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## Returning from the Dead His Secret Lover Chapter 1851

Ian slept until that evening.

When he woke up, all he saw was a beautiful mountain view with a shade of red draped over it. Confusion filled his mind. H-How did I end up here?

“You’re finally up. Doctor, please come.”

A middle-aged woman was sitting beside him and guarding him.

That confused him even more.

Truth was, he was already a little overwhelmed when he escaped because Karl’s “teachings” had already dehydrated him by then. Karl was never harsh, but Ian was too stubborn. He refused to voice up or complain the entire time he underwent his training.

That was why Karl assumed that Ian could take it and gradually made things more difficult.

That night, Ian had fallen asleep as soon as he returned to his dorm.

He had no idea what happened next.

He didn’t even remember how an insane thought kept running in his mind, telling him that he had to leave that torturous place. Before he knew it, he had already grabbed his phone and left the place.

So... where am I now?

Confused, Ian stared at a middle-aged woman with clothes so washed out that she looked like a beggar.

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“He’s up? Okay, let me examine him.”

Soon, a middle-aged man with a pair of mud-tainted pants entered. He reached out as soon as he saw that Ian was up.

Ian reacted by instinctively moving away.

“What are you doing?”

Both the middle-aged man and woman were stunned.

Why is this punk so aggressive? I wouldn’t have bothered to take care of him if Ms. Jadeson hadn’t asked.

“You’re sick, young man, and I am a doctor. I’m just going to examine your condition.”

“A doctor?”

Ian, with his face pale, kept frowning as he scanned the man standing in front of him.

The doctor didn’t know what to do about that.

In the end, the middle-aged woman eased the tension when she thought of asking for help.

“The sickness might’ve caused the kid to lose his mind, Doctor. I better ask Ms. Jadeson for help,” suggested the middle-aged woman before she rushed to get Susan.

Ms. Jadeson?

Ian, who had been lying on the bed, finally stopped being so hostile.

Indeed, a few minutes after the middle-aged woman left, they heard a series of footsteps approaching. Ian stayed in the room and saw a familiar face a moment later.

“Ian, you’re up! Are you okay?”

Susan was extremely happy to see him. She ran to his bed as soon as she entered the room and stood in front of him excitedly.

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Ian couldn't speak.

Only then did he finally realize where he was and what he had done on the previous night.

His incredibly handsome face tended to exude a stoic aura, but at that moment, that same face shone with embarrassment and awkwardness. It got so bad that he had to turn to the other side because he was worried that it'd show.

"Ian?"

Naturally, Susan had no idea what was going on in his mind.

All she knew was that he refused to acknowledge her. He wouldn't even look at her, so she assumed that his being ill had prompted his childish side to act up again.

"Okay, come on now. Don't be mad. Your Aunt Susan is here now, right? Be good and let the doctor examine you, okay? I'll treat you to something nice afterward."

She was actually coaxing him as though he were a kid.

Things would have been better if she had kept quiet because

Ian's expression became worse immediately after he heard what she said.

"Watch what you say, Susan. I am not a kid!"

"Right, okay. You're an adult now," Susan said right away to calm him down.

About ten minutes later, the doctor finished examining Ian.

"His fever is gone, but he should still take the pills. Also, he should refrain from eating anything cold or spicy. He needs to rest for the injuries to heal, so have him stay put for a few days. Don't let him exercise or do anything during this period."

"Will do, Doctor^" replied Susan right away.

After that, she collected the medicine and returned to Ian's room to take him back.

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“Do you need me to help you?”

“No.”

Ian stubbornly turned her down, but he soon regretted that. The second his feet touched the floor, his overly exhausted body ached all over, and he couldn't stop himself from moaning in pain.

“Are you okay?” asked Susan. She was so surprised that she hurried back to help him.

She knew all too well how big his ego was, so she didn't insist earlier. She trusted him and let him walk on his own when he said he was fine.

Yet...

As Susan held him, she said some comforting words in a sweet voice, “Don't underestimate your injuries. The doctor said that those injured muscles won't kill you, but it will be agonizing for you.”

Ian didn't reply.

He remained quiet as she helped him move forward slowly.

The village offered a fantastic view at dusk. As the sun set, the bright blue sky slowly turned into a stunning orange, and droplets of warm light rained down on the green forest and clear river. It looked so good that it was as though it were a painting.

The two of them walked on the path filled with green grass. The red sun elongated their shadows on the ground.

“Ian, it's not right for you to come here without telling your dad. Talk to your parents the next time you feel the need to run away, okay?”

