

## After Death 501

### Chapter 501

"Are you awake?" Steven turned around and noticed that I was awake. Instantly, he suppressed all his anger.

I felt a little awkward. The way Steven looked just now... If others didn't know, they might have thought he was a gangster. He was quite intimidating.

"Stephie..." His voice was hoarse and filled with a hint of grievance as he lay in my arms. At this moment, he was now completely different from before.

I raised my hand and gently rubbed his head. "What's wrong? Eason was cursing,"

"Did he bother you? I'll go and sew his mouth shut." Steven stood up, determined to walk out.

I firmly grasped his wrist, fully aware that he was attempting to divert the conversation. "Tell me, what happened?"

"Nancy died under their watch," Steven answered.

I was momentarily stunned. "There are so many police officers keeping watch..."

Steven turned around and looked at me. "They had planned everything, but they didn't expect Nancy to take her own life. She knew the organization wouldn't let her go, and she understood the police would be eager to pry the organization's secrets from her."

Nancy's decision to attempt suicide was a chilling indication of how terrifying Genome Society truly was. She was willing to take her own life rather than be captured by the police. I seemed to have predicted the outcome and released Steven's wrist.

"Nancy said that you slept with Una." At the moment, I didn't want to dwell on other matters. I simply wanted to know if it was true.

Suddenly, Steven appeared to have grasped something important. He gently cupped my face, his breath warm against my skin. "Were you there with me? I felt it... You were there with me, weren't you?"

I was momentarily stunned. Then it dawned on me that while Una introduced herself as Una, I was still in my soul form.

"Maybe I overheard you speaking while I was unconscious?" I was unsure how to articulate this phenomenon. Science couldn't explain this either.

Steven laughed and affectionately rubbed my cheek. "I would recognize you even if you turned into a dog."

I frowned. "I'm not turning into a dog, you..."

"Don't change the subject, Steven! I'm still your wife. Have you slept with anyone else?" I fixed Steven with a warning gaze.

"What kind of sleep are you referring to?" Steven asked me, smiling.

I believed he deserved a swift punishment. I clenched my teeth and uttered, "Sex!"

Steven kissed my forehead. "No, but I allowed her to come into my room and put on a show for Nancy."

"Oh." I snorted, still feeling a twinge of jealousy.

"Stephie, are you jealous?" Steven whispered.

The blood rushed to my ears, flushing them with a tinge of red. I couldn't help but feel a twinge of awkwardness. Perhaps a hint of jealousy was at play.

The door to the ward swung open forcefully.

Joel glanced between the two of us, who had come so close to kissing. He wore an expression of innocence. "Something has happened..."

Steven's gaze turned dark as he looked warningly at Joel. "I hope that's the case."

"The laboratory has been exposed. Many criminal experiments conducted by Genome Society have come to light. It has implicated several wealthy individuals in Huma, including the Lincoln, Ford, and Larson families.

"The records of their custom-made genome-edited babies in the laboratory were not destroyed in time. The police have discovered it all."

Joel was visibly nervous as he continued, "Genome Society isn't willing to put themselves at risk, so they're eliminating individuals who are aware of the situation."

"What do you mean?" I asked with a frown.

Jimmy walked in through the door and smiled at me. "Obviously, they want to eliminate as many insiders as they can. It's good to see you again, my dear sister-in-law."

"The news has been just released. Tonight's Huma charity dinner is being held on a cruise ship, where hundreds of wealthy people and their families have been collectively kidnapped.

"This is a major criminal case that the authorities are taking very seriously. The cruise ship is about to depart into international waters." Joel took out his phone.

"Michael's mother is also among them, as well as Charles and Nadia. Michael and Yasmin are also there."

Joel suspected that someone within Genome Society was implementing a purge plan to eliminate all insiders, ensuring their own survival.

"If Genome Society truly wishes to ensure its survival by getting rid of others, it should refrain from making such a loud commotion. By doing so, it would become clear to the police that the organization is indeed connected to these affluent individuals. This may not necessarily be beneficial." Even if the organization managed to eliminate all the wealthy individuals, it would still be exposed.

## Chapter 502

"It doesn't seem like the work of an organization, but rather that of the Rebels," I murmured. Steven nodded, clearly indicating his agreement with my perspective.

"The police are communicating with the kidnappers to secure the safety of the passengers on the cruise ship. There are thousands of passengers on the cruise, including over a hundred wealthy individuals, as well as singers, celebrities, dancers, actors, waiters, chefs, sailors, and more."

More than a thousand people attending a luxury cruise dinner were unexpectedly caught up in a hijacking horror scenario. The affluent passengers never could have fathomed experiencing such an exhilarating event during their leisurely evening aboard the cruise ship.

