

After Death 51

Chapter 51

It was Steve, the psycho from the orphanage!

He was the murderer who turned himself in for killing me!

What was he doing here?

He gaped at me for a long time too.

I came to a realization that I was naked. I picked up a towel from the floor and reached for my phone to call the police.

Maybe it was due to fear, but my body wouldn't stop shaking. I fumbled for my phone in this unfamiliar environment but couldn't find it. I was like I was having a nightmare and was trying to escape with all my might, but I was powerless.

Kneeling on the floor, I stared at myself in the mirror. There was a 70% resemblance with my own face.

I raised my hand fearfully and touched that face in confusion.

This couldn't be. I was already dead. Who was this person in the mirror?

After a while, my rapid breathing slowed down. Only then did I realize that I had been reborn. I was reborn into a complete stranger's body!

After a long bout of silence, I tentatively spoke up, "You..."

"You just want a child. You just want to give birth to a Lincoln... You'll get what you want. If you don't want to die, then get out!" He snarled angrily.

I could see the hidden murderous intent in his eyes.

He wanted to kill me!

As I thought... A murderer was still a murderer. He couldn't hide the resentment and murderous intent in him.

I looked at him warily. In a panic, I grabbed the lamp next to the bed so that I could fight back at any time.

I didn't have a phone to call the police. Not to mention, I was very frightened by my current predicament. I didn't know who I was, much less why I was sleeping in the same bed as a murderer!

Probably noticing my desire to kill him in my eyes, Steve's gaze also darkened.

We were like two beasts that were about to bite each other at any time. Neither party dared to let their guard down.

Just as I forced myself to calm down to analyze my surroundings, the door opened. A middle-aged man in a wheelchair was pushed in.

“Ms. Stephany Larson, you were screaming a lot last night.” The man grinned. His expression looked like he was up to no good.

“Mr. Ignatius agrees to a union between the Larson family and the Lincoln family. The funds he to your family are for you to give birth to a healthy heir to the Lincoln family, not for you to enjoy. yourself!”

gave

I frowned in confusion.

Stephany Larson? The Larson family?

The Lincoln family? A union?

Give birth to an heir?

The middle-aged man left the room. I quickly followed him so that I could leave, but the nanny stopped me. “Let me out! Who are you to keep me here!”

“Ms. Larson, your duty is to birth an heir for the Lincoln family in order to save your family. In order to ensure that you successfully get pregnant during your ovulation phase this cycle, please hold on a little longer.”

With that, she shut the door.

“Let me out!” I was mad and scared at the same time. I was desperate to find out the situation I was in.

Why w

was I reduced to a baby maker for this murderer?

“You’re so noisy,” Steve said hoarsely, seemingly annoyed. He was looking for something.

“Where is it?” He wasn’t wearing anything, and he seemed to be enraged.

I was struck by his rage. It made me reevaluate this psycho.

Before this, I always saw him in ill-fitting shirts and baggy pants that didn’t cover his ankles. I never imagined... that he could look so beautiful.

Objectively speaking, whether it was his body or his face, he was very good-looking... If I hadn’t died once before, I would’ve had a hard time linking him to the person who killed me ruthlessly.

“I’m asking you... Where is it?” He rushed over. He lost control and grabbed my throat.

At that moment, he wanted to kill me.

He seemed to be furious at me for sleeping with him and for moving his things.

A feeling of suffocation overcame me, and the dark veil of death shrouded me once again. I hit him forcefully, subconsciously aiming for his neck.

“Stephie, if you run into a bad guy next time, hit him in the throat. This can make your opponent lose their breath, and you’ll have a chance to run away.

All of a sudden, my head felt like it was splitting apart. Who was teaching me self–defense?

Chapter 52

Who did that familiar yet foreign voice belong to? After that car accident when I was 18 years old, who did I remember?

I had this feeling that I had forgotten someone very important, but why couldn’t I remember?

“Stephie...”

Steve held his throat in pain. He gave me a heated stare before searching the room in a frenzy again.

Finally, under the towel, he found a bracelet.

I stared at the bracelet in surprise. It was the bracelet that I gave to the thief and also the bracelet that the murderer put on his victim’s body....

But the police had already found the victim. The bracelet should be with the police.

Could it be that it was just the same design?

Or could it be... that the one on the corpse’s wrist was fake?