Susan broke the silence and spoke up because she felt awkward. It was so bad that her palms were sweating.

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Ian turned his head and looked at her right after she finished speaking.

Susan saw a breathtaking glow in those beautiful brown eyes.

Her heart skipped a beat as she stared into them.

“You told them?”

“Y-Yes...” answered Susan dazedly.

Ian stopped talking and looked away. It was obvious he was upset about it.

Susan dared not speak again.

She waited for quite some time, but he never said anything. It seemed that his silence was doing a pretty good job of expressing his utter dissatisfaction because it was driving Susan insane.

“D-Don’t worry. They are not angry with you at all. In fact, they want you to rest well here. That is why I’ve planned everything for you. If you don’t want to go home, you can stay here for a few days, and I’ll hang out with you.”

Susan didn’t actually mean to share all that information. It simply slipped out of her lips.

When she finished speaking, Ian turned his gaze to her.

He was extremely tall, and Susan could tiptoe, but the top of her head still wouldn’t be able to reach his chin. Darn it. He’s three years younger than me, so why is he taller than me?

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The height difference made it so that she had no choice but to lift her head to look into his emotionless eyes. As though granting her a gift, he half-heartedly nodded in agreement.

“Okay...”

Susan was speechless once more.

This spoiled brat!

Ian ended up staying in that village after that.

Sebastian, who was at Avenport at the time, burned with anger when he first heard what had happened, but Sasha convinced him to let him go.

Sasha thought that her son had only done something that rebellious to go against his father.

As for the reason he went to Susan...

“Susan has always looked out for Ian even when they were at school. It’s not like Ian can go to his siblings after he escaped SteelFort, and he definitely couldn’t go to Kurt, who has gone to Xenhall. He didn’t have many options, and that was why he went to Yeringham instead,” Sasha analyzed.

That reasoning was sound. As far as Sasha and Sebastian were concerned, that was the only possible reason Ian would go there.

He never had many friends, and the incident with Duncan only made him keep his guard even higher. That was why he didn’t really know anyone outside the family.

Sebastian agreed with his wife’s reasoning.

Still, her words reminded him of a crucial issue he needed to solve.

“Should we help him look for his significant other?”

“Wait, what?” Sasha was surprised to hear that. “Didn’t you say that you wouldn’t get involved with the kids’ love life? Why are you trying to set Ian with someone up now? Are you going back on your words?”

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Sasha panicked a little.

They were having a video call at the time, so Sebastian could see how worried she was. Hence, he waved at her and signaled for her to calm down.

“I don’t want to get involved, but Ian’s situation is a little unique. You saw how things are for him and what the incident involving Yasmin has done to him. There is no saying what will happen if he meets another woman like that again.”

Sasha was instantly at a loss for words.

He’s right. My boy is not an ordinary man. He has always had a small circle of friends, and he always hides away in the figurative castle he built in his mind. Who knows what will happen the next time someone breaks down his defenses?

“W-Who do you have in mind?”

“We’ll have the old man keep an eye out.”

Sebastian didn’t have anyone in mind, so he entrusted that to Jonathan. The latter happened to be bored out of his mind, anyway.

Besides, he was strict, so the woman he chose would surely be amazing.

Sasha agreed.

The couple ended the call soon after. Sebastian was going to go back to work when someone suddenly sent him a text.

Karl: Kurt called earlier, Mr. Hayes. He said he found something in Xenhall.

Sebastian: What did he discover?

It had been a while since Kurt had gone to Xenhall, and he had been sending reports regularly. As everything had been progressing smoothly, Karl had not bothered reporting anything to Sebastian.

That day, however, something that was worth mentioning came up.

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Sebastian checked the photo Karl had sent and saw that it was a clay pot. There was a lot of mud on the pot, and it looked as though it had just been excavated.

Sebastian: What is that?

Karl: Inside is filled with broken bones, and it was buried by the entrance.

Sebastian: So?

Karl: Do you believe in geomancy? After Kurt found it, I looked into the place and learned that the place was actually filled with vital energy.

Sebastian was lost for words. My gosh, I can't believe he's talking nonsense.

Sebastian cut him short right away and demanded that he take things seriously.

Geomancy? What on earth is that? The monk from Aquene Temple once said that I am destined to be a king, but I'm still the same old me, aren't I?

Karl: I'm serious, Mr. Hayes. I'm sharing this information to let you know that the clay pot is buried in a critical spot.

Sebastian did not reply.