I narrowed my eyes and scrutinized Jimmy cautiously. "You're also a member of the Global Trade Union. Why didn't you attend? Is it possible that you were aware of the insider information beforehand?"

"Maybe I'm kind and concerned about your well-being. I wanted to come and see you, so I sacrificed the chance to go on the cruise," Jimmy replied with a smile.

Nevertheless, no one would believe what he said. I gestured toward the door. "Tell the truth or leave."

Jimmy approached the bedside and said, "Don't be so heartless. Well, I had already anticipated this. After all, I'm quite intelligent."

Seeing my gloomy expression, Jimmy smiled and said again, "All members of the club received invitations to board the ship, and it was mandatory for us to join the cruise. I knew there had to be something amiss..."

Jimmy continued with a grave expression, "The club's website was hacked, and the internal information on every member was used to send invitations to all club members in Huma. The Rebels are becoming increasingly reckless."

They even hacked the club's website.

"Haha... Those people aren't as smart as you. That's not our concern. We're not as wealthy as them, and we're safe here," I said nonchalantly with a sneer. Then, I reclined on the bed.

"I heard that the president of Crowdstar Group was there too," Jimmy exclaimed with a wide grin.

I abruptly sat up and glanced over at Steven. It dawned on me that I had nearly overlooked something crucial. Was Steven working in cahoots with the president of Crowdstar Group? It was important for him to remain alive. Otherwise, we would lose access to the person in charge of the organization.

Jimmy seemed to have caught on to this and smiled at me.

"What are you staring at? It's too late for us to board the cruise." I couldn't tolerate Jimmy's mean look. Jimmy was lost in thought. "The fresh water and food on the cruise are sufficient for two weeks. But after that, the situation on the cruise will be dire. There will be no distinction between the rich and the poor. What's the use of being wealthy then?"

I was stunned for a moment. What kind of game were the Rebels playing?

Joel handed the list to Steven. "The kidnappers have given the police a demand. They want to swap the people on this list for the minors on the cruise. Eason sent the list to me. You, me, her, Rachel, Zion, Eason, Una... We're all on this list."

I took a deep breath, my fingers trembling with anger. Had these Rebels lost their minds? Why did they always drag us into this damn game?

Jimmy smiled and narrowed his eyes. "This time, the game is much more interesting because I'm here. I'm looking forward to it. Guys, shall we embark on the cruise together?"

"I'm feeling unwell. I'm not going." The suffocating and stressful situation consumed me and left me breathless. Moreover, I had just narrowly escaped death.

"If Stephie doesn't go, then I won't go either," Steven said nonchalantly.

"Are you really going to pass up this opportunity? The president of Crowdstar Group's life is at stake. Don't you want to find out who he is, Stephy?" Jimmy cunningly used this information to entice me.

"Zion will also come to beg you because there are 20 young dancers on the cruise who are the performers for this dinner. They're innocent. Only when we get on the cruise can we ensure their safety." Joel sighed deeply.

A death cruise... I was truly infuriated. Who was the leader behind the Rebels? What kind of lunatic and pervert could come up with these tricks?

## Chapter 503

I was in the hospital for two days, and Zion came to visit as expected. He hesitated outside the door while holding the fruits. Rachel also peeked her head in. Eason then pushed Zion away and entered with flowers. "I'm sorry, I'm allergic to pollen. Please leave," I said as I covered my head with the quilt. I was concerned about Steven and Rachel's safety. I was fine with risking it, but I could not let them put themselves at risk.

Eason looked perplexed. "There are an abundance of flowers growing at home. When did you develop an allergy?"

"Just now, right before you came in." I snorted, embracing Steven tightly.

Eason finally grasped the situation and carefully arranged the flowers and fruits on the table. "We're not trying to pressure you to go. We're just here to visit you. Don't get us wrong,"

I couldn't help rolling my eyes. No one would believe that.

"Um... But there are actually over 20 children aboard the cruise, including a few babies," Zion murmured, brushing the tip of his nose.

Eason and Zion glanced at Steven, who in turn looked back at me. They were all aware that I would never abandon those kids.

"How many people belong to the Rebels?" I asked. I was concerned about our chances of survival as we ventured across the sea. The entire cruise ship had fallen under their control, with scarce fuel and limited supplies adding to our predicament.

"The Rebels are lurking on the cruise ship. They could be drivers, chefs, sailors, or even dancers on the ship," Zion whispered. In other words, the police hadn't figured out the total number of Rebels yet.

"Jimmy claims that the Rebels successfully hacked the website of the Global Trade Union and managed to send invitations to all members within Huma. This suggests that they may have been secretly present on the cruise ship for a while.