As Steve held the bracelet, the rage faded from his body. Instead, he found a corner to curl up in, like a wounded animal licking its injuries.

I took a few deep breaths to force myself to calm down.

Last night, while I was unconscious, some memories that didn’t belong to me had entered my mind. They seemed to belong to the actual owner of the body. I wasn’t able to fully process them just now. Now that I was calm, I finally understood.

The original owner’s name was Stephany Larson. She was the daughter of Charles Larson, the chairman of the Larson Group. She had been sold to the Lincoln family as though she was an object to become a baby maker.

In order to save the Larson family’s business, Stephany married into the Lincoln family with the clear purpose of becoming a baby maker. Afterward, James Lincoln–the man in the wheelchair just now- forcefully injected her with follicle–stimulating hormones and aphrodisiacs...

Because the original owner had a heart condition, those drugs proved to be too much for her. After she was tossed into this room, she died from shock.

And due to some mistake or some coincidence, I was reborn into her body.

“Steve?” I tried to communicate with him. I knew that if I wanted to find out the truth behind these.

serial killings as well as my parents’ deaths, I had to start with him.

Thus, I had to disguise myself and get a hold of the prime suspect, whom I wasn’t sure was really

insane or not.

He looked at me. Those dark eyes looked as though they wanted to swallow me whole—they were dangerously beautiful.

He continued hiding in the corner while stark naked... He looked like a masterpiece from the ancient legends.

As I thought, if I hadn't known that this person was most likely a perverted murderer, I would've been bewitched by his beauty like anyone else.

His body was flawless. His legs were long and muscular. Probably because he was of mixed heritage, he had paler skin than the average person here. The brutal scars on his calves and soles didn't take away from his beauty.

"I... did this to her." His long eyelashes fluttered. That sort of broken beauty would easily make someone want to protect him.

"I... did this to Stephy," he repeated, looking out the window.

I frowned as a derisive look flashed in my eyes. Was he regretting killing me? Were murderers able to feel regret?

"What do we have to do in order to leave?" I said carefully, trying to make my voice gentle.

Probably from all the shock I experienced since I woke up, I suddenly grew dizzy. I quickly crouched down.

Ever since I was young, I always had this problem. Whenever I was anxious, nervous, or scared, I would show signs of low blood sugar. During those times, my father would give me a lollipop.

I thought that I wouldn't feel this again after being reborn into someone else's body. But to my surprise, the feeling of low blood sugar was still evident.

Maybe because I had disturbed him, he suddenly shifted his gaze toward me. His eyes were scarily heated.

He stared at me for a long time, as though he wanted to see right through me.

After a while, he took out a lollipop from somewhere and gave it to me.

I was stunned for a moment. With my hand shaking violently, I bit back the fear and reluctance in my heart. I took the lollipop to put it in my mouth.

He just stared at me quietly.

"Stephie..." Out of the blue, he called my name.

I raised my head subconsciously. “Yes?”

I wasn’t even sure whether he was addressing Stephanie Carlson or Stephany Larson.

Steve seemed to get worked up. With reddening eyes, he slowly walked over with restraint.

Subconsciously, I felt afraid as he approached me and backed away. I forced myself to calm down and pointed at the towel on the floor. “Cover yourself.

All of a sudden, he was very cooperative. He wrapped the towel around himself and sat across from me, gazing at me.

I was astounded. Just a second earlier, he seemed like a prowling wolf. Why had he become so nice all of a sudden?

As I expected, in order to gain his trust, I had to act as gently as possible in front of him.

Chapter 53

“You should... eat.” Steve’s hand was injured. It was obvious that someone had hurt him deliberately. Because of that, he couldn’t use cutlery. He could only raise the plate to his face in order to eat.

After a moment’s hesitation, he put down the plate. He hid in a corner and kept quiet.

I forced myself to put on a kind face and reached toward him. “Let me see your hands.”

I had to earn his trust as much as possible.

Steve was very cautious. After I stretched out my hand, he hesitated for a long time but still showed me his hands.

I took the chance to flip his hands up and down and inspect them closely. Indeed, they didn’t have the red birthmark that my murderer had.

Clearly, he wasn’t the person who actually killed me, but he was definitely related to the murderer somehow! If he wasn’t an accomplice, then he was a partner.

