

The Untouchable Ex Wife by Mizuki Sei

Chapter 551

'Argh! Every path I see ends in a roadblock! On the surface, it looks like there are many ways to Rome, but in reality, they're all blocked!'

Renee repeatedly sighed, almost driven mad by the problem.

"Mommy, are you unhappy?" Aiden asked worriedly after pushing the door open to see Renee sighing.

"No. I'm very happy. I'm a winner in life with you and Abby by my side. Why would I not be happy?"

"Mommy, stop lying to me. You're clearly forcing your smile, and you blink a lot when you lie. I'm not a three-year-old anymore. I'm almost five, you know? Can you please stop insulting my intelligence?"

"Uh, well..."

Like a thief caught in the act, Renee's smile froze on her face.

After all, with Aiden's intelligence, her poor acting skills were a joke that would be easily exposed. So, she stopped pretending and was honest with Aiden.

"Adie, I've encountered a problem recently and need a little money. We may have to sell Sun Island temporarily to solve this problem. Are you and Abby okay with that?"

Selling the island was her last resort and also the most painful decision she could make. So, she needed Aiden and Abigail's agreement.

"Of course not!" Aiden replied without hesitation and firmly added, "Sun Island is our home, and we have many happy memories there. We can't sell it, come what may!"

"You're right!"

Renee patted her head and slumped down in her chair. She looked up at the white ceiling with watery eyes and whispered, "I just lost my mind for a bit since I was in a hurry. I'm sorry, okay? I won't sell Sun Island. I'll think of something else."

Aiden pulled on Renee's arm eagerly and said, "Mommy, if you need money, that's easy. I know someone who has a lot of money. Whatever amount you need, he'll give it to you."

"Oh? Who is it? Let's hear it."

"Mr. Q!" Aiden gleefully said as he took the chance to promote the man further. Mr. Q is a really nice person, and he's super rich.

His treasure

house has all sorts of exotic treasures from around the world. If you take just one piece and sell it, you can make a lot of money!

"I have a close relationship with him, so if you need money, just let me know, and I'll talk to him. He can solve your problem easily!"

Renee naturally didn't take it seriously and smiled gently.

"Really? Ah, our Adie must be really amazing to know such a wealthy friend. N

Aiden pouted and denied seriously, "We're not friends! We just have a special relationship!"

"Haha! How special is it? Can I know?"

"Not for now."

Aiden didn't want his mother to know that Mr. Q was the man he had picked for her until he was done with his investigation. His mother would be heartbroken if Mr. Q turned out to be a scumbag in the end.

"Oh, you rascal. You're always so imaginative and mysterious!" Renee laughed as she pinched Aiden's nose. She obviously didn't believe a single word the child said.

After all, Mr. Q was a super big shot who was both mysterious and ruthless. He was also known as the Night Demon. With that said, he wouldn't have the time to hang out with a little kid like Aiden!

Aiden was about to argue, but Leia suddenly burst into the room. Panting for breath, she struggled to get her words out. "Ren! Something bad has happened!"

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"What happened? Calm down and tell me," Renee said. Her brows furrowed deeply as she helped Leia, who was trembling in exhaustion, up.

"My brother... My brother is in trouble!" Leia exclaimed, her pretty face now as pale as a ghost. She took a deep breath before stammering, "Earlier, he went to get a loan at the bank to solve Azure Group's financial issues. He used his shares in Osborne Group as collateral. Initially, everything was fine, and he simply needed to repay the money on time. But somehow, my father got wind of it..."

Renee's grip on Leia's arm tightened as a foreboding feeling of dread overcame

her. "What happened?"

"You know how my father is. When he's angry, he doesn't care about anything. You know how we Osbornes started our business in the grayer parts of the industry, don't you? He's using his old ways to punish Liam! H- he's going to be beaten to death at this rate!" Leia gushed out everything and burst into tears.

She looked helpless as she begged Renee, "Ren, please think of a way to save my brother! He's going to die!"

"Okay. Stop crying. Where are they now? I'll go see them," Renee comforted Leia as she packed her things and prepared to leave.

She didn't know Geronimo well, only that he was a stubborn, deeply conservative old man who ruled his family with an iron fist.

As the long-awaited heir of Geronimo, Liam was the second largest shareholder of Osborne Group and had always been his family's favored child.