"Considering the large number of Rebels on board, it's highly dangerous for us to get on the cruise," I analyzed with a frown.

"The police will maintain a vigilant presence in a secure vicinity. They'll be prepared for immediate rescue operations. Furthermore, the Rebels have given their word that once the few of us board the cruise, they'll release the innocent children first."

I clenched my hands nervously. It was not out of fear of death but because I had a bad feeling. When I was in the laboratory, I felt overwhelming fear.

The individuals in the organization were truly intimidating, and the Rebels were just as fearsome. There was no clear distinction between right and wrong, no discernible good and evil. It was just a clash of opposites.

The Rebels sought to dismantle Genome Society, but their ultimate objective remained a mystery. Was it driven purely by a thirst for revenge?

On the other hand, Genome Society intended to control the world's abundance of wealth and vital resources. Thus, there was an undeniable clash of interests between the two parties.

I frowned and looked at Zion and the others. "Have you considered why they keep pushing us to participate in this damn game over and over again? I understand why they want me on board. It's because I'm a valuable resource for the organization right now.

"But what about you guys? Zion is just a detective. As for you, Eason, even though you were in the advanced class, your IQ doesn't quite meet the organization's standards..."

Eason glared at me and then parted his lips, clearly displeased but unable to explain it...

"Rachel is a trainee coroner and Steven is just a customized heir of genome editing. There are likely multiple heirs in wealthy families just like Steven. Jimmy is one of them too. So why do they need to monitor you all and include you when they play these damn games?"

I couldn't grasp their intention fully unless the leader of the Rebels had a specific purpose behind their actions.

"Furthermore, the news that Nancy showed me indicated that Peter was a member of the Rebels. He was already apprehended. How could someone come up with a cruise ship game in such a systematic and methodical manner?" Clearly, Peter was not the sole leader of the Rebels.

Zion and Eason fell silent. Clearly, my doubts mirrored theirs.

At the door, Joel reached into his pockets and asked Steven with a smile, "Rather than struggling and doubting here, it's better to go and find out the reason. Are you afraid of death?"

I looked at Steven, expecting him to declare that he wasn't afraid. After all, he had never shown fear of death before. But instead, Steven frowned and said with deep conviction, "Of course. I have a wife."

Of course, he was afraid of death. Now, with a wife by his side, why wouldn't he be afraid of death?

"Tsk, you're absolutely insane." Joel snorted.

"I have a wife, and you don't," Steven repeated.

Joel angrily turned and stood outside the door, ignoring Steven. The ward was silent, and everyone was quiet.

## Chapter 504

Everyone was aware that if we boarded the cruise this time, it would be a narrow escape. However, everyone would certainly go-not only for the secret behind it but also for the sake of more than 20 children.

"Eason, are you the person in charge of this case?" I inquired.

Eason nodded.

I narrowed my eyes. "If you manage to successfully rescue those individuals, will you receive a promotion?"

Eason cleared his throat nervously. "Although a promotion might seem unlikely, there are enticing bonuses and rewards to strive for. Even in the unlikely event of my demise, I could potentially become a martyr..."

I gritted my teeth and said, "If everyone makes it back alive, you treat us to dinner for a week."

Eason was taken aback for a moment, gazing at me intently before speaking with a smile, "Sure... Not just a week, I'll treat you to dinner for an entire month."

Zion smiled as well. Our eyes met in silent agreement to go.

The cruise ship stopped in the sea, likely waiting for us before leaving the international waters. We were brought over by a police boat.

"Hey, are you scared?" I asked Rachel.

"I'm not." Rachel trembled, her voice unconvincing.

Rachel then said in a hushed tone, "I've adapted after the killing game in the abandoned building. At least it won't be like last time."

I agreed. Being mentally prepared in advance was always beneficial.

"Ah, it seems like it'll be quite interesting." Jimmy looked like a lunatic... I didn't really like him and considered kicking him off the boat.

Joel glanced at Jimmy with utter disdain. "Why in the world did you invite this lunatic to join us?"

"His name is on the list." Zion sighed.

"Then why is Una's name on it too?" Joel inquired, glancing back at Stephanie No. 2, who had been seated in the corner. She was eerily silent, resembling a walking zombie.

"Who knows? She's on the list," Zion replied again.

"It's inevitable... Every one of us holds great value in this game," I murmured, watching the cruise ship warily. As the boat neared the cruise ship, the people on board lowered the ladder.

"The police must withdraw, or we'll kill the hostages and throw them into the sea," the man wearing sunglasses threatened us in a deep voice.

A few of us boarded the cruise. The deck was empty, indicating that everyone was confined to their cabins. This cruise ship was remarkably large and offered the highest level of luxury in Huma.