The serial killings, my parents’ deaths, and the memories I lost after the accident....

There were too many truths... They blurred together, yet it felt like the answer was right on the tip of

my tongue.

Just what was the truth?

“Does it hurt?” I looked up at Steve, trying to win his affection.

was

He was very quiet. His beautiful, large eyes were filled with innocence and warmth.

“Who did this to your fingers?” I gazed at the deep, furling wounds on the pads of each of his fingers and couldn’t stop myself from shuddering.

The Lincolns had to all be sick in the head. No matter what, they couldn't treat him like this.

"It was to stop me... from escaping from here." Steve pointed at the window.

I looked out of the window. We were on the third floor.

Indeed, with his fingertips like this and the unhealed burns on the soles of his feet, he couldn't run away.

I took a deep breath, feeling a bit angry. "You need medicine for your wounds. Or else they'll get infected and rot!

I went to the door and screamed, "Open the door! If you want him to produce an heir, the least you could do is treat his wounds! Are you even human?" However, no one responded.

Steve just stared at me. When I began to slam the door with my hand anxiously, he finally said, "Stephie, how did your parents die?"

"There was a car accident "I nearly blurted out.

But as soon as I said that, I tensed up.

It was Stephanie Carlson's parents who had died in a car accident.

But Stephany Larson's parents were still alive, as cruel as they were.

"I

"I was just saying that. I wish they'd die in a car accident," I explained, attempting to cover it up.

Steve said nothing. Suddenly, he smiled.

"Stephie..." he called my name again.

I turned to face him.

"They won't open the door." Steve got up and slowly approached me.

Subconsciously, I was still afraid of him coming close, so I instinctually backed away.

He stopped in his tracks. He was probably afraid of frightening me.

After a long while, he spoke up, "Do you want to... leave?"

I nodded. Of course, I did. I couldn't be locked up here to become a baby maker.

I had to leave in order to find out the truth behind everything.

"Once you get pregnant, they'll let you out." Steve picked up a pregnancy test and gave it to me.

I was taken aback. Although I knew he was right, how could I... I just couldn't give birth to a murderer's baby.

After a long silence, I turned around to observe the room we were locked in. Then, I went through every drawer to find anything of value.

When I opened the first drawer, I saw two copies of a marriage certificate. It was mine—no, it was Stephany and Steve’s marriage certificate.

“Steven Lincoln? This name...” I murmured quietly. It sounded very familiar.

I tossed the marriage certificates back into the drawer. After a moment of shock, I finally processed that those were marriage certificates! It turned out that Stephany had married this psycho!

“Stephie...” Seeing me in a daze, Steven called my name again.

I turned around while flustered. Trying to keep my cool and gentle demeanor, I asked, “W—What is it?”

“I want a baby...” he said carefully like he was scared of spooking me.

Chapter 54

“I want to help you leave this place,” Steven added.

It was as if the only way he could think of to help me leave was to impregnate me as fast as possible.

Most likely, Stephany had plotted this for a long time, so Steven also thought that she wanted a baby.

“When it comes to these things, we can’t rush into it!” I tried to make myself calm down and buy as much time as possible. I said gently, “Children are the product of love between two people. Children who aren’t born out of love are too pitiful. We’re still not that close yet...”

Steven’s gaze darkened as he looked at me. Suddenly, he smiled and said seriously, “We are close!”

I gaped at him. This was the first time I would call a man “bewitching”.

His eyes were bright and sparkling, as though they contained a thousand galaxies.

His eyes shone like brilliant stars.

“Don’t worry. If I run away, I’ll bring you with me,” I confronted him. This person carried too many secrets. I had to get a hold of him and make him trust me.

I had to first think of a way to leave so that I could find Rachel.

As for Michael and Yasmin....

Thinking of Michael, my gaze froze over.

I finally died just as he wished! Now, Michael would have nothing holding him back from living a good life with Yasmin.

In that case, I wished him a few happy days with Yasmin. I wouldn’t let the woman behind my murder get what she wanted!

Since I had been reborn, I had to let Michael and Yasmin experience all the pain I went through!

I continued ruffling through the drawers and found a first aid kit in the second drawer.

Taking out the iodine and cotton buds, I called Steven over and helped him clean his wounds.

This version of Steven was a mystery to me. I couldn't see through him. His mysteriousness and wildness scared me.