Liam, however, had quietly mortgaged his shares to cover a small technology company's financial

hole. Even as an outsider, Renee was furious at what he had done.

"Your brother has really lost his mind this time. Even if he trusted Azure Group and me, he shouldn't gamble the future of Osborne Group like this. What if our project fails? What if Azure Group goes bankrupt? Did he think about the consequences?"

"Who's to say he hasn't? My brother is motivated by love. In the past few years, he supported your career and expanded Azure Group to the point of almost emptying out our family's coffers! My father has been unhappy about it for a while now, but he never expected Liam to take out a loan using his shares as collateral! This time, my father might actually kill him to vent his anger!"

"It was my fault. I was too slow to realize that this would happen," Renee said, hanging her head low as she was consumed with guilt.

Renee had always thought that Liam was funding Azure Group with Osborne Group's approval. She never imagined that he was struggling to this extent.

"Hey, it isn't your fault. Clearly, someone has been spreading rumors. My brother wouldn't be in this tough situation if there weren't! Let's focus on how to save him first!"

"You're right. Let's not waste any more time. We have to go."

Before leaving, Renee instructed Aiden not to run around and ensured he had enough food and water. With Aiden's intelligence, she trusted he could take care of himself.

Renee and Leia drove the car flat-out, arriving in no time at the Osborne residence, a luxurious mansion in the western district.

From afar, Renee could hear Geronimo's thunderous voice, "Don't stop me! I'll beat this loser to death today! He'll take nine thousand nine hundred and eighty-one hits from this iron whip! Not a single blow will miss! I'll beat anyone who tries to stop me!"

In the living room of Osborne Mansion, Geronimo's five sisters and five sons-in-law, Mrs. Osborne, and Hayden Jacobs, were all present.

Liam, who was usually charming and elegant, was now completely unrecognizable. His sturdy back was covered in cuts and bruises, and there was not a single inch of skin was left unblemished

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"Dear, stop beating him! If you continue, you'll kill our son...!" Hayden cried as she held Liam in her arms. Tears flowed down her face as she begged, "Liam is your only son! You have a huge business! If you kill him, who will inherit it?"

"Mom, I don't like that you said that!"

Laura, the third daughter of the Osborne family, sneered, "You make it sound like we're not part of the family! What? Did you pick us up from the roadside? Even if Liam is no more, it's not like the Osborne name will go extinct! What century are we in? Why do you still prefer sons over daughters?"

"That's right!" Geronimo exclaimed. "Liam is not my only descendent! If I beat this loser to death, I still have six daughters! Every single one of them brings me less heartache than this loser, especially Laura! The family business I handed to her has been flourishing these years, and I'd be at ease if I handed them all the business!"

Laura smirked, then said to Liam, who was kneeling in the middle of the room, "When you took that money to start Azure Group, you didn't just use it to pick up girls, did you? We thought you were over that, but who would have thought you would become more addicted the more you invested? You took all of the Osbornes' money and threw it at Stefan's wife, and what was the result? She got tired of playing with you, obviously. Did she thank you? Did she let you touch her? You've been licking her shoes for so many years. Did you get anything out of it? Now you're almost dead from getting beaten. Do you think she cares?"

Liam clenched his fist tightly, and he glared at Laura with reddened eyes, sneering, "Dear sister, I warn you to speak respectfully.

The boss is my savior, and she holds a sacred place in my heart! If you continue with such disrespect, don't blame me for ignoring our relationship!"

Geronimo became angrier when he heard those words.

"You brat! You've been bewitched! I've had an outstanding life and experienced countless women! How could I have given birth to such an idiot who gets affected by love? What shitty retribution is this?!"

The older man was furious that he raised the iron whip in his hand and brought it down fiercely again. "You'll be ruined in that woman's hands sooner or later, so I might as well just kill you today and get it over with!"

"Stop!"

Renee's voice rang out clear and

firm. Everyone turned to the

door.

Liam, who had been calm, immediately became angry and shouted at Leia, "You stupid girl! Are you crazy? Why did you tell her?!"

"Liam, you're still putting up such a brave front? If I didn't get Ren here, Father would have killed you!"