"Stay right where you are," the leader ordered us to stop and meticulously inspected our identities and appearances one by one. After confirming that each person matched the description on the list, they

stepped aside and granted us entry into the cabin.

They didn't search us on the deck this time. The weapons and food we had hidden on our bodies remained undetected. Curiously, I glanced at Steven, eager to know what was going on. He held my hand tightly and shook his head.

I grasped Steven's hand firmly and said in a hushed tone, "This time, stay by my side. Don't make any reckless sacrifices and allow me to protect you..."

Steven looked at me and smiled, his eyes shimmering as if filled with light. He nodded in agreement and took shelter behind me, his gaze turning icy where it escaped my notice.

## Chapter 505

"Where are the children? Let them go," I said warily as I gazed at the leader.

"The children have been released," replied the leader in a deep voice.

I turned around to see a group of children in tiny floral skirts being taken off the cruise.

"No! Our records clearly show that there are a total of 27 infants and young children under the age of 14. But there are only 26 now. One more child is missing." Beneath the cruise, Officer Samuel Cabot shouted as the number of children did not add up. The eldest child, a 14-year-old girl, was missing.

"If she's not here, she's probably hiding. If she refuses to leave, it is what it is." The leader sneered, showing no intention of assisting in the search.

"Find the little girl and bring her back safely!" the captain shouted to Zion and Eason below the cruise ship.

"Okay." Zion nodded.

All of us were herded into the cabin by the Rebels. "Now that everyone's here, the game begins."

As we stepped into the cabin, the entire cruise ship lit up, bringing back the atmosphere of peace and joy with music and lively DJ sounds. The deck was also reopened. Everyone seemed to be diligently performing their duties and returning to their stations.

The cruise ship sailed into the deep sea without any escape routes or other ships. Some people went closer to the cockpit while others disguised themselves as waiters or dancers.

"I need to get out of here!" The wealthy individuals, who had been confined in the cabin for numerous days, had become desperate. Realizing there was no one to stop them, they angrily wanted to leave.

However, after scouring the deck for a long time, they couldn't find any lifeboat, so they reluctantly had to return.

"The party continues." The voice from the broadcast sounded. It was distorted by a strange voice modulator. The music grew louder, but most people were in no mood to continue partying.

Threatened by an unknown individual, the dancers returned to the stage to perform for the wealthy audience. Despite the apparent calm, panic gripped everyone present.

"What kind of tricks are they playing?" asked Zion.

"It's time to have fun and enjoy ourselves. When the supplies are gone, it'll be time for everyone to go crazy." Jimmy entered the crowd with a grin. Holding a wine glass, he started engaging with the dancers.

I looked at that lunatic and wondered if he was too confident.

"The police investigation found that the supplies on the cruise ship could only provide water and meals for thousands of people for two weeks. Half of that time has already elapsed. The supplies will soon be depleted, and the cruise will be unable to sustain such a large number of passengers," Steven whispered.

Hence, Jimmy suggested enjoying the party now. I glanced around and pulled out a large plastic bag from my pocket. "Based on my experiences, it's best to start by collecting water."

Steven responded to me with a smile and assisted in locating unopened bottles of mineral water at my preferred buffet table. Carefully, he placed each bottle into the plastic bag.

The sea stretched out as far as the eye could see, its vast expanse filled with water. Without fresh water, survival would be impossible. While one could survive for a few days without food, lasting three days

without water was out of the question.

Probably because the tension disappeared, someone took the lead and started having fun. The atmosphere slowly became lively. On such a large cruise ship, the cabins were spacious and divided into many areas. Now that the restrictions were suddenly lifted, everyone thought that everything that had happened before was just a prank. Once people relaxed, everyone began to enjoy themselves wildly.

While we were discreetly gathering water and stashing food in an undisclosed location, the voice suddenly spoke again, "From now on, everyone here is equal. It doesn't matter if you're a worker or a rich person, all of you can enjoy the resources on the ship equally. Let's have a great time."

As a result, regular people stormed into the cabins where the wealthy were staying and started devouring their top-notch food and drinks. Over a hundred affluent individuals, who had been feeling quite smug, suddenly became alert. They furiously demanded that their bodyguards intervene.

"Who invited you here? This is not a place where you should be," someone took the lead and scolded.

"The broadcast has announced that all restrictions have been lifted. Everyone is now equal, with the freedom to have fun anywhere on the cruise. We can enjoy equal access to the VIP area. We can



also indulge in air-freighted delicacies and savor bottles worth hundreds of thousands of dollars here!"

Thus, the first round of conflict between the rich and the poor had begun. Steven, Rachel, Zion, and I stood at the back of the crowd, observing this farce.

