

A Cue For Love Chapter 1096

Chapter 1096 Relapse

Anna slowed down and walked to the bedside. Then, she saw him coughing up fresh blood. The glaring red blood stained his monk robes.

It was apparent he was in a terrible condition. His brows were tightly furrowed because of the pain in his body. Nevertheless, he grasped the file in his hands while continuously smoothing and shaping the jade.

He was concentrated on carving the piece of jade and paid no attention to the blood he coughed up.

Only until a few drops of blood dripped onto the phoenix engraving on the jade key's bow did he think of wiping off the blood with a piece of brownish-yellow handkerchief.

Anna did not make a sound and merely took in the scene in silence as heart-wrenching pain filled her heart.

He deserves this after all the sins he committed. So what if he's coughing up blood? His agony is nothing compared to my mother's torment during her death.

Intense hatred washed over her, but Anna wasn't delighted. On the contrary, she could only feel a suffocating sensation as if she was losing something significant to her.

She bit her lip forcefully until it bled. Nonetheless, she didn't utter a word before she left.

Father?

The term merely sounded distant to her and, at the same time, reminded her of too much anguish.

After returning to her room, Anna became caught up in the throes of a nightmare.

"No. Don't treat my mom like that! Don't die, Mom. Don't die, please? Mom, it hurts so bad..."

She thrashed and clawed at her blanket while muttering in her sleep. Her eyes were tightly shut, and beads of sweat covered her face and body and almost drenched her hair.

Awakened by Anna's hysterical wails, Natalie hurriedly ran to the latter's side.

"Anna, Anna. Wake up..."

Natalie grasped Anna's hand and attempted to rouse her up. Unfortunately, Anna seemed deeply immersed in the nightmare and couldn't come around from the bad dream.

"Mom. Mom, don't leave me."

Natalie sensed something was off about Anna. She hastily applied pressure on the latter's wrist to check her pulse.

Sh*t! I think this trip has provoked Anna to be reminded of her tormenting experience. The trauma stimulated her to recollect the incident she resisted the most in her mind. Her body should be fine, but the mental impact is causing her body to react in a similarly aggressive manner. If this drags on, Anna may bite off her tongue and end her life because she can't endure this devastating suffering.

Natalie swiftly opened her needle pouch, took out the crystal needle, and immediately pricked an acupoint on Anna's head.

Anna turned a little calmer after she was jabbed.

At that sight, Natalie quickly manipulated the needle, inserting the crystal needle into the nerves connecting to Anna's brain, and tried to ease the latter's pain via medical treatment.

Natalie was drained after getting all of that done.

Still, she didn't dare to let her guard down and remained by Anna's side.

This is the most I can do to help her alleviate her physical pain. She'll have to overcome her mental torment on her own.

“Anna, it’s fine now. All those things happened in the past.” Eyes gleaming with an agonized look, Natalie clasped Anna’s petite hand. “Anna, you have Kyle and me now. You’re not alone. Even if you’re suffering, someone will always keep you company. I promise you! I’ll help you locate the person who caused your mother’s death and seek revenge for all the torture you’ve been through.”

Anna stopped struggling as much. Natalie didn’t know how much Anna had heard about the things she said.

And just like that, Natalie kept watch on Anna for the whole night.

Only at the break of dawn was Natalie finally overwhelmed by drowsiness. Sitting beside Anna in exhaustion, she yawned, and her eyelids drooped.

When Anna woke up, she saw Natalie nod off beside her and noticed the dark circles under the latter’s eyes.

Instantaneously, she fathomed she must’ve had an episode of relapse. Natalie pulled an all-nighter and stayed by my side the whole time.

Not only that, but Anna also perceived the red scratch marks on Natalie’s arms. I suppose that’s my doing too.

A Cue For Love Chapter 1097

Chapter 1097 The Truth Behind The Secret 1

Last night was a blur to Anna, but she had a vague recollection of what had happened.

She remembered it could have been Natalie gripping her hand the entire time, radiating comfort in a haze of pain.

Thank you, Anna said silently to Natalie as she draped a jacket over her sleeping body. She let Natalie sleep in a little longer, knowing she must have stayed up all night.