Leia cried as she rushed over and hugged Geronimo's arm. "Father, Liam is my twin! Our lives are connected. If you really want to beat him, then beat me as well! If he dies, I can't live either!"

"Lei, get up! Your brother doesn't know any better, but you don't have to follow his example! If you're not careful, I might accidentally hit you with the whip!"

Liam was the most favored child in the family, but Leia, the youngest daughter, came after him. So, when Geronimo spoke to her, he unconsciously toned down a little.

"No! Either you stop hitting Liam, or you hit the both of us

together!" "Come! Take her away!" Geronimo ordered his

subordinates coldly.

Renee walked up to Geronimo and said humbly, "It's been a while, Uncle Geronimo. I think the one you're really angry with isn't Liam but me, the real culprit of this mess. So, as long as you forgive Liam, I'm willing to pay the price!

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"Oh? Did the sun rise from the west today? The redhead whose shoes my son has been licking has finally decided to show up?" Geronimo hissed venomously as he studied Renee from head to toe as though he was looking at a commodity.

Then, he sneered, "Are you really willing to pay any price to save this loser?"

Renee nodded, her eyes determined. "I've never gone against my words."

"Good. At least you still have some conscience."

There was a complicated look in Geronimo's eyes when he looked at Renee, and it was unclear if it was appreciation or contempt. Then, he said in a vague tone, "You have quite a devastatingly beautiful face, I must say, to be able to charm my son to this extent..."

Liam, who was still kneeling on the ground, furrowed his brows when he heard that. "Boss, just ignore me and leave!" he pleaded emotionally. "I'm my father's favored child! No matter how angry he is, he won't kill me. But if you fall into his hands, I don't dare to imagine what kind of sick things he'd do to you with how rogue he is!"

Geronimo was known as a philanderer in their circle. In addition to his seven children, he had many illegitimate children outside and countless affairs!

How could Liam not know about his father's cheating ways? It was natural for him to be concerned about Renee because of

that!

Renee, however, was calm. She even smiled charmingly and said, "Sick things, huh? I've seen a lot of those, so what's one more?"

She had heard about Geronimo's affairs, but she believed the older man wouldn't make such a pass at her.

"Shut up!"

Geronimo was furious at the conversation he heard between the two, especially his precious son, who he had spoiled from a young age. Not only was he a lovesick idiot, but he was also stupid enough to think that

Geronimo would be so lustful that he would go after any woman before him?!

"My request is simple. Since that loser son of mine has licked your shoes for so long and almost emptied the family's coffers and even racked up a sizable debt, you can't possibly expect you won't have to repay. Why don't you marry him and work for him for the rest of your life to atone for your sins?"

This request came entirely out of expectation and it dumbfounded everyone.

Especially Laura. She glared at Renee and said disdainfully, "Dad, are you crazy? You want a divorced woman to marry Liam?!"

The Osborne family's eldest daughter, Yvonne, also shook her head and sighed. "Dad, you should think twice. Liam can fool around with a divorced woman like her, but to really marry her into the family... It'd be a disaster!"

"Yeah! Even if she wasn't divorced, she's an Everheart and Schneider descendant! You know how difficult those families are! We're no match for the Hunt family, certainly not something we can handle!"

Geronimo ignored the nasty reactions and continued to look at Renee.

"You should take a stand, hmm? You can't enjoy all the benefits and refuse to give anything in return, right?"

Geronimo was not the only one waiting for Renee's answer. Liam also held his breath and watched her

closely.

"I..."

Renee, who was initially calm, was now in a panic. She knew very well that she had no feelings for Liam, and they had only broken up recently.

Whether she agreed or refused, both would be awkward.

"If this can really help relieve your anger, Uncle Geronimo, then I'll happily agree to marry Liam. That one was originally one of our plans for this year anyway."

Renee eventually agreed to Geronimo's request with the greater good in mind, but the man ended up ridiculing her after she agreed.

"Hahah! You're delusional!"

Geronimo sneered from the high horse he was on. "What makes you think that the Osbornes would want a low-quality item that someone else has swept out of their house? My loser son may be a lovesick idiot, but I'm not. Not to mention, you don't love my son at all! Even if you two really loved each other, I would never allow you to become my daughter-in-law!"

"The Hunts have oppressed us at every turn. If I were to take a woman that the Hunts rejected, my reputation would be in shambles! Even if you don't have a brain and think with your toes, it's impossible for that to ever happen!"