But he seemed to like looking into my eyes. I wasn't sure what he wanted to see in them.

However, I kept having the feeling that he was looking at someone else.

"Stephie..."

He liked to call me by that name in his throaty yet gentle voice.

After cleaning the wounds on his hands, I asked him, "Did it hurt?"

It had to hurt a lot. A few of his fingers were about to fester.

Gazing at me, he shook his head. Then, he nodded, looking a little aggrieved. "It hurt."

I furrowed my brows at him. His current self and the person who tried to strangle me this morning were like two different people. Did he really have multiple personality disorder? "Stay strong. It'll get better in a few days. Try not to get your fingers wet for now."

He nodded like an obedient dog. "Help me shower, Stephie."

My temples suddenly began to ache, and my "gentle" mask nearly slipped. "Why should I?"

"You're my wife." Steven pointed at the marriage certificates,

I sucked in a breath. Was this person really crazy? Or was he putting on an act?

In order to test whether he was crazy, I took out a pen and paper and scrawled several math questions

on it.

"What is 345 plus 246?"

When Steven saw the questions, he laughed.

"You don't know?" Although I was deeply terrified of this person, every time he smiled, he had this innate... charm. It made people think that he was very pure.

"I'm not crazy." He seemed to have read my mind. Without hesitation, he wrote down the answers.

I was slightly surprised. "Knowing arithmetics doesn't make you smart."

Iv

After pondering it for some time, I wrote down a very difficult advanced math question. In school, my senior and I had spent a long time on this question but weren't able to solve it. Afterward, we went

to consult our teacher, who then spent a whole night trying to come up with the solution.

I guessed that Steven wouldn't even understand it.

I passed the paper to Steven and rested my chin in my hand. "Can you solve this one?"

Steven took a look and picked up the pen with his fingers stiffly.

I was afraid that he would go crazy if he didn't understand it, so I carefully comforted him, "It's okay if you don't understand it. I didn't know how to solve it either back then."

This was something I only learned when I got to college.

Steven grew up in an orphanage, so there was no way...

Before I could say anything else, he had already scribbled the solution on the sheet messily.

From the moment he looked at the question to getting the answer, he had taken less than five minutes.

Chapter 55

I stared at Steven in shock. It took me a long time to process this information.

I snatched the paper out of his hands and gasped...

I thought he had scribbled nonsense on it, but unexpectedly, it was the real answer.

"You've studied this before?" I asked in surprise. Shock aside, I was also in disbelief.

Wasn't he insane?

Steven nodded. "This is simple."

Those words provoked me. This was impossible! Ever since I was young, I was always top of the class. When I went to college, my professors took great pride in me. Even though I wasn't a genius by any means, I was still an excellent student. How could Steven be smarter than me?

"Have you seen the solution before?" Refusing to concede defeat, I continued writing more questions.

for him.

Jone

However, he quickly answered correctly.

Sometimes, he even wrote his answers while distracted because he would want to look at me from time to time.

Despite all of this, he could still come up with an answer so quickly. This made him more than the average genius...

It was as though the crazy person was on his left shoulder and the genius was on his right. He could only go between the two options.

“You... You went to college?” I asked hesitantly.

“I went to Stamford...” he began.

I gasped. He really had gone to college.

“When I was 14 years old. I was in the advanced classes and was scouted by the college,” he finished.

I was speechless.

Advanced classes? Why did that sound so familiar? Suddenly, my head hurt a
flooded my mind.

some memories

Two children stood at the door of the welfare home, holding giant bouquets. There was a banner in front of the welfare center that congratulated two of its children for getting into the advanced classes.

I pressed my hand to my forehead, struggling to remember more. But my memory seemed to have been corrupted.

To have been scouted to attend Stamford at 14 years old, Steven was indeed a genius.

“Then why did you sleep at the orphanage and act crazy?” I tried to make myself appear calm. I was getting more and more curious about Steven’s secrets.

This person was clearly not crazy!

Had he been purposely putting on an act so that he could cover up his crimes?

“Stephie asked me to wait for her...” Steven lowered his gaze, and his voice sounded sad.

I frowned. What?

Stephie? Was he referring to Stephanie Carlson or Stephany Larson?

“Why are you being so nice? Is the Stephie you’re referring to me?” I didn’t fully trust the man in front of me, even if he was acting pure now.