"I've heard that this ship is worth tens of billions. Apart from the cruise ship itself, there are also all the supplies on the ship, including top-notch luxurious air-freighted ingredients, drinks worth over 100 million, and luxurious decorations.

"The entire cruise ship has a total of 16 floors, offering a plethora of amenities such as amusement facilities, entertainment venues, and medical facilities, alongside a variety of other unimaginable luxuries. "Jimmy smiled.

## Chapter 506

"Why are there so many civilians allowed on such a luxurious cruise ship amidst a gathering of the ultra- rich?" I couldn't understand. Didn't they ask for it?

"Do you know what fuels the pride, honor, and source of fun of the rich? It stems from class differences. They consider themselves superior to the common people. So when they indulge in the privileges of the wealthy, they must look down on the less fortunate..." Jimmy sneered.

How did the wealthy demonstrate their power? By incessantly comparing themselves to the poor. Hence, this opulent cruise ship was made accessible to the public as well.

Observing everyone rushing into the VIP area, I said calmly, "Oh, then that's what they deserve. The supplies are enough for them to squander for a while. Our priority now is to locate the 14-year-old girl."

She was the only child who didn't get off the cruise.

"She's not on the deck. Let's begin our search for the cabins on the first floor. We need to search all 16 floors." Eason shrugged. This was indeed a massive task.

I turned to Eason and suggested, "Why go through all this trouble? After all, she's just a child. When she gets scared, she'll instinctively hide. And when she eventually gets hungry, won't she come out to eat?

"I believe that once everyone lets their guard down, she'll surely emerge as well. There are five buffet restaurants in the entire cruise, so we'll split up."

"I want to be with Steven," Una declared confidently as she approached Steven, reaching out to hold his hand.

I looked warily at Una, positioned myself between her and Steven, and slapped her hand away. "Don't touch my partner."

"What are you afraid of?" Una asked.

"I'm concerned about your lack of shame," I warned.

She remained silent, her expression unchanging.

"She and I will go to the sixth floor." Joel took the initiative and asked Una to follow him.

Una looked at Steven and firmly stated, "Steven, you must protect me. I'm the only clone that's identical to Stephanie. You should understand the significance of my existence."

Steven frowned and looked at me. "Let her join us."

"That's impossible," I disagreed.

Una sneered. "If reincarnation truly exists, I'll be the resurrected body of 'Stephanie.' So he must ensure my survival."

What Una meant was that as long as she did not die, I could die again and be reincarnated. Was this her intention? How dare she?

I stared at Una with caution, fully aware of her thoughts. If I were to die, she would pretend to be me after reincarnation. Ha... She fixed me with a murderous gaze.

I firmly pulled Steven behind me, my voice low and threatening. "Let her die. I don't need the resurrected body. Or, I can kill her now."

Joel grabbed Una and urged us, "Stop fighting amongst ourselves. Let's go, follow me."

Una shook off Joel's wrist, walked to the side, and sat down. "It has nothing to do with me. I'll just wait here."

She was visibly cold, but I chose to ignore her and lead Steven away.

"Stephie!" Suddenly, someone called my name from the VIP area. It was Michael.

I turned around and saw Michael and Yasmin standing at the door. Michael looked at me in surprise and ran over excitedly. Frowning, I maintained an aloof look.

"Stephanie!" Yasmin exclaimed as soon as she caught sight of Una. A look of terror washed over her, and she instinctively sought refuge behind Michael.

Michael also glanced over and subconsciously clenched his fists. "Stephie..."

They were incredibly similar as if they were molded from the same source. I could discern a sense of indecision and uncertainty in Michael's eyes. Once again, he found himself torn between choosing Una or

me.

I furrowed my brows and glanced at Una. Her gaze was fixed on Michael, her eyes sparkling.

I had a hunch that this clone was very dangerous. She was constantly plotting to replace me and take everything from me, and both Steven and Michael were her targets.

## Chapter 507

I gazed at Michael with indifference, fully anticipating this outcome. It was clear that the one in panic now was not me but Yasmin.

Yasmin glanced anxiously at Una while hiding behind Michael. She was likely overwhelmed by feelings of guilt and fear. Una's gaze shifted toward Yasmin, a faint smile playing on her lips. It revealed the perceived superiority of higher beings looking down upon those of lower status.

Una didn't even consider Yasmin a potential threat and completely underestimated her.

Yasmin was clearly avoiding Una's gaze. She anxiously tugged at Michael's sleeve. "Mike... I'm a little flustered. Can you accompany me to the deck to get some fresh air?"

Michael glanced back at Yasmin and nodded. "Certainly,"

Yasmin let out a sigh of relief and glanced at Una and myself with a sense of pride. I couldn't fathom what was going through her mind. Did she believe that her intelligence could outshine that of the clone?