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Everyone breathed a sigh of relief, but they also didn't forget to take a jab where they could.

"All of you, shut up! Don't talk about Ren that way! Have you forgotten that she saved Liam and me before? With our family's status, even if we cultivated another eight hundred years, we'd still not be able to match up with Ren!" Leia yelled angrily at her family, and her cheeks flushed red.

"Take her away!" Liam ordered Leia, his head hanging low and fists clenched.

His goddess and savior had been humiliated by his family! He was so ashamed that he couldn't even find the courage to look at Renee!

"Geronimo, you better beat me to death today, or don't blame me for becoming a rebel!" Liam coldly warned Geronimo.

Although the older man was his respected father, he had touched something precious of his! It wasn't something he could tolerate!

"You stupid beat! How dare you say such damning things to me just for the sake of a used woman! Fine! I'll fulfill your wish and beat you to death!"

Geronimo had also been driven to desperation by Liam's words, and he brought down the whip two more times, where it struck skin and flesh with impunity.

Hayden naturally cried for him to stop, and the entire scene became chaotic again.

"Enough!"

Renee, who had been silent the entire time, said indifferently, "Uncle Geronimo, your opinion was very objective, and I wholeheartedly agree. As a divorced woman, I should have kept my distance from your son.

However, not only have I failed to do that in the past few years, but I've also gotten close to him and shamelessly enjoyed the benefits of his efforts. I was too selfish."

"Hmph! At least you have some self-awareness!"

The reason for Geronimo humiliating her in this manner was because he hoped it would make Renee understand her status and stop seducing his precious son in the future.

Renee continued, "The money Liam spent on me all these years and the money he borrowed from the bank, I'll repay it all with a three percent interest, principal included. Please don't blame him anymore. All of it is my fault, and I'll fix this mess myself!"

"Those are some nice words. The money my son spent on you over the years is probably between three to five billion. You say you'll repay it all with a three percent interest. Where are you going to get the money?"

Geronimo was very dismissive.

In his opinion, Renee was just a rich abandoned woman whom Stefan had kicked out. She could hardly protect herself, let alone obtain such an impossible amount of money!

"You don't have to worry about that!" Renee said coldly. "I'll say it clearly now. In three days, I'll pay the money back in full, but you have to keep your promise and not give Liam any more trouble!"

"Hah. Fine. In three days, here with the same people. Let's see how you'll make it up, hmm?"

Geronimo looked at Renee as if she were a joke, then put away his whip and said to Liam, "If she can really come up with that much money in three days, I'll transfer the shares of Osborne Group back to you and never interfere with your affairs again!"

"Goodbye!"

Renee saw that Liam was safe for now, so she turned and left without saying another word.

Liam had been beaten to an inch of his life, yet he still held strong and gritted his teeth as he tried to chase after

Renee. "Boss, wait for me..."

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Renee was already walking out of the Osborne Mansion when she heard Liam shouting her name from behind. She stopped but did not turn around.

"Why are you following me?" she asked him coldly. "Just go back and get a good rest. That whipping must've done a great deal of damage to your body. Be careful or it might make you impotent."

"Boss..." Liam's lips were pale. His whole body seemed fragile and his handsome face was twisted by a look of excruciating pain. "I'm so sorry, Boss! Please don't be angry with me!"

All these years, his family never liked it when he was too close to Renee, but as long as he made sure to keep it all under a low profile, they always kept their distance and never interfered too much with his life. But he made a mistake this time. Had he not taken such a monstrous risk and angered his father, Renee would not have been humiliated by his own family.

"You idiot... How could I possibly be mad at you?!"

"Then why are you turning your back on me? You don't want to see me ever again, do you?"

"You really are an idiot..." Renee shrugged resignedly. The reason why she could not turn around and look at him was not that she was angry with him in any way, but only because she was too ashamed to face Liam right now.

"I'm the one who should apologize to you, Liam. You've given me so much help and support all these years. You never hesitated to jump into the abyss with me. I took it for granted that everything was fine..."

"I'm not afraid of the abyss!" Liam interrupted agitatedly. He stepped forward and added, "You are the light of my life. I would gladly follow you anywhere, and I would gladly do anything for you because I..."