I pointed at myself to see his reaction.

He looked into my eyes for a while then nodded.

The person he promised was Stephany?

I couldn’t see through this man. Just because of a promise he made to a woman, he pretended to be mentally ill at the orphanage for so many years?

This person seemed a little too stubborn. He was just like... a monster in a fictional book, but ant angelic one.

“Was it worth it, wasting your talent to wait for someone?” I asked curiously.

“Yes!” Steven seemed irritated by that and continued in a serious tone, “Stephie asked me to.”

I rubbed my forehead, Whatever. Trying to bait a mentally ill criminal into saying something useful was not easy.

“I’m tired. I’m going to sleep for a bit...” I had to restore my energy so that I could think of a way to get out.

Steven said nothing. When he saw me go to the bathroom, he followed me too. He just kept standing behind me. When I brushed my teeth, he brushed his teeth. When I washed my face, he just watched.

1. me.

When I walked out of the bathroom, he also trotted after me and then lay down beside me.

Thinking about how this person could either be a murderer or an accomplice, my body couldn’t help but go as stiff as a board. But since I had to live with this psycho for now, I just had to tolerate it.

However, there was one thing I underestimated, which was his eyes... His long eyelashes were enchanting.

I admitted that people were unable to defend themselves against beauty.

When I came back to my senses, I ultimately put my rationale first. “You sleep on the floor.”

Steven didn’t protest. He just obediently got up and lay down on the floor.

I lay there for a while, wondering why he was suddenly listening to everything I said. The one who nearly strangled me to death this morning was him.

Clearly, I was getting tired. “You can come up here and sleep.../ can’t touch me.”

you need to promise me that you

Chapter 56

Steven immediately climbed onto the bed, laying on the edge. He seemed very energetic and kept staring at me.

“Aren’t you going to sleep?” I was frightened by his stare. The trauma of my previous life before my death shrouded me.

Although I had accepted the fact that I had been reborn, it was difficult for me to sleep with the murderer.

“Stephie, they won’t let you out unless you’re pregnant.”

He said seriously, “They come and watch us every 24 hours. And the meals we eat... all have aphrodisiacs.”

Upon hearing that, I sat up abruptly and tried to spit out what I had eaten. “You should’ve told me that earlier!”

“It’s useless. The fragrance in the air will make us horny too...”

Steven smiled sarcastically. I wondered if it was my illusion. At that moment, I felt a sense of strong coldness from him.

“Have you never thought about resisting? Even when they’re doing this to you?” I asked tentatively. Was it because he was hurt and tortured by the Lincoln family that his mind distorted? Was that the reason which caused him to commit those murders?

He looked into the distance and said in a low voice, “I never thought that... I’d lose something I wanted to protect. But now, I want to resist.”

I couldn’t understand it, but I seemed to recall some memories from the deepest parts of my mind.

“Stephie, what do you want to do?” He looked back at me and asked me seriously.

“I want to leave. I want to...”

I wanted to find the murderer. I wanted Yasmin to get retribution. I even wanted to see Michael repent.

“I can “Stephie, as long as you don’t lie to

I whatever you want.” Steven looked at me seriously
me...”

I felt a little guilty for no reason. “Okay.”

He smiled innocently.

“How did you hurt your throat? Where did you get the scars on your body?” I pretended to be relaxed as I tried to understand him better.

“Fire... Fire in the orphanage...” He suddenly turned his back on me, only mentioning the fire in the

I looked at his back quietly. It turned out that when he became silent, his body could also express his

Looking at his back, I felt his loneliness and helplessness. I subconsciously wanted to reach out to comfort him, but I was soon shocked by my own thoughts.

Was I crazy? I shouldn't be deceived by this monster even though he was good-looking.

Unconsciously, I fell into a deep sleep. As Steven said, the fragrance in the room smelled of lust and made me hot.

I almost woke up from the heat and kicked the blanket irritably, forgetting that I was sleeping with a dangerous person.

He covered the blanket back on me, but I kicked it away several times.

From beginning to end, his breathing was hot, as if he was holding back.

"It's so hot..." I grabbed Steven's arm, delirious. He immediately took a glass of cold water and splashed it on my face.

I woke

up

in shock, sat up, and looked at him warily. "What are you doing?"