"Stephie," Michael said, looking at me and then at Una. He was seemingly unsure of who exactly he should be addressing as "Stephie."

I ignored him, feeling a little disgusted.

"Officer Landon, could you explain..." Michael asked Zion for his assistance in explaining the presence of an individual who bore an uncanny resemblance to Stephanie.

As a member of the Global Trade Union, Michael had openly raised the question of human cloning in the laboratory. How he could not know about clones?

Una appeared to be a replica of Stephanie, except she was not truly Stephanie. Stephanie was dead, displayed in a glass cabinet in her death. He had seen the body before. Michael simply refused to acknowledge this truth.

"This is Una, Stephanie's... identical twin sister." Zion could only explain it this way.

Una smiled at Michael. The smile resembled Stephanie's from before, the old Stephanie before she lost her memory. It was a smile devoid of emotion. It was cold and calculating.

"Before you arrived, Yasmin and I were stuck on the 16th floor for three days. She's feeling a bit seasick, so I'm going to take her to relax for a while now," said Michael evasively as he led Yasmin away.

He refused to acknowledge Stephanie's death. Now, he couldn't bear to confront anyone who resembled her or might be her.

"Zion, imagine me waking up one day to find that I have switched bodies. My soul now resides in Eason's body, and Eason's soul resides in mine. Tell me, would you prefer Eason's body with my soul or his soul with my body?" Rachel inquired, giving Zion a cheeky nudge.

Zion was left utterly speechless. Eason stood there, his face clouded with disdain. "I have no interest in men, thank you. It's quite gross."

Rachel rolled her eyes at Eason. "The question wasn't meant for you."

Eason struggled to find his voice and whispered softly, "I don't want to be in a woman's body. It's disgusting. I don't like men."

Joel scoffed and placed his hand on Eason's shoulder. "Have you ever heard of gay people being homophobic? Let's go to the restaurant."

Eason was furious when Joel kept grabbing him back and forth. "Little brat, I'm many years older than you. Please respect me more."

"Alright, Mr. Grant. Let's go find the 14-year-old girl," Joel said as he towered over Eason, his strong and imposing figure casting a deliberate sense of unease.

Eason was not short either, but when compared to Joel, he seemed somewhat petite.

Meanwhile, Zion took a long time to understand Rachel's words and replied softly, "Beautiful exteriors may all appear similar, but the captivating souls are truly distinctive. Without a soul, isn't it just a lifeless doll?"

Rachel raised her chin and said, "Good answer."

Zion smiled warmly and extended his hand toward Rachel, his palm turning upward. Rachel gracefully placed her hand on top of Zion's in return. "Let's go to the restaurant."

I glanced at Rachel and Zion and leaned into Steven, whispering, "Have they already confirmed their relationship?"

"I heard that Rachel went on another blind date, which made Zion so angry that he went to the restaurant where the blind date was held to confront her. They might be together. Eason mentioned that Zion brought her back to his home," Steven whispered and gossiped in a very cheeky tone.

"What could they possibly do at home alone? They couldn't have discussed the case, could they?" Steven responded earnestly.

I sighed and took Steven's wrist, guiding him away. "Let's go. It's time to find the little girl."

Over there, Jimmy leaned against the wall. When we all left, he walked over to Una. We were unaware of what they said.

## Chapter 508

When I went downstairs, I happened to see Jimmy talking to Una.

"I won't die easily again," I whispered to Steven as he held my hand tightly.

He turned around and locked eyes with me, his gaze filled with intensity.

"I refuse to waste any more of my life. So no matter what happens, you must choose me unconditionally over anyone else," I reiterated. I wouldn't die so easily. There was no need to look for a "resurrection body " for me.

Steven looked at me nervously and tightened his grip. "Don't lie to me."

"I won't lie to you." I grinned.

I would never deceive Steven, but when it came to other individuals, it would depend on the circumstances.

Steven smiled warmly and reached out to draw me into his embrace. Perhaps he had also noticed the profound transformation I had undergone since my return.

"Don't worry... I'll never mistake you." Steven's voice was hoarse as his trembling body held me tightly. He was probably afraid that I would die in the laboratory.

"I believe you." I rested my chin on his shoulder.

"Stephie, did you see Michael's hesitation when he saw Una? It's clear that he doesn't truly love you. He's nothing but a hypocritical liar. Stephie, don't like him anymore." Steven started to speak ill of Michael. "Mhm. I don't like him." I nodded.

Steven stood up proudly and led me downstairs.

"Why didn't these people search our bodies? We all have weapons..." I was a little confused.