"That's enough!" Renee raised her hand and abruptly cut off Liam's confession. She gently added, "I owe you too much, Liam, and it's time for me to repay you. I've found a way to get that money, so all you need to do right now is wait patiently for the good news, which I will bring you soon."

"But how?" Liam furrowed his brows deeply.

That money was no laughing matter. His father even said that it might be as high as 500 million, or even 800 million dollars! He simply could not think of any way that Renee could suddenly cough up that ridiculous amount of money, unless...

"You're not thinking about going back to the old way of life and joining that group of sly pigs again, aren't you? That's just too reckless, Boss!"

In the past, he would have loved nothing more than to get Renee to return to her old ways. After all, she was just too cool and too powerful then! The world was her oyster and she could dictate the weather if she wanted to!

But things were different now. She was now a mother to two adorable kids, Adie and Abby, and a quiet and peaceful life suited her more now. If it turned out that Renee's solution to her current problem was to go back to her old ways, then he would probably feel so guilty that he might kill himself!

"Don't be ridiculous!" Renee bluntly refuted Liam's assumption. "I promised Grandpa that I'll never do that ever again for the sake of Adie and Abby, so you have my word that I'll never get involved with those pigs ever again."

Certainly, the idea was tempting. After all, with her old ways, she could easily get hundreds of millions of dollars without lifting a finger. But that lifestyle was simply too precarious. She narrowly escaped with her own life, and the mere thought of it would make her break out in cold sweat. No, there was no way that she would ever go back there!

"Then how..."

"You don't need to know the details right now," Renee asserted. "I may be poor, but I still have enough fixed assets to settle the money."

"Don't lie to me! I know exactly what kind of predicament you're in right now. You don't have any fixed assets, you're..."

"Enough! Stop interrogating me! I'm still your boss, aren't I? In that case, you should trust in my abilities and believe that I know what I'm doing!"

"Have I ever disappointed you before?"

"I guess you're right..."

Renee's bold confidence put Liam somewhat at ease, but he was still concerned for her. Nevertheless, he knew what she was like. If she did not want to reveal something, he could ask her till his mouth went dry and she would still keep her lips sealed. He also knew that Renee would never give up till she was able to pay up, so he decided to just give up the matter for now.

"No matter what solution you've thought of," he told her, "just remember to be careful and stay safe, Boss! If there's anything at all that I can do to help, just say the word and I'll be there!"

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"Don't worry. I know what I'm doing."

Renee waved her hand goodbye and walked away. But she soon paused and turned around to ask Liam, "By the way, do you know where Carmine Pawnshop's exact location is?"

"Why do you want to know?" Liam was immediately alarmed by her question. "What are you planning to do?"

"Just answer the question!" Renee replied sternly, looking displeased.

"It's near the Water Dock, but it's a really dangerous place, Boss. It's a lawless no man's land where even the Devil himself could get conned out of the clothes on his back!"

Liam had been to that place with his father once or twice before, and it left a distinct impression in his mind. Suffice it to say, the experience had fueled his nightmares ever since!

"Besides, Carmine Pawnshop is nothing like the ordinary pawn shop that you might expect. You must know that the pawn shop's owner, Mr. Q, is known as the Night Demon. Don't even think about making a deal with him -it's no different than selling your soul to the devil! You'll cross a line where there's simply no return!"

After listening to this, not only was Renee not afraid, but it even piqued her

interest. A demon, huh?! She began to anticipate meeting this mysterious man

now!

Still, she did not want to worry Liam, so she lied to him, saying, "Don't overthink it. I was only asking because I kept hearing Adie talking about the place... You don't actually think that your boss is that stupid, do you? Even if I wanted to make a deal with them, what on earth do I have to trade?"

When she got back to her apartment, Adie had already had his dinner and was now in the study. He sat on the couch, reading a book, with his feet dangling in the air, looking heart-achingly adorable.

"What a good boy you are, Adie! You already know how to take such good care of yourself!"

Renee sat down next to her son and gently patted his little head.

"Of course, Mommy! I know how hard you're working, so I don't want to be a burden to you."

Adie was reading an advanced physics textbook. His knowledge had already reached the level of a university student now, making him a bona fide child prodigy. Yet this fact only made Renee worry about him. Because he was so far ahead of his peers, Adie was quite a lonely child compared to kids his age.