He looked at me seriously. "If you don't consent to it, I won't touch you."

"Is pregnancy necessary?" I asked irritably and then angrily picked up the glass to throw it at the door. "You perverts! You're all crazy!"

"For them, having an heir exceeds moral values." Steven's voice was still hoarse. The fire had destroyed his vocal cords.

With such an angelic face, he should have had a beautiful voice in the past.

"I'm going to sleep. I'll be fine after I fall asleep." I turned over irritably, facing away from him.

He whispered hoarsely, "You've really... forgotten me."

I didn't know what he was talking about and couldn't respond. My body was so hot and uncomfortable that I could only force myself to sleep.

In my daze, I had a dream. In it, a delightful voice called out my name, "Stephie, come here..."

"Steven, let's meet at the orphanage on Saturday. You can wait for me there. I want to ask you about the college entrance examination questions.

"Steven, wait for me at the orphanage..."

"Steven, wait for me..."

Chapter 57

I abruptly woke up and started gasping heavily.

The room was already dark. The sky outside the window had also darkened. Unexpectedly, I slept all

afternoon.

Steven was still sitting on the edge of the bed, staring at me. I was so startled to see his gaze that my heart ached.

It was hard not to be scared when I woke up and saw the murder suspect staring at me.

I rubbed my eyebrows, a little confused. "Don't keep staring at me. It's scary."

He lowered his head but soon looked up at me again. His eyes were bright under the illumination of the night light as if he wanted to see through me.

I felt guilty for no reason, so I looked away. I feared that Steven would discover I wasn't the original Stephany.

"Dinner is here."

He pointed to the food on the table, asking me to finish my meal. I dared not to eat it as there must be aphrodisiacs in it.

"I won't eat it. I have no appetite."

Steven thought for a moment before saying, "If you don't eat, you won't be able to stand the hunger."

"I can't stand it even more after eating it..." I complained softly.

He looked at me and said again seriously, "I'm your husband. I can help you."

My mouth twitched. How could he help me?

"You want to have a child to help the Larson family. I can help you as long as you don't lie to me. If you lie..."

His voice was still gentle, but there was a hint of threat. I didn't know what he meant, but I felt inexplicably guilty.

What did I lie to him about? Well... I was hiding the fact that I wasn't the real Stephany.

"I don't want children. I want to escape. The Larson family..."

I wanted to tell him that the Larson family had nothing to do with me, but I was occupying Stephany's identity right now. "Forget it."

If I couldn't fight, I could only compromise.

"We can't leave before you're pregnant."

He seemed to be coaxing me, "Stephie, I'm your husband."

"Don't repeat it..." I looked at Steven warily,

I had no idea that I would be married to a possible murderer, let alone that I would have to cooperate with him to eliminate his vigilance.

I had never thought of handing myself to him.

“I can help you have a baby,” Steven said seriously.

He analyzed it with me from a biological perspective, “After ovulation, the eggs

Can survive in your body for up to 24 hours, so the sperm must wait for the eggs in the uterine cavity in advance. We should have intercourse every other day.”

I looked at him in shock. Did he know what he was saying to me with that serious look on his face?

“Y-You’re a dimwit, a tramp. How did you learn this in an orphanage?” I felt like I couldn’t figure out who he was more and more.

It seemed that he couldn’t wait for me to get pregnant. Did he know that with his current situation in the Lincoln family, they wouldn’t hesitate to erase him after having an heir?

“It’s the eighth hour after ovulation. We still have a chance.”

Steven continued, “It takes one to two days for fertilization and about a week for implantation. It’ll also take at least seven days before the HCG in the urine can be detected with a pregnancy test strip... So Stephanie, if you want to leave, it’ll take 14 days at the earliest before they can get the results.”

I looked at the man who was like an encyclopedia. I leaned slumped against the bed and thought about the current situation.

I was trapped in this cage-like room by the Lincoln family. They treated me as a baby maker.

My situation wasn’t much different from before I died. Life was like a dream, and mine was tragic.

I stared at the ceiling. All I could think about was the murderer, Yasmin, and Michael.

I wanted to see them brought to justice and receive retribution. I was eager to recover my lost memories to find out my parents’ cause of death. But now, I was trapped, in this room. Was there no other way but to get pregnant?

Did I have to accept such a fate?