It was almost lunchtime in the monastery when Natalie woke up.

Nereus brought vegetarian meals for her and Anna, and a while after they were finished, he led them to the meditation room where Varre was.

Anna entered the room and glanced at the small table, realizing the pool of blood that Varre vomited had been cleaned of its traces.

Her eyes strayed to Varre, who appeared more gaunt and pale to the naked eye than the day before. His dull gaze was instantly drawn to her as they stepped into the room.

The look was brimming with layers of emotions, so much so that they were about to spill over, but he forcefully caught himself in time.

Natalie knew about the secret, and needless to say, she understood the significance of the glance.

Anna did, too, but she feigned ignorance and deliberately trained her gaze elsewhere.

"I finished carving the jade key you wanted." Varre presented his creation with quivering hands. "I am afraid my replication is only 99% accurate. Alas, I can't make something totally identical to the original. I can only hope that this jade key will be of help to you both."

Natalie took a step forward and accepted the jade key with both hands, taking in the lifelike phoenix carving on the ridges and the head.

She could not have been able to tell the difference between the original and copy if she did not study the genuine jade key in detail beforehand.

Varre had not lifted a burin in twenty years, yet he still possessed such artistic talent and skill as was expected from the craftsman once held in high regard by the royal family in Loang.

"Thank you," Natalie said solemnly to him.

"It's destiny." He clasped his hands together and gave a slight bow. "Please take your leave now that this situation has been addressed."

"Let's go, Natalie." Anna scowled and tugged on Natalie's hand to leave the meditation room.

But Natalie dug her heels in. "He's running out of time, Anna."

"How long more?"

"Huh?" Natalie was startled.

Natalie was only stating her observation aloud, which was the truth as well, but she was not expecting an answer from Anna.

"How much time does he have left, Natalie?" Anna reiterated her question, her eyes widening.

"Three to five days, at most." Natalie hesitated before adding, "These days are your last chance to see him in this life. You will not have another opportunity if you miss it."

"Oh," Anna replied unfeelingly, but drops of tears leaked from the corners of her eyes.

Good riddance!

Her heart wrenched at the thought of the old man focused on carving under the bright light last night while trying to keep blood from sputtering out of his mouth.

Yes, she hated him, but the compassion beneath the resentment filled her with hesitation.

Natalie turned and looked at her.

She promised Varre to keep it a secret, but some secrets were not meant to be kept hidden. How could Anna live with her decision if she left now, and the secret was out?

"I have something to tell you, Anna..."

"What is it?"

"Your mother's death is connected to the jade key."

Tears pooled in Anna's eyes, and her pupils constricted, incredulity flashing in her eyes.

A Cue For Love Chapter 1098

Chapter 1098 The Truth Behind The Secret 2

Anna seized Natalie's wrist and demanded, "What do you know about that? My mother died because he was obsessed with carving and messed with the wrong people." My earliest memories are of him burying himself in carving, never caring about how Mom and I felt. Everyone else had a loving father, but not me. Mom was the only one by my side when I was burning up with a forty-degree fever. All that man did was turn his back on us!

"It is not like that." Natalie shook her head, resolution hardening her eyes.

"He enjoys carving, but he loves you and your mother more. His time is almost up, yet he bore the agony in his liver and ceaselessly worked for more than ten hours to replicate the jade key at your request."

Anna blinked back tears and looked up with a derisive smile. "He owes me that, Natalie! He only did it to assuage his guilt."

"Anna, what if Mr. Varre's so-called 'obsession' is because he was forced to do it?" Natalie finally blurted it out after giving it a thought.

"T-That's not possible..." Anna released her arm and staggered a few steps back. "I wanted to beg him to take me to the amusement park when I was younger, so I went into his workspace and touched the jade in curiosity. He caned me until I was bruised all over. Never in my life will I forget the hatred in his eyes."