"We can't identify the NPCs, except for the ones carrying guns in the cockpit." Because we couldn't identify the Rebels in the crowded group.

There was one thing that was certain. Over a hundred wealthy individuals were members of both the Global Trade Union and Genome Society. However, among the remaining thousand individuals, there were also some Rebels. Despite us having weapons, their usefulness was minimal.

That night, we discovered the 14-year-old girl in the common dining area on the third floor. Clad in her performance dance costume, she was trembling with fear as she sought refuge under the table to savor her fruit.

The entire cruise ship had returned to its former liveliness. The chef was as busy as ever, preparing meals as usual. Everyone was dining as per routine.

The only difference was that the common dining area seemed less crowded, with many guests flocking to the VIP section on the 16th floor. This exclusive area catered to the wealthy with its offerings of scallops, lobsters, and various other premium seafood not available in other dining areas.

"We're here to rescue you," I said as I squatted on the ground and looked at the young girl.

The young girl climbed out cautiously, her mouth filled with grease. "Seriously?"

I nodded. "The police are already on the cruise. If they come searching for you again, I'll bring you to them.

The young girl wiped her mouth and nodded obediently. "Madam, please eat quickly. When I was hiding under the cabin, I overheard the bad guys saying that from tomorrow on, they would limit food and distribute the remaining resources on the cruise based on wealth.

"Only the wealthy will have access to delicious food. Those without money will only be able to eat dry bread."

I was momentarily stunned and turned to look back at Steven. "Are they intentionally trying to provoke conflict between the rich and the poor?"

Steven frowned and remained silent, his expression clearly indicating the seriousness of the matter. It was evident that this was no trivial issue.

"Let's take her to Zion. Then, we'll locate the president of Crowdstar Group and ensure his safety. You must have met him before, right? Only then will we have the opportunity to contact the top leader of the organization."

I grabbed Steven's arm and quickly led him toward the entrance of the elevator.

We had to locate the president of Crowdstar Group immediately. It would be extremely perilous if conflicts and riots involving over a thousand individuals unfolded.

Steven held me back and hesitated to speak, "Stephie... Actually..."

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I glanced back at Steven, wondering what he wanted to say.

Suddenly, the sound of a gunshot reverberated in the distance as someone on the cruise ship pulled the trigger...

In a moment of shock, I swiftly pivoted and cast my gaze toward the source of the sound. Steven instinctively wrapped his arms around me, pulling me close for protection, while I cradled the girl in my embrace. Together, we hid under the dining table.

A group of individuals had entered the room. They were the armed personnel who were in charge of operating the control room earlier. "Alert them. If they persist in their actions and approach, we'll kill the hostages."

Steven and I exchanged glances as we noticed a ship approaching. The police had already strategized with Zion and Eason about rescue and response plans.

It was clear that in order to ensure the survival of over a thousand people aboard the cruise ship, they could not resort to using force or engaging in confrontation. It was evident that the approaching ship was not of police origin.

"Are they from the organization?" I whispered.

Steven agreed with me. It had to be someone from Genome Society. The over one hundred wealthy individuals on this ship were the organization's lifeblood, serving as their primary source of revenue and economic stability. Rest assured, the organization would spare no effort in rescuing these people.

"Ha..." The leader glanced out the window.

We were situated on the cabin's third floor, with public access for all visitors. From this point, they had a clear view of the nearby ships drawing nearer. "Go and tell them that if they continue to get closer, we'll start killing the rich on the list one by one and tossing them into the sea to feed the fish."

The leader spoke in a deep tone, his husky voice sounding oddly familiar. I was eager to peek outside and get a glimpse, but Steven stopped me. He shook his head, emphasizing the danger. However, that voice... it sounded strangely familiar.

"They're planning to attack the members on the Global Trade Union membership list. We must return to the 16th floor immediately, locate the president of Crowdstar Group, and ensure his protection.

"They'll head to the deck shortly, and that's when we'll make our escape," I whispered to Steven, outlining the plan.

Steven acknowledged my plan. We locked eyes, exchanged a meaningful glance, and prepared ourselves to make a quick exit with the young girl at any time.

"Boo-hoo, I'm scared. I want to go home..." Suddenly, the girl crouched down in fear and burst into tears. I instinctively covered her mouth, but it was already too late. People outside heard it. I peered through the gap in the tablecloth and saw someone slowly approaching. I took a deep breath and reached out. I withdrew the dagger hidden from my body, ready to resist at any moment.

Steven's gaze was chilling. As the man attempted to lift the tablecloth, Steven decisively grasped his hand and instantly rolled away. Then, he forcefully threw the person to the ground and held him down. My heart raced as I quickly took the girl and walked out.