Karl went on: I think someone deliberately buried this clay pot here. This may have probably been Eddie's future grave back then, yet they actually buried these bones here.

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Karl: There's more to it as well. Given the size of the bones, it is likely these bones belonged to a kid. That would destroy whatever geomantic omen this place is meant to bring its owner. Legends say that the curse will be more potent if the person buried here is related to the child.

Karl added that last sentence to warn Sebastian.

Whether they were real or not, these were what some people would believe.

Sebastian remained silent.

It was true he didn't believe in any of it, but his subordinate made a valid point about being wary of the supposed intentions. It was something he had to deal with.

In other words, someone who wishes eternal damnation for Eddie buried the clay pot there. Who could the culprit be? Also, if those bones likely belonged to a kid who is related to Eddie...

Even someone as incredibly intelligent as Sebastian fell into deep thought.

In the village in Yeringham, Ian felt much better when he woke up the next morning. Some of his energy was replenished, and his appetite had returned.

Susan was up early as well.

She knew that Ian was a picky eater, so she had woken up early to go to a farmhouse in the village to get some flour and egg. She had even picked some fresh vegetables from the field.

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That was why Ian detected the alluring scent of delicious breakfast when he walked down the stairs that day.

"Ian, you're up. I bet you're hungry. Take a seat. I'll be done in a minute," said Susan from the kitchen when she saw Ian.

However, Ian didn't leave. He had a white shirt on and was staring at the thing in front of him. He walked to it and looked down at it in confusion.

What is this?

He reached out.

"Don't touch that, Ian. It's a water pump!" Susan shouted in surprise.

Unfortunately, she was too late. All she heard was a loud splash. The mechanism that was pumping water from the spring began working as soon as Ian removed the cork.

The water splashed right onto his face.

Susan was stunned.

When she came back to her senses, she rushed out of the kitchen, grabbed a dry towel from the floor above, and ran to Ian after that.

"Here, dry yourself up. Ah, this is all my fault. I forgot to remind you that this water pump works in a way such that the water will shoot upward if you pull that cork."

Susan felt terrible about it.

She held the dry towel and quickly wiped the water off of

Ian's face because she was worried that he would catch a cold.

Fortunately, the water wasn't too strong. It only got Ian's face wet, so Ian was basically fine after Susan dried him up.

Ian recomposed himself and said, "That is so stupid. There's a thing called pressure pump."

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“Huh?”

Susan didn't understand a word he just said.

However, Ian refused to talk anymore. He grabbed the towel and walked up the stairs right away. Moments later, Susan heard him shouting from the floor above. “Hey you, get me some new clothes. I wanna change.”

Susan was dumbfounded.

Hey you? How rude! Also, we're in a poor, secluded village. Where am I supposed to go to get him a new outfit?

Despite those thoughts, Susan had no choice but to go to her coursemates and borrow some clothes. Fortunately, she knew some guys, so she managed to borrow a brand new outfit from one of them.

After changing his clothes and reluctantly using the toothbrush that Susan got him, Ian was finally ready to have some breakfast.

The pasta tastes pretty good.

Ian was so spoiled that he felt compelled to wipe the chair clean before he sat down and gracefully have his breakfast.

“Ms. Jadeson, we have to go harvest some pears today, and you'll have to tag along because we have to weigh and record everything.”

“Okay.”

Susan was quick to agree to help when a member of the Villagers' Committee assigned her a task.

That was how things were in a secluded village like that. The leaders they elected for the Villagers' Committee were all somewhat uncultured, so university volunteers were destined to fall for their tricks.

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The task of harvesting the pears, for an instant, somehow got assigned to the members of the Finance Department, and as their accountant, Susan had to tag along as well.

She went to her office to pack some things, then returned to the kitchen to see that Ian had left in the few moments she was gone. Nothing but his plate remained.

“Ian? Ian?”

Susan panicked a little and hurried out the door to look for him.

The second she left the house, she saw that young, dashing man standing on the field. His beautiful brows were knitted together when he stared at the old woman who was waving endlessly at him.

“Hey, why are you still standing there? I asked you to help me carry this because I am too old to do it myself.”

Susan found the situation so funny that she almost laughed aloud.

The old woman was on her way to spread the fertilizers in the field.

She probably saw Ian through the open window and realized that he was having his breakfast, so she asked for his help. It was understandable since fertilizing truly was a tiring task.

Unfortunately, Ian was a spoiled brat who grew up in a luxurious environment. There was no way he could understand what the old woman was saying.