Chapter 58

“Is there no other way?” I asked.

“Yes...” Steven stared at me.

For a moment, I felt that not only was he not stupid, but he was even as clever as a fox. He was just waiting for me to step into his trap.

Maybe it was my misunderstanding that I thought I was the hunter and he was the prey.

Steven said seriously, “Tomato juice can make two lines appear on the pregnancy test strip, which blood can temporarily deceive them. But the Lincoln family has a family doctor. They’ll take you after they take you out.

“You won’t be able to hide your fake pregnancy then. Unless you’re sure you can escape from them after leaving here.”

It would’ve been better for him not to mention such a method. It was useless.

Of course, I was unsure. I didn’t even know what it was like outside. “How do you know so much? What did you major in in Stamford?”

He didn’t answer me. Right then, my stomach growled with hunger, but I still refused to eat.

After carefully sorting out Stephany’s memories, I discovered that the Larson family had investigated Steven before she married him.

He majored in chemistry and minored in medicine, finance, and computer. He was also proficient in multiple languages.

He was a very rare genius.

Holding my head, I glanced at Steven as I wondered why the Lincoln family wasted such a genius.

No wonder they wanted to keep his genes—he was excellent.

He looked at me. “Do
you need a child?”

He didn’t seem to feel shy or ashamed at all.

I choked. “Let me consider it.”

He nodded, looking at the time. “You still have eight hours to consider. If you’re late, your chances of conception will decrease.”

I collapsed on the bed. What sins had I committed?

I dared not close my eyes now. I would think of the past as long as I closed my eyes.

Those memories were like hell, constantly torturing and eroding my soul.

“Stephie, eat something. Eggs are fine.” Steven peeled a boiled egg for me.

He seemed to worry that I would feel disgusted with him and added nervously, “I’ve washed my hands”

I quickly took the egg and ate it. I was too hungry.

I was curious. Did Stephany starve to death?

Lying on the bed, I looked at Steven, who was still peeling eggs. I asked tentatively, “Steven, have you ever thought about your future? Are you going to be controlled by others your whole life? You’re capable. Don’t you want to resist?”

He didn’t speak, but he nodded after a long time. “I will resist.”

He was boring, but he was indeed good-looking.

Did there really exist a person in the world who had an angelic face but a devilish heart?

He was a rare genius who had been scouted by Stamford. He was the one that the Lincoln family should compete for. Why did he end up like this?

How many secrets did he have?

Why did he fall from a genius to a crazy and mentally disabled person? He was even forced by the Lincoln family to continue the family line.

“Let’s have a baby,”

I thought for a long time and suddenly figured out something.

If I got pregnant, I would become the person the Lincoln family needed to protect the most. After all, I would be giving birth to an heir they needed to carry on their family line.

With this identity, I could use their power to help myself.

Chapter 59

I was trapped in the Lincoln family’s villa for about 13 days. Every day, I kept thinking about the murderer’s motive, path, method, and all possibilities.

I heard vaguely from the helpers of the Lincoln family that the murder case had been closed.

Although Steven surrendered, the Lincoln family balled him out and trapped him at home by using his mental problems as an excuse.

I knew he wasn’t the only perpetrator. At the very least, my murderer was someone else.

I was sure that there must be some kind of relationship between him and the person who killed me.

But after so many days, I didn’t manage to get any clues from him.

Perhaps he was too good at pretending. He did nothing but stare at me in a daze every day.

I wrote on a sheet of paper, analyzing the murderer’s motive and all the suspicious points in my memories.

I wanted to help Zion catch the murderer.

If the murderer wanted to kill the girls who got adopted and left the orphanage, the only survivor of those girls in red dresses was Yasmin.

“Ms. Larson, Mr. James wants to see you,” The nanny knocked on the door and asked me to go over.

This morning, I handed a pregnancy test strip with two lines to the nanny. James should be looking for me regarding this matter.

Steven was right. As long as I was pregnant, I could get out.

The nanny waited outside the door while I changed my clothes. When I left, Steven didn’t say anything.

“You...” Upon walking to the door, I looked back at him.

Forget it. Before I found out the truth, it was safest for him to remain locked up by the Lincoln family. What if he went out to kill people again?

I had never really been able to trust him.

"I'll find you..." As I was walking outside, I vaguely heard Steