seemingly as ifthe had used up all his energy just by doing that.

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Willow reached out and brushed her hand past. her lips. That wasn't just a touch, was it? "Do you still need proof?" Jasper's raspy voice sounded.

It was only then that she was pulled back from her thoughts. The fact that he had kissed her was proof that he did not dislike her, and this realization caused her face to flush red as she bit her lips in embarrassment. However, she felt that the kiss had ended too quickly, so much so that she barely had the time to enjoy it.

"Is it supposed to be that quick?" she mumbled, clutching her face. Faced with her words, the man was rendered speechless while she awkwardly whipped her head away. Just then, the light from the torch vanished out of the blue, plunging them into complete darkness. "Oh no! Don't tell me the torch is out of batteries!" she yelped, pouncing into Jasper's arms.

"They probably forgot to charge it.' He wrapped her in his embrace cooperatively as she buried herself in his arms, terrified to be trapped in an ancient tomb without any light. Although Willow was clinging onto him, she continued to burrow herself into his embrace. as if trying to mold their bodies into one.

"Don't be scared. It's safe here." Jasper lowered his head to look at her. At the same time, Willow raised her head, and the distance between their faces minimized.

The two froze for a few seconds, and she could feel his lips at the corner of hers. However, as if struck by lightning, they quickly turned their heads away from each other. "Jasper, | have something to ask you." Willow's voice rang sweetly.

"What is it?" "Have you kissed other girls before?" she asked, extremely curious. "You're the first." Her melodious and smug laugh gently broke the silence. "Really? You aren't pulling my leg, are you?"

"I never lie." "All right! I believe you, but I have something to tell you. You just stole my first kiss. However, since it was your first time too, I won't hold you to it." Just then, a loud call was heard nearby. "Miss Presgrave, where are you?"

"Mr. Wyatt, Miss Presgrave, where are you?" Willow was overjoyed at the sound of the voices. "They found us!" Then, she rose to her feet and began to yell toward the opening. "We're here! Come and save us!"

As expected, she soon heard the voice reply, "Did you hear that? It's Miss Presgrave's voice. Hurry, they're right up ahead!" Soon after, they discovered the entrance to the cave, basked in the moonlight, and they asked probingly, "Miss Presgrave, are you down there?" "Yes, we fell. Be careful, though! The ground in this area is slippery. Don't fall in."

"All right. We'll call the captain and the others over." Not long later, Winston returned with the bodyguards, and Johanna called out urgently from above, "Miss Presgrave, are you hurt?"

"Johanna, I'm fine. I'm not hurt." The bodyguards made quick work of the ropes, and once they were secured, Willow was hoisted out of the cave, immediately followed by Jasper. "There's an ancient tomb below. Let's go back and get some rest, and we can explore tomorrow morning," she suggested.

"That's great. We might even find the clues we were looking for," Winston exclaimed as they headed down the mountain. The moonlight illuminated the path, and Willow suddenly felt a gush of warmth in her heart. She turned around and looked at the man trailing behind her, her lips uncontrollably curling upward into a smile. Although she had a fright, she did not return empty-handed either.

After returning to the ship, Willow and Jasper took a hot shower to thoroughly clean themselves off before turning in for the night. However, he did not enter. Just as she was growing confused, he yanked the zipper open and said, "I'll keep watch. You can just sleep."

"All right!" She agreed obediently. Exhausted from the long ordeal, she succumbed to slumber in no time. Early the next morning, they set out to investigate the tombs. With the equipment they had prepared, it was not even afternoon before they unearthed a coffin. As it was made from cedar, it was surprisingly in pristine condition, unaffected by the passage of time.

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Among the unearthed artifacts, a wooden box caught their attention. It was securely locked, rendering it particularly more valuable than the rest.

With gloved hands, Winston gingerly cut through the ancient iron lock. To their astonishment, they found that it contained a logbook, a priceless discovery that left everyone elated. "This expedition isn't in vain after all. We're finally getting somewhere!" he exclaimed, his excitement palpable.

Willow was unable to contain her joy either, as the purpose of their journey was solely to uncover the secrets of the past and recover lost national treasures. Moreover, this was an achievement that would surely make a significant mark in the archaeology world. "Let's take it back to the ship to take a closer look now."

When they only discovered a dozen or so skeletal remains after excavating for thirty minutes, Winston suggested that these were the crew members who had passed away from malnutrition or disease and had been buried next to the official.

Soon, they discovered the source of the mysterious signal as well. It was a sizable meteorite rich in minerals that had been surprisingly buried nearby, causing all electronics within a thirty feet radius to lose accuracy.