Susan came over and stood beside the dashing young man.

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"I'll help you. He doesn't know anything about this."

"Oh, is that so? I see. No wonder he ignored me when I kept calling him. Okay, then. You can come and help me out," the elderly woman replied with a grin that revealed she did not have many teeth left.

Susan bent down immediately and was about to take off her shoes to go onto the field when Ian took notice and finally turned toward her.

"What are you doing?"

Susan gestured toward the field and explained simply, "I'm helping her with the pollination. You don't know what that is, do you? They're pollinating the crops. This tall one is the stamen, and the shorter one is the pistil. The crops are in the flowering stage now, and they have to pollinate them by hand"

Ian fell silent.

Indeed, he had not seen that before.

I've been to the countryside with Mom, Matt, and Vivi. In fact, I've been there several times. However, the climate and environment there were unlike where we are now. I really haven't heard of this.

He gazed at Susan as she took off her shoes and socks, revealing her fair feet. Suddenly, the sight triggered something within him, and he recalled a scene of being in the fields with his parents when he was little...

"Ian! What are you doing? You can't come down here!"

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Ian looked at her impassively as he kicked off his shoes and socks in seconds. "Why not? I used to go out to the fields with my parents when I was little. Who knows where you were or what you were doing then?"

He gave a contemptuous snort before stepping forward among the flowering crops.

Susan was dumbstruck.

All right, then. I was only worrying about where to get clean socks and shoes for him later.

Hence, both of them started working in the field. During the time Susan had been there, she had done such work before and had become accustomed to it. However, it was a different story for Ian. Soon, he felt his arms start to ache and his face sting.

The leaves of the seedlings were actually very sharp with serrated edges. Those unaccustomed to handling the seedlings would easily cut themselves on them and even find that their skin would itch.

Susan watched as Ian's fair and handsome face quickly turned red as he scratched at it.

"That's it, Ian. You can't stay in this field any longer. Let's hurry up and go back. Your skin isn't used to this. If you continue, you'll ruin your face."

Tossing aside the bamboo pole, Susan hurried over to him and pulled him out of the field.

It was not long before they were back in front of the faucet.

But this time, Ian found the familiar coolness of the water that gushed forth when Susan removed the plug soothing and refreshing.

Finally feeling better, he asked Susan, "Doesn't it make you itch?"

She was in the middle of wringing a towel to wipe his arm. When she heard his question, she answered casually, "I'm already used to it. I was just like you in the beginning."

In the beginning?

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Ian's gaze fell upon her face, and it was then that he noticed her skin was indeed a little darker than it had been when she was in university.

Her skin used to be fair and smooth, but now, he could see at a glance that her cheeks were red as if smeared with blusher.

Is that really sunburn?

Before he realized what he was doing, he had already stretched out his hand and pinched her cheek, which looked as pink and plump as a juicy peach.

Susan stared at him wordlessly, and everything seemed to come to a standstill.

They stood unmoving as if rooted to the spot, and the only sound was the gurgling of the water as it continued gushing out.

Only their eyes moved as they stared at each other.

"Ms. Jadeson! Ms. Jadeson!"

Suddenly, someone from the Villagers' Committee's Finance Department came rushing down from the mountain, his yells shattering the peaceful stillness.

The sound jolted Susan to her senses.

"Huh... What is it?"

She looked away hastily as if electrocuted, her bright red face betraying her panic and embarrassment.

Meanwhile, Ian was equally flustered.

After withdrawing his hand mechanically, he grabbed the towel and hurriedly wiped his body with it.

By the time the person from the Finance Department ran over, Ian had already gone upstairs to his room.

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After a while, Susan followed the man uphill to record the number of pears, leaving Ian alone upstairs. Even after a long time had passed, he could not calm down.

What did I just do? Is she angry? Did I give her a shock?

His frustration continued burgeoning, and he became so upset that he ended up ripping a book he had brought with him to shreds.

Just then, Vivian sent a text message: What are you doing, Ian?

Ian ignored the message.

Vivian: How are things with your Aunt Susan? Are you having a lot of fun? You should send me some photos.

Ian reckoned that Vivian was probably so bored at Oceanic Estate that she resorted to pestering him for photos.

As a result, his already foul mood only worsened when he saw that text message.

Ian: I didn't take any photos.

Vivian: Why not? Is it no fun there? Then why did you run all the way there? If you don't feel like staying at SteelFort, you can come and find me. We can look for Kurt and have a blast together.

Ian did not reply after that.