But days like these would soon be over.

Renee then enthusiastically told her son, "Adie, guess what? The headmaster of Monte Perry Kindergarten told me today that they've abolished that horrible rule and agreed to welcome you and Abby to the kindergarten! I'll bring Abby and Aunt Margaret over in a few days and we'll all be together again, okay?"

She expected Adie to be leaping with joy after hearing the news, but the boy reacted very calmly and merely said, "I didn't think it would be settled this quickly. Looks like that guy's the real deal."

"What guy?" asked Renee, confused. She did find it suspicious how the kindergarten would take a 180-degree turn on their rules so suddenly. Did Adie know the actual reason for this?

"Um, Superman! I asked Superman to help me last night. I didn't think he'd fulfill my wish so quickly! Superman is so awesome!"

Adie's face was full of satisfaction. Right now, he regarded Mr. Q as one of the best candidates to be his mother's future husband, but he did not want to reveal too much before Mr. Q really passed the test, for fear that his mother might fall too crazily in love with him too soon. Hence, he would only refer to him as "Superman" for now.

"Is that so?" Renee gently replied, not suspecting that Adie was hiding anything. "If that's true, then Superman must be an awesome guy! Oh, how I wish I had someone like Superman to fulfill all my wishes too!"

"That's easy!" Adie wrapped his arms around his mother's neck and warmly told her, "All you have to do is find a husband you can do anything for you... But don't worry, Mommy! I believe that you'll find your Superman soon!"

It was already getting late. Renee put Adie to bed and quietly tiptoed out of the kids' room. She went into her own room, changed into comfortable sportswear, tied her hair up into a high ponytail, and confidently walked out of the door..

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It was one in the morning. Everything was quiet and peaceful everywhere else, but here at Water Dock, things had only just warmed up. It was the most chaotic time of the day, when all kinds of colorful characters began to show up.

Renee had come to Water Dock on her own, with nothing but a 'top-secret' map of the area that she bought at a high price from the second-hand market. She headed straight to Carmine Pawnshop.

Water Dock had indeed lived up to its reputation. It was every bit as much of the lawless, "no man's land" it was rumored to be, where burning, looting, robbing, and killing took place at almost every corner. Anything that was too sickening to be found in civilized society was nothing but a normal occurrence here. It was truly a dreadful place to be.

The whole area of Water Dock was actually not that large, but it was divided into three main zones-upstream, midstream, and downstream.

The upstream area was at the outermost edge. It was relatively the most "normal" zone here, where a trading center was located. Here you could find all kinds of goods, and if you looked hard enough, you might even leave with a good deal in your hands. It was certainly the safest area in the Water Dock.

Things began to stray off the beaten track in the Midstream zone. Here you would find illegal casinos, illegal racetracks, illegal brothels, and an illegal marketplace for all kinds of shady goods. This was also a place where you could find groups of thugs and ruffians who had no fear of death. They would do anything for you as long as you agree to their price.

Unsurprisingly, people get killed here every day.

The downstream area, however, was basically purgatory on Earth. Danger lurked in every corner and most normal people would never dare get close to it, let alone set foot there. It was just as Liam had described-even the devil himself might get conned out of the clothes on his back here.

Yet here was the place where Carmine Pawnshop was located, in the deepest bowel of the downstream zone in Water Dock. It was right in the center of an absolute hellscape, and just from this fact alone, one could guess what kind of man Mr. Q, the owner of Carmine Pawnshop, really was. You would have to go through an ordeal just to meet him!

If Renee was not so desperate to get the money, she would've never even imagined having anything to do with such a shady guy. But she was not afraid of him in the least. After all, she used to be an infamous figure herself back when she was still in the circle. She had been to many godforsaken places that were a thousand times more accursed than Water Dock, so she was perfectly in her element in this kind of place.

But she had two children to think of now. This made her a lot more cautious than she was in the past. Back then, she would dive headlong into anything without a care for the consequences. The very thought about how reckless she used to be made her shudder!

It was still early, so Renee parked her car in a parking lot in the upstream zone with a plan to go to the famous antique market first.

The antique market was located in the upstream zone. It also acted as the entrance to Water Dock. Because of its special location, many rare treasures from all around the world were smuggled and sold. Countless people have made their fortune here, but just as many had their life ended here as well because of their greed.