After three days of digging, they finally managed to clear the ancient tomb. Once done, they returned to the ship and started their urgent research, which Morgan participated in as well. Desperate for money, he had taken pictures of the logbook and submitted it to an artifact dealer.

Soon, he received a reply from them. 'I need you to translate the information ASAP and send the details to me. If you do so, I'll pay you 750 thousand as a deposit.'

Driven by the allure of money, Morgan became braver. Coincidentally, he happened to be one of the members of the translation team as well.

As the others gathered in the meeting room to translate the ancient text, he entered the contents of every single page into the computer. Since each of them was an excellent member of the literary field, it was not a difficult feat for them to translate the logbook. However, it was three volumes long, making it

impossible for them to complete the translation right away, and they had no choice but to finish reading all three before they could proceed to the next step.

In the midst of it all, Morgan discreetly downloaded a copy and sent it to the dealer. When he immediately received the money he was promised, he was filled with smug glee, thinking that 1.5 million would soon be his.

The team had begun to grow tired before the investigation could fully begin. In the evening, the meeting room was still fully lit when a bodyguard suddenly walked in. "Stop the meeting. A pirate ship is heading toward us."

"What?" Winston shot to his feet in shock. The crowd was dumbstruck by the news. They had thought of pirate ships as a mere myth, and none had expected one to appear in the open sea.

"My goodness! Do you think they're carrying guns?"

"They definitely have bombs!" "I heard that pirates are all barbarians. Are we in danger?" a female team member yelled, blanching from fear.

On the contrary, Willow calmly comforted her. "Don't worry. It's not like we're unprepared. Even if we have to deal with them, we have nothing to be scared of." "Miss Presgrave, are you not afraid at all?"

Willow chuckled. "This ship isn't just any ordinary ferry. It's equipped with military-issued defense systems, so all these windows are bullet-proof."

As soon as her words fell, the female team members let out a breath of relief. "Have you all forgotten? We still have Commissioner Wyatt with us. As long as he's here, we'll be safe," one of them piped up.

"That's right! We also have Miss Presgrave's strong bodyguards." Willow shared their sentiments. Her composure was the reason behind her presence. After all, he was not just any other special agent.

At that moment, the leader of the bodyguard team, Ricky, walked

to report to her, cMiss edges a battle w i eck out later. We need to escort you to the island and protect you. You can't stay on the ship."

Willow understood that his plan was necessary to make things easier for them to chase the pirate ship away, so she nodded. "All right! Our team will disembark the ship, and I'll leave things over here to you."

"We will protect you and the unit members' safety." As she stepped out to look for Jasper, who Mes looking for her, the pdeshr spread he, corner, but he quickly reached out to stop her from running into him. The touch of his hand caused her heart to race, but in the next instant, he firmly held her arm and said, "Get off the ship with me."

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"Will you come with us?" Willow asked him. "We'll talk after we're off the ship." All the team members disembarked the ship, followed by Jasper, who held Willow's hand as he led her along with the rest. For the time being, the ship had become the bodyguards' battleground, used to chase away the approaching pirate ship.

At the same time, a meeting was being held on the pirate ship, led by a middle-aged man with a scarred face. He had received intel that an archeology team's vessel had headed their way, and the resources they carried onboard were extremely ample and worth making plunder for.

"We haven't been making any money for a long time. Everyone, get your spirits up. We'll be hitting the jackpot soon!" "Boss, that ship might even be carrying some artifacts. If we sell any of them, it'll be enough money for us to spend for months."

"We just don't know what kind of men are on the ship and whether they'll make things easy for us." "We'll start attacking once we get close. We have to take this ship down today. We might even get something out of it." "It's been a long time since we had any fun. We can thoroughly enjoy ourselves tonight."

The ship's crew consisted of fugitives and criminals from around the world, each harsh and ruthless. Without any means to enter the private ocean, they could only make a living by ransacking passing ships. Hence, their eyes lit up with greed at the prospect of a wealthy vessel.

Now that they discovered the ship was filled with abundant ancient artifacts, it was as if someone had left a pile of irresistible gold coins before them.

Meanwhile, Jasper headed to Winston once they were on the island and instructed, "Take all of the team members and hide in the cave. where the ancient tomb is. I'll stay here and protect the island."

"Should I leave some male team members behind to help you?" Winston hurriedly offered, afraid to leave Jasper all by himself. "No need for that. I can handle this." Jasper refused because he did not need any companions. To him, they would only get in his way.

"In that case, Commissioner Wyatt, take care of yourself. Contact us if you need any help," Winston conceded. He could tell that Jasper was not just any ordinary man.

