

Chapter 23: Meeting Renee

"What's that?" Riley asked Adrian while in the car.

Adrian had placed a small paper bag beside him, and Riley was curious. He turned to her and answered, "A gift for your mother. I have to make a good impression, right?"

Riley smiled. She leaned back in her seat and said, "That is nice of you."

Max, the driver, was at the wheel, navigating the busy streets as Riley and Adrian discussed Renee's condition. 1

Riley had no complaints at the King's Medical Center. Renee was treated like a VIP patient. Her mother's care was superb, from the medical staff to the small details like the food. She could fairly say Renee was recovering well. 1

"She should be practicing how to walk today. That's why I am excited to see her," Riley commented. "Everything has been great so far."

"Good," Adrian answered. "I look forward to meeting her."

The other day, Riley had finally told Renee about Adrian. She described how Adrian saved her and how he had provided for Renee's medical treatment.

Soon, they arrived at the King's Medical Center. When they entered Renee's private suite room, Riley saw a therapist and the caregiver, Miranda, holding her mother's arms. They were walking around the room.

"Mom! You are doing great!" Riley said before rushing over to Renee and kissing her cheek. "I'm so happy!"

"We just finished fifteen minutes of walking, and she is doing great," the therapist remarked. "We'll have Miss Allen rest for now."

After Renee settled back in bed, the therapist and the caregiver left. Only then did Renee notice Adrian's presence. She was staring in the doorway's direction, awed. She asked, "Riley, who is your friend?"

Riley was beside Renee's bed. She smiled and walked to Adrian. Then, they moved closer to Renee. Riley said, "Mom, this is Adrian, the friend I told you about yesterday, remember?"

"Good morning, Miss Allen. It's nice to meet you," Adrian greeted. He propelled his wheelchair closer to Renee and handed her the gift. He said, "This is a gift for you. I hope you like it."

Renee looked at Riley, hesitating.

Riley encouraged, "Go ahead, Mom. Open it."

"Thank you," Renee softly said.

As Renee opened the gift, Adrian returned to Riley's side. After a few seconds, Renee took out a white gold necklace with an imperial jadeite pendant.

Renee smiled brightly; her brown eyes shone. She said, "It's beautiful."

"Jadeite is said to have healing properties, so I thought of this gift for you," Adrian said. "I hope you are feeling better."

Again, Renee glanced at the jade pendant and said, "It's very thoughtful of you, Adrian. You have done more than enough for me and Riley."

"It's my way of helping Riley. Besides, Riley and I are old friends," Adrian said before forming a faint smile on his face.

After that introduction, Riley and Adrian told Renee how they met back in college. At the end of the story, Adrian said, "I was very disappointed at what Brian did to Riley, so I was even more determined to help her get back on her feet. I decided to build a new jewelry company, and Riley and I will manage it." 1

"Wow, it's such a big favor that you are doing," Renee said with brows meeting. "I hope it's not too much trouble."

"It's no trouble at all. I have always wanted to invest in a business that guarantees return. With Riley's skills, I am confident that the jewelry company will succeed," Adrian assured.

Renee looked at Riley and then back to Adrian. She answered, "Well, Riley is indeed very good at creating jewelry designs. Brian will lose a lot, more than he realizes."

"Yes," Adrian agreed. "He is just courageous now because he is doing what he selfishly wants, but when he sees the effects of his decision, he will surely regret it."

"The business name of the jewelry company has already been registered. By next week, Riley and I can start with recruiting for office staff -" 1



"Really?" Riley was surprised. "That quick?"

Adrian stared at her and revealed, "I am a very efficient man." 1

After that exchange, Renee asked about Adrian's family. It was Riley's cue to give them a private moment. She said, "I'm going to check with the doctors. In the meantime, Mom, why don't you entertain Adrian?"

"I'll entertain him with my questions, Riley," Renee responded. Unlike last week, Renee's voice has fully returned to normal, so she can now speak clearly.

"Right," Riley said before chuckling. "I'll leave you to it."

After Riley left, Adrian sucked in a deep breath. He moved closer to Renee and braced himself.

"Do you like my daughter?" This was Renee's first question.

Adrian leaned back in his wheelchair and answered, "Riley is not only beautiful but talented. Of course, I like her."

He was not about to tell Renee about their soon-to-be marriage agreement. He and Riley had already agreed to slowly give the news to Renee.

"Hmm. I figured," Renee said before looking at the door. She glanced back at Adrian, saying, "But she just got divorced -"

"I'm never going to force Riley into anything, Miss Allen. For now, we

are friends," Adrian responded. "But as our friendship continues and as adults, we may decide to be with each other."

"Well, you are right. You are both adults and can make independent decisions," Renee said.

Adrian noticed Renee heaved. She looked at the door again before asking, "Riley told me that you belong to an influential and wealthy family."

"Ah, yes. Admittedly, I was born rich, but I have also built an empire of my own. I can definitely provide for Riley." Adrian paused and cautiously replied, "If that's what you are worried about -"

"No, I - I taught my daughter to be self-reliant. She doesn't need a man to provide for her, but how are your connections? Can you protect her?" Renee asked. "From - um -"

Renee was clearly hesitating. After another deep breath, she asked, "You know, for example, from Brian, from his mistress, or someone who wants to hurt her? Maybe a rich person who is envious of her? You know how the world works."

Adrian thought Renee's questions were rather odd. Still, he answered, "Of course. I will protect Riley. I may be disabled, but I have what it takes to protect her." 1

Renee smiled and said, "That's Good."

After a while, Renee expressed, "Adrian, I can tell you are a very good person. So, if you both decide to date, I'll give you my blessing."

"Just promise me to keep her safe always," Renee added.

"I promised," Adrian said.

In another city, a woman was drinking tea on the patio of their luxurious home. Suddenly, a man approached her and whispered, "Ma'am, I have bad news. Renee Allen awoke from her coma." 1

The woman's skin crawled, and her eyes rounded in shock. She said, "No. She is going to be trouble."

"Maam, what if Renee won't speak. Maybe the car accident was enough warning?" The man softly said. "Why don't we observe in the meantime? After all, she had not said anything for many years." 5



LiLhzyz Author

“May 22, 2024. Sorry, ladies. Author-san is still not well. Whatever I caught is rather strong, and I'm taking antibiotics now. Hopefully, tomorrow will be better for me. There is only one chapter. The next” 5

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