The antique market dazzled with lights and bustled with activity. Traders and peddlers were shouting, advertising their wares to the rest of the market which was filled with a flurry of people.

"Come and take a look! This is a genuine glass urn from Ulria! It's the only one of its kind in the whole world! It's a once-in-a-lifetime deal! Don't miss out on a great deal..."

"Feast your eyes, ladies and gentlemen! These are sacred stone beads from the Western Highlands! Legend has it that these were blessed by angels! These are only meant for those who are destined to have them!"

It

Renee was both fascinated and overwhelmed by the sight of rare treasures all around her as she strolled through the market. Never would she have guessed that there would be such an exciting "treasure trove" right here in Beach City, where one could buy whatever their heart desired.

She then came across a smaller stall attended by an old man with a gray beard and dark skin who was engrossed in playing his fiddle. His stall was relatively simple and somewhat shabby compared to the others around it, consisting only of a table covered by a coarse linen cloth where a few pieces of jade, ancient paintings, ceramics, and other knick knacks were lined up on. It was hard to tell where these objects came from, but they seemed to have been dug out of old tombs and graves.

What caught Renee's eye the most was the stack of cards right next to these treasures. She looked closer and realized that they were tarot cards. This inexplicably piqued her interest, so much that she asked, "Are you good at predicting the future, old man?"

But the old man did not even open his eyes. He was lost in his music, passionately pouring his heart out to the song he was playing on his fiddle. Renee thought the song he played was familiar. She thought it sounded rather like a song called "Destiny".

Seeing that the old man was so absorbed in the music, Renee thought it best not to disturb him, so she was prepared to leave.

Just then, the old man finally finished playing his song and stopped her, "Where are you going, young lady? I've been waiting

for you for so many years. The person I was destined to meet is finally here."

"You've been waiting for me?" Renee asked. She was even more fascinated now. With a smile, she asked, "Do you know me?" "You can put it that way."

"Then tell me, who am I?"

Renee waited eagerly for the old man's answer with a playful smile on her face. She had heard of swindlers and conmen who could tell someone's fortune by just randomly picking a name-statistically, there would come a time when they'd get it right.

That was why she absolutely did not believe that this old man could guess her real name. After all, her last name was pretty rare and her first name was not a common one either

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The old man raised his eyebrows, and with a half-smile said, 'You are the granddaughter of Liliana Schneider, the heroine of North City, correct?'

The smile on Renee's face faded. She became serious in a heartbeat as she asked, "How did you figure that out?"

If he had guessed her name correctly, she could still have assumed that the old man must've loved reading gossip about famous people. As Stefan Hunt's ex-wife, her name and face were considerably recognizable. But the old man managed to guess her grandmother's name, and that was nothing short of amazing, because the Everheart family never publicly announced that the woman her grandfather married was the one and only Liliana Schneider from North City!

"It looks like I got it right." The old man stroked his beard, then asked, "Do you believe in my skills now?"

"If you figured that out based on your fortune-telling skills," Renee clasped her hands together, "then you must be the master of all master fortunetellers! I humbly bow to your incomparable mastery!"

"In that case, why don't you draw a card and ask the question that your heart yearns for an

answer?" The old man's gaze shifted to the deck of tarot cards as he made the suggestion.

"Sure! I was planning to do that anyway."

Renee enthusiastically leafed through the cards and spent ages before she finally drew one from the

stack. The old man took the card, glanced at it, and said, "Two of Cups. What would you like to ask,

young lady?"

"I..." Renee bit her lips. She hesitated for a while before replying, "I want to ask, will I ever get married again before I die?"

She felt ashamed of herself as soon as she uttered those words. She had sworn off love and romance for the rest of her life! This was so out of her character!

Yet, she really did want to know if she would ever love another man again, or perhaps if she would be willing to get married once more. She just refused to believe that Stefan Hunt would be the only man she would love in her entire life. He was dead now anyway, and she could not spend the rest of her life as his widow, mourning him, right?

"As lofty as the mountain, as boundless as the sea, an unrivaled pair, their union shall stand through eternity... You really are a one-in-a-million couple!"

The man recited Renee's fortune with a meaningful smile on his face, but Renee herself was utterly

perplexed. "What does that mean exactly?"