"That jade was so important to him because it was related to you and your mother's lives." Natalie continued with a frown, "Someone threatened Mr. Varre with your and your mother's lives to carve this jade key, but they had a different request. I gave Mr. Varre the real jade key to replicate, but he wanted to follow the old fragmentary records and completely duplicate the jade key. He had never seen it before, and the records only chronicled eyewitness accounts, so determining its authenticity was difficult. When Mr. Varre didn't finish the carving in time, the person who had been threatening him for several years burned your mother alive in front of you."

Anna did not think there was more to what had happened, and the tears she tried to hold back came spilling out.

"Is that true? If it was, why didn't he tell me?"

"He wanted to protect you." Natalie approached Anna and stopped in front of her, wiping her tears. "That man wanted your mother's life, and Mr. Varre knew all of you were not his match, so he shouldered your hate and went along with it."

Anna was sobbing uncontrollably.

He was the person she hated the most, but now she realized she had made a mistake.

Her heart ached as the image of him enduring the pain during the night as he concentrated on carving kept replaying in her head.

She snapped out of it and pleaded with Natalie, "I know your medical skills are excellent, Natalie, so would you please help him? Can you think of a way to save him?"

"It is too late." Natalie sighed. "I could have extended his life by three to five years if it had been sooner, but his cancer had spread all over his body by the time we arrived, and he is living on borrowed time."

I would have tried every method if I had any, despite knowing the truth and the fact that you hated him.

"How... How could this happen?"

"Anna, you have helped me enough." Natalie pulled her into a hug. "Stay here by his side since time is running out. To Mr. Varre, nothing compares to your forgiveness and company."

Anna bawled her heart out as she nodded fervently.

I will! Yes, I will! I will cherish every last moment I have with my father.

A Cue For Love Chapter 1099

Chapter 1099 Their Concern

Anna's eyes turned red when she let Natalie go. "Natalie, now that the jade key is in your hand, you might one day have to square up to the mysterious man who killed my mother. Let me know if you need any help. I will assist you in any way I can..."

Natalie nodded steadily. "I will. You better get going." Anna hummed in response. After fixing her eyes on the room Varre was staying, she quickened her pace and ran toward it.

Natalie clenched her fists as she watched Anna leave in haste. Mom kept me in the dark for my own good, but this has become one of my biggest regrets.

She used to long for Thomas' love, but in the end, she realized she was merely building castles in the air. Never in his life had he thought of Yara and me as his daughters. I was too foolish to believe that he, our father, might shower us with love.

Had she known the outcome, she would have tried to make things right. Had we known this from the start, I'm sure Yara and I wouldn't have put ourselves through this misery. But we can't turn the clock back and undo the regrets. The damage is done.

At that point, Natalie could only pin her hope on Anna to minimize the damage, preventing it from spiraling out of control. She did not want the regret to turn into a nightmare that would haunt her for the rest of her life.

Natalie took the bus and returned to Yaleview in the company of Nereus.

In the last two days, Zophie kept her promise by sending videos about Yumi once every six hours.

While watching Yumi's video, Natalie tightened her grip on the box in her bag and went deep in thought while traveling on the bus. How come Yumi has the key to Loang's national treasure? Where did it come from? She might be living in an orphanage in Chanaea, but I don't think her parents had died of sickness. She didn't seem like she was abandoned by her parents either. I supposed there's more to her background than meets the eye!

Regardless of her parents' identity, Natalie decided to protect her at all costs since she and Samuel had adopted her as their daughter.

Upon arriving at Yaleview, Natalie gave Yandel a video call. After speaking to him for a while, she told him to pass the phone to the four children.

"Mommy, are you still trying to rescue Yumi?" Franklin asked.

Natalie hummed calmly in response. "If everything goes as planned, we should be able to get her back."

The four little ones did not seem happy upon hearing her reply. Worry was written all over their faces instead.

Natalie's lips curled into a smile. She asked, "What's wrong with those sad faces? Did Yandel bully you?"

"Hey, excuse me." Yandel stepped in. "Boss, I took great care of the kids. I wouldn't dare bully them!"

"Mommy, it's not him. He took good care of us," Franklin explained, "we're just worried about you. That woman is evil, and she'll not let Yumi off so easily. She might even take the opportunity to harm you!"