The main guy looked at us and stopped everyone. The people beside him raised their hands and aimed their guns at Steven.

Steven strangled the neck of the person beneath him, his eyes exuding an icy calm devoid of any fear. I kept a vigilant eye on them, shielding the girl behind me.

"Lower your weapons. It won't be fun if they end up dead," murmured the leader, his voice hushed and still rough. The leading man smirked and gestured to those around him, signaling for our release. Steven glanced down at the man. With a snort, he stood up and protected me while we walked away.

## Chapter 510

We took a few steps back, bracing ourselves to run. Suddenly, the man who had been lying on the ground sprang to his feet, fueled by anger at his defeat by Steven. He then brandished a knife and attacked us.

Steven instinctively raised his hand to block the knife and immediately kicked the person away. His palm was pierced in the process. In a moment of panic, I immediately grabbed Steven's hand and swiftly removed my coat to apply pressure to the wound and stem the bleeding.

Steven stared coldly at the man. "Rubbish."

The leader frowned and turned his gaze toward Steven. After a few tense moments, he delivered a resounding slap to the assailant, sending him tumbling to the ground once more. "What a shame!"

Steven glanced at the knife lodged in his palm indifferently. Ignoring my objection, he removed it and hurled it at the man, who cowered in terror. The knife sliced through the top of his head, severing strands of hair and embedding itself firmly in the wall.

I looked at Steven nervously. "Let's go to the infirmary to treat your wound."

The cruise ship was equipped with comprehensive facilities, including medical staff and resources. It was the only cruise ship in the country that offered surgical and organ transplant capabilities at sea.

Steven nodded and ushered the girl and me into the elevator. She was still crying and trembling with fear.

I didn't comfort her and frowned slightly. It was the duty of the police to protect her. I only needed to bring her to Zion and Eason. That was the best I could do.

The elevator doors closed, and I was worried about Steven's injury. Amid my concern, I momentarily forgot what Steven had wanted to say earlier.

"Are you alright?" Zion and Eason rushed into the infirmary, their concern evident on their faces.

I shook my head and clenched my fists tightly. "He has a deep penetrating wound on his palm. They just carried out an X-ray, and the doctor performed emergency surgery, but they can't guarantee that his hand won't be affected in the future."

The human palm contained numerous muscles and nerves. Any injury that penetrated the palm could significantly impact future activities and quality of life.

"Do you know that this cruise ship is actually equipped with an exceptional team of doctors? The owner spared no expense in hiring a medical team all the way from Melovia, known for their world-class surgical procedures.

"So rest assured, there's absolutely no need for you to worry. But I'm curious. He's very skilled and has exceptional hearing and insight. How could those people hurt him?" Jimmy leaned against the door with a sarcastic smile.

Failed to react in time? Too urgent of a situation? Obviously, Jimmy didn't believe those excuses.

I frowned and looked at Jimmy. "If you're going to make sarcastic remarks here, you can get out now."

Jimmy shrugged. "Don't be so hostile... I'm just voicing my reasonable suspicions."

"Well, I forgot to tell you all. The true owner of the cruise ship is none other than the main person in charge of Genome Society in the Othard region, also known as the boss behind Gerome Society. His code name is Boss, and we all refer to him as just that," Jimmy said with a smile.

He purposely withheld this clue until now! This cruise ship belonged to Genome Society, signifying that it held a complexity far beyond what met our eyes.

"This cruise ship has 15 floors above ground and one floor of cabins, making a total of 16 floors of open areas. However, there are two floors with deep cabins below the open area. Would you like to know what's below?"

Only members of the Global Trade Union were granted access there.

He added, "This cruise ship travels the seas year-round, including international waters and even war zones, where illicit activities such as human trafficking, organ trafficking, and illegal profiteering can go unnoticed."

I inhaled deeply and cast a disapproving gaze at Jimmy. "If you have something to say, just say it quickly." "The primary objective of the Rebels in gathering people to hijack this cruise ship is to protest against the organization itself. Killing the affluent individuals who hold utmost importance to the organization serves as the most impactful form of protest.

"Additionally, it has been reported that the president of Crowdstar Group is on board this ship. However, the identity and appearance of the president remain unknown..." Jimmy glanced outside, and armed officers were patrolling outside.

"All club members are now being controlled according to a list. Unfortunately, I'm one of them. The president of Crowdstar Group is on the list too."

Jimmy was aware that those people were here to take him away. Before being taken, he grasped my hand and whispered, "Find the president of Crowdstar Group and protect him."

Afterward, Jimmy was taken away by the armed personnel. "He's Jimmy Lincoln, a member of the Global Trade Union. Take him away."

Jimmy followed suit and left, then turned back to smile at me.