"It means that your marriage is long-lasting, unlike any other couple in the world. You don't have to worry that you will grow old and die alone."

Renee could not help but laugh after hearing the old man's words.

"Are you saying that I still have the chance to meet the man who will spend the rest of my life with me,

right?" "You can put it that way."

"Great!" Renee was now relieved. "That's so good to hear!"

She knew that she was nothing like those ladies in the olden days who dedicated their lives to loving one man for the rest of their lives. She could not possibly love Stefan Hunt alone, for the rest of her life!

Sure, she still could not forget him now, but she was confident that one day, she would meet another man who would make her fall in love with him and completely wipe Stefan out of her mind...

Renee glanced at her watch. It was time to get ready for business now. She then paid the old man the fee for the fortune-telling and was about to leave.

"Wait," the old man stopped her. "We're destined to meet each other, young lady, so I would be remiss if I don't leave you with a gift.

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"A gift?" Renee stopped and turned around, looking at the old man with interest.

How lucky could she be today, to receive a gift from such a legendary person?!

She glanced at the old man's stall. Any one of those items was either priceless or incredibly rare-she could easily make a fortune selling any of them!

But the old man had no intention to give her any of his wares. Instead, it was something that he carried with him.

"Take this silk handkerchief, young lady. One day, it will give you much-needed guidance."

The old man then stretched out his branch-like arm towards her, handing her a finely crafted silk handkerchief.

"This silk handkerchief..." Renee was astonished when she saw the pattern on the handkerchief.

There was a phoenix and some red spider lilies embroidered on the handkerchief, it looked similar to the pattern she saw on the quilt her grandmother had left her all those years ago. Perhaps it might even have been made by the same person. It's a shame that the quilt was destroyed in that fire...

Just as she was about to ask the old man where he got this silk handkerchief, a woman with her head covered in blood rushed towards her and clung onto her leg.

"Help me!" she shouted. "Please help me, Miss! Those people are going to stab me to death..."

The woman looked to be in her early thirties. She continued to cry, "I can't die right now, Miss! If I die, then my son would become an orphan! Please, Miss! You must help me!"

Renee initially had no intention to get involved, but when she heard that this woman was a fellow mother who was bringing up her child alone, she was suddenly moved by compassion. She helped the lady up to her feet and asked, "What happened to you? Explain it to me slowly."

"I... I came to the antique market to sell something. But these people here are barbarians with no regard for the law. When they saw a weak, helpless woman like me, they immediately tried to rob me..."

As she got to this point, held the bag in her arms even more tightly, before adding, "What I have here is a family heirloom. If my son wasn't ill and didn't require a lot of money for treatment, I would never even think of selling this, not even to save my own skin! But those thugs had the audacity to rob it from me. They even threatened me with knives! They're horrible people, Miss! Please, you must help me!"

Renee looked her up and down and her eyes gleamed with determination. She calmly asserted, "Calm down. Although I know that Water Dock is a lawless land, since you chose to ask me for help, then I'll deal with this fair and square. I won't disappoint you."

The woman was instantly relieved, so much so that her tears even dried up. She hurriedly replied, "Thank you! Thank you very much, Miss!"

Then, about ten big burly men swarmed in their direction. They were all wearing black suits and each was holding a huge club. They seemed to be searching through the crowded antique market for someone.

"Where is she?! That b*tch is slippery like an eel! How did she vanish so quickly like that?!"

"Leave no stone unturned, boys! Once you find her, make sure she pays with blood!"

Seeing this, the woman instantly took cover behind Renee, quivering in fear.

"Don't be afraid," Renee assured her, tilting her head towards the woman. "I told you that I'll help you. They won't dare to do anything with me here!"

In no time at all, those men noticed Renee. They rushed up towards her with bloodthirsty eyes and yelled, "If you don't want to die then don't butt into this! Get out of the way!"

Without a change in her expression or budging for an inch, Renee opposed them. "You think I'll move just because you say so? Who the hell do you think you are?!"

Her fierce reaction not only stunned the men in black suits. Even the sellers and onlookers around her were astounded.

A tall man in a black suit who stood in front of the others viciously roared back, "Is this your first time in Water Dock? Don't you know who you're talking to?!"

"I..."