Next to them, Willow had been eavesdropping on their conversation and immediately approached him once Winston left. "Jasper, you have to come with us."

"I must stay behind to stop the pirates from getting on the island," Jasper insisted firmly. "But..."

His gaze turned strict and sharp. "Willow, listen to me." Taken aback by his serious demeanor, she found her eyes welling up with tears. She bit her red lip, knowing there were times when she could be willful and moments she had to be obedient. If she did not listen to him now, it would only bring him trouble.

The sight of her teary eyes sent a pang of pain to Jasper's heart, but he could not afford to succumb to his emotions at a time like this. Protecting the island also meant that he would protect the safety of everyone on the team.

Now, Willow was not the only one he had to protect, as her team members needed to be looked after as well. After all, she would feel guilty if anything were to happen to them, and he did not wish for such a thing to occur. At that moment, Winston walked over and began to persuade her, "Willow, we should head up now!"

"Miss Presgrave, allow me to protect you for the time being!" Johanna joined in as well. Suddenly, Willow pounced forward and pulled Jasper into an embrace, without any regard for the onlookers

behind them. Tightening her grip around him, she said, "Tomorrow morning, I want to see you safe and sound."

"Okay," he replied in a low voice. It was only after hearing the reply that she released him and went up the island, with Johanna trailing behind them, in charge of providing close protection by Willow's side.

As they were familiar with the paths on the island, their journey up the

mountain was smooth sailing. Willow glanced behind her, gradually losing sight of the direction Jasper was in. She pressed forward with a tightly wound nerve.

Just then, an explosion sounded from the bottom of the mountain where the shore was, followed by an exchange of gunfire that reverberated in the air.

"They're fighting!" a few of their team members yelled uncontrolledly. "Everyone, Augreup! Winston roared, Fasc to ensure the safety of his team members.

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Basked in darkness, they stealthily made their way to the mountaintop and arrived at the cave entrance under Winston's lead. It was a perfect hideout, and the pirates would not be able to find them easily even if they entered the island.

Meanwhile, out at sea, two ships engaged in a fierce battle. The bodyguards that Willow had brought along this time were well-versed in naval combat, and they were trained sailors as well. With their skills, they quickly led the pirate ship toward the outer seas. Little did they know, five silhouettes floated in the dark ocean—a part of the pirates' plan.

They speculated that the crew had already taken refuge on the island, and if they managed to capture them, they could force the ship to lower their defenses. Moreover, kidnapping was their specialty. And yet, they had no idea that someone else was awaiting them on the island.

In the darkness, the pirates finally arrived at the shore. At the sight of the tents, they laughed wickedly, their eyes filled with greed as they prepared to ransack the tents. Just then, the leading pirate, still

oblivious to the danger, was struck in the forehead by an unseen force, causing him to collapse lifelessly to the ground in a split second.

Immediately, the remaining pirates huddled together, firing their weapons in every direction possible. They had not expected such a skilled warrior amongst a team of archeologists and were taken aback by the military-issued equipment on their ship. Now that an assassin was lying in an ambush on the island, they were caught off guard.

“Disperse and find that man!” the leading pirate ordered. The four pirates immediately spread out at his words, not knowing that this would be their doom. If they attempted to flee at that moment, they might have stood a chance at survival, but their dispersion only led to nothing but their death. After all, the man in hiding excelled at taking out his targets individually.

“Ahh!” With a sharp gasp, a pirate who had walked into the distance noticed another shadow next to his. He whipped around in fear, and the next moment, the gun in his hand was pressed viciously against his chest by the looming figure that reached out toward him. In a fit of panic, he pulled on the trigger, not realizing it was pointed at his chin.

The sound of the gunshot quickly attracted the other three, but their comrade had long departed from the world of living by the time they rushed over, and his gun had vanished in thin air.

That frightened the three pirates, and only a single thought crossed their minds-head back to the sea immediately and return to the ship.

However, as they fled wildly toward the ocean, the man at the group’s tail took a shot to the back of his head while the other two turned around in fear as they fired frantically. Yet, the man in the darkness was devilishly skilled, and he was able to aim accurately even with the moon as his only source of light.

Bang! Another gunshot later, a wild pirate collapsed into the sea, the water around him turning crimson with his blood. The sole remaining pirate trembled with fear, and just as he thought he had finally made it back to the ocean, he heard a voice call out to him. “Hey!”

Uncontrollably, he turned toward the source of the voice, only to see a cold figure standing by the shore, the gun in his hand pointed toward him. In a blink of an eye, his head became the man’s target as

soon as he emerged from the water, and he was unable to react at all. Just like that, the five pirates were wiped out without even knowing the face of the man who took their lives.