Her text had rendered him speechless.

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After putting down his phone, Ian was about to wash his face when he heard another voice downstairs calling for Susan.

"Hey, Small Fry," the man asked upon seeing Ian emerging from his room, "have you seen Ms. Jadeson?"

"No"

Looking as proud as ever, Ian's already foul mood worsened when he heard yet another request for Susan, prompting him to give a retort that was as cold and stiff as his stance.

Why does everybody only want her help? What about the rest of us volunteers? We might as well go home!

"Oh man, who's going to help me count for the sale of my wares if she's not here?" the middle-aged man wailed. "I'm selling all my lumber today, Small Fry! Say, are you as good as Ms. Jadeson? Why don't you come with me instead?"

"Me?" Ian wondered if his ears deceived him.

Before he could give a definite answer, the panic-stricken villager was already bounding up the stairs toward him.

"Yes, yes, you will do just fine," the man said impatiently as he tugged on Ian's arm. "Hurry up and come with me please; the driver is about to leave. What if I get scammed without an accountant present?"

Ian instinctively took a few steps back.

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As was the culture within the village, every important sale necessitated an educated opinion wherever possible.

Even the sale of timber required the careful calculation of its mass to ensure equity for both parties.

In the end, Ian decided to consider it a favor to Susan by obliging the villager.

Several minutes later, his snow-white shirt caught the crowd's attention almost as soon as he arrived at one of the drying fields of the village.

Aside from his natural good looks, he had an aura of nobility emanating from his bones. Upon his arrival there, even his fellow volunteers stared at him blankly.

"What are we evaluating today?"

Pretending not to notice the stupefied glances, Ian turned to the villager who sought his help.

The man, who was a farmer, immediately pointed to a pile of peeled fir trees on the ground. "All of that," he said. "The buyer will come and measure it. After that, please record it in my ledger and exchange the necessary documents with him."

That's it?

Ian took the paper and pen.

The buyer arrived soon after.

With a single disdainful glance at the seemingly inexperienced teenager, he took out a measuring tape and conducted his usual routine while mumbling the dimensions under his breath.

"Wait a minute. Is that all?" Ian stopped the pair of burly men stepping forward to carry the wood.

The buyer glared at him.

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“Yeah. What else are you expecting?”

“What about the foliage?” Ian asked as he cast a glance at the sizable mass of branches while opting to ignore the man’s impertinence.

He noticed that the buyer measured only two-thirds of the actual length while conveniently leaving out the top of the tree.

What is this wily fox up to?

“Don’t they teach you how to measure wood in university, young man?”

“Enlighten me.”

“The leaves and branches are useless to us,” the buyer retorted. “Why should we pay for it?”

By that point, the villagers around Ian, especially the middle- aged farmer, were glancing at each other in dismay. After witnessing the newcomer’s anger, he began to panic at the prospect of losing a reliable buyer.

“Small Fry, let’s just-” the farmer began.

“Fine,” Ian cut across to address the buyer, instantly crushing the latter’s arrogance. “Then they’ll saw off what you didn’t pay for, and you can keep the part you do have a use for.”

The buyer and the villagers were struck dumb with astonishment.

Such a demand to saw off the branches is unprecedented! Will the buyer still agree?

Sure enough, the buyer did not take the threat kindly.

“You are deliberately causing trouble, aren’t you? Well, I don’t want the wood anymore. You can sell it to someone else!” At that, he turned around and made to storm off to the villagers’ horror.

Ian’s voice rang out again impassively at that moment and interrupted the villagers’ flattering pleas to the buyer.

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"I would think twice if I were you. If you leave this village today, I guarantee you will never be able to do business here again."

"What did you say? Who are you to make this kind of 'guarantee?'"

"Try me."

Clad in his white shirt, the eighteen-year-old young man stood positively sparkling in the bright morning sun as he held a man twice his age in a vice grip with nothing more than several words and a refusal to lower his gaze.

Although he did not lose his temper or raise his voice, that was a warning sign to those who knew Ian well.

Fortunately, the buyer was wise enough to hesitate. After regaining his composure from his short burst of temper, he noticed how his young adversary carried himself. Not only did he fail to intimidate the boy, but the boy's presence had him at an unusual loss for words.

Finally, he turned to address one of his subordinates without taking his eyes off Ian. "Who is he?"

"They're volunteers from a famous university, boss. And expensive, too. Their families must be powerful people."

The buyer gulped.

Ten minutes later, the measurement was redone without so much as a twig left out of the equation.

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