That explained the troubled expression on their faces.

Though they were concerned about Yumi, they were also worried about Natalie's safety.

Upon noticing the deep frown on their foreheads, Natalie could not help but grin. These kids really do care about me, don't they?

They might be young, but they meant every word they said. That had given her the courage and motivation she needed to endure the uncertainties ahead.

"Now it's not the right time to smile, Mommy," Clayton said while pursing his lips.

"I smile because you guys are adorable," Natalie said, "I promise I'll bring Yumi back and return in one piece. How can I die at this age when I still want to see you grow up and get married, right?"

Yandel, too, was worried about Natalie, but he knew Natalie was doing that to pacify the children. He echoed, "Exactly. What's with those sulky faces? Don't you have faith in your mommy?"

A Cue For Love Chapter 1100

Chapter 1100 Smart And Observant

Upon hearing what Yandel said, the four children answered in one voice, "We do!" "We do!"

"We do!" "We do!" Natalie fixed her eyes on the screen. There was something heartwarming about the four adorable children—not forgetting their chubby cheeks.

"I can tell all of you have faith in me now." Natalie gave them a crescent moon-like shape Duchenne smile. "All of you better obey Yandel since you're staying at his place. Don't gang up on him, okay? Perhaps, by the time you wake up tomorrow, Yumi and I might have returned. If everything goes smoothly, we'll be able to take you home!"

Natalie's words of comfort had allayed the children's worry. Their faces were finally wreathed in smiles. After waving Natalie goodbye, they reluctantly ended the video call.

Meanwhile, Billy and impostor Natalie, who had departed from Chanaea, were still flying in the plane heading to Loang.

At that point, Natalie was drinking coffee on the street while wearing her hyper-realistic mask. She went deep in thought as she was busy devising a plan.

All of a sudden, someone placed a slice of strawberries and cream cake next to her coffee. "Hi, this is not mine. I only ordered a cup of coffee, so..." Natalie explained as she thought the waiter had made a mistake.

When she lifted her head and noticed the man in front of her, she was at a loss for words. She did not know what else to say.

The man sitting opposite her was wearing an exquisite white suit. He had delicate and handsome facial features with a soft gaze. As he stood against the evening sun, his smiley eyes curved like a pair of crescent moons, making him look innocent yet charming.

"I-It's you..." Natalie looked at him in disbelief. "How did you recognize me?"

"I've seen you wearing this mask in Chanaea. You don't remember, do you?" the man answered.

Realization dawned on Natalie. I see.

She responded calmly, "This is not mine. Please take it away."

In other words, she was subtly asking Bastien to leave.

Bastien did not take offense in her reaction. He gazed into her eyes steadily and said, "You've suffered enough in the last two days. Drinking coffee is just going to give you more anxiety. Perhaps, eating a dessert can make you feel better."

Natalie's heart skipped a beat when she heard that. She blurted out, "You're stalking me?"

"I was trying to let you know I was worried about you. You can think of it that way." Bastien leaned forward. "A mysterious figure abducted your kid, and you were trying everything you could to rescue her. You might be able to come up with a great plan, but don't think you can execute it better with my help?"

"You want to help me? What do you want in return?" Natalie asked while staring right into the man's eyes. Love? People who grow up in the royal family will never sacrifice everything for love. Even if they do, it'll always be conditional. They will never love someone at the expense of their ambition and immeasurable desire.

"What if I just want you to stay by my side?" Bastien asked a question to test the waters.

"What if I expect you to give up your inheritance rights and the privileges as a royal member in Loang and live as a commoner?" Natalie responded with another question.

Bastien was startled for a moment as he did not expect Natalie to hurl the question at him.

A corner of Natalie's lips quirked up. I knew he couldn't answer me.

Anyway, Natalie was merely poking fun at Bastien. She had no intention of finding out how sincere he was.

"You—"

"You don't have to answer me. It was just a hypothetical question." Natalie tilted her head and looked at him once again. "You said you wanted to help me. So what exactly do you want from me in return?"

Bastien clenched his fists as his expression turned grim. Not only is she smart, but she's also very observant.