Meanwhile, the two ships were still engaged in the crossfire, separated by the ocean. As the pirate ship was afraid to come into the range of their opponents, neither of the vessels was damaged. At that moment, Jasper disappeared from the beach and leaped into the sea.

An hour later, with the pirate ship's departure, the bodyguards steered back to the shore and returned to the dock. When Winston noticed that the pirate ship had disappeared, followed by a message from the bodyguards, reporting that they were now on the island.

Immediately, Willow suggested, "Let's go down!" "Miss Presgrave has to wait a little longer. We can only head down once Ricky confirms the safety on the island."

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"No, I have to head down now." Willow could not wait for another second, leaving Johanna with no choice but to trail after her. "Miss Presgrave, I'll escort you."

On the island, the bodyguards were just as dumbfounded. At the sight of five new corpses that belonged to the pirates, Ricky immediately ordered his men to take the bodies away and clean the surroundings before Willow caught sight of such a blood-curdling scene.

"Wait, did you see Mr. Wyatt?" he asked one of the subordinates next to him. "No, I didn't. Did he leave to look for Miss Presgrave?" "He must've gone up to see if Miss Presgrave is safe!"

However, Ricky found it impossible that Jasper would ascend the mountain unless the pirates had escaped and made their way up, but the discovery of the last two corpses near the coast showed that they had been shot down in their attempts to flee toward the sea.

In other words, none of the pirates had gone up the mountain. As his gaze shifted to the barely visible pirate ship on the horizon, a bad premonition arose in his heart. He knew this was something that Jasper was capable of.

After Willow hurriedly rushed down from the mountain half an hour later, her gaze skimmed past the crowd gathered at the bottom, but all she could see were her bodyguards, and Jasper was nowhere to be found.

“Ricky, where’s Jasper?” She immediately demanded his presence. “Miss Presgrave, we didn’t see him anywhere when we came on shore,” Ricky replied, afraid to tell her his assumptions.

After hearing that, Willow felt as if a knife was digging into her chest, leaving her unable to breathe. Where is Jasper? Didn’t he say he’d stay here to protect me? Why did he disappear?

“Miss Presgrave, don’t worry! Mr. Wyatt will be fine. He’s more capable than all of us combined.” Ricky comforted. However, with Jasper nowhere in sight, she was plunged into worry and could barely settle her anxious heart. “Search him. | order all of you to locate him now.” Tears gushed out of her eyes, but her gaze was surprisingly stern.

“Miss Presgrave.” Johanna had never seen Willow in this state and was at a loss for what to do. “You go with them too, all of you. He’s definitely hurt; he has to be nearby.”

“Blood! There’s blood here!” A female team member keenly spotted the blood stains on the ground and cried out in horror. At that, Willow immediately picked up a flashlight and approached the woman, examining the crimson splatters on the ground. In an instant, her body began to sway weakly Why is there blood here?

Ricky approached her and explained, “Miss Presgrave, when we stepped foot on the island, we found five corpses belonging to the pirates. These blood stains don’t belong to Jasper; they were left behind when we were cleaning up the pirates’ bodies.”

“Really? Are you sure?” Willow pressed hurriedly.

“I’m certain.” “But, where is he? Does anyone know where he went?” She looked around frantically, praying with all her heart that Jasper would appear by her side.

However, no matter how long she waited, he was nowhere to be seen. Nearby, Johanna whispered to Ricky, "Do you really have no idea where Mr. Wyatt is? Miss Presgrave is nearly losing her mind."

His gaze turned toward the ocean. "I suspect he's already embarked on that pirate ship."

Johanna was immediately taken aback. "What?"

"That's why I'm keeping this a secret from Miss Presgrave. I'm afraid that her emotions will

be affected. Although I believe Mr. Wyatt

shouldn't take a risk so blindly. Since

those pirates have their eyes on us, they will continue attacking us and might even call for reinforcements."

Ricky's speculations were accurate. On the pirate ship, a fierce exchange of gunfire was taking place. Their target was only 900 yards away. In the blink of an eye, the death of over a dozen people among the crew. Even the captain was now in a panic, desperate to flee. He stood on the deck with his hands raised, surrendering to this strange man who had appeared out of thin air.

The man before him was completely soaked, but his eyes emanated a terrifying chill as if he were a beast that had crawled from the depths of

the underworld. Just ten minutes ago, he suddenly appeared on the ship with a bloodthirsty aura before he began to wreak complete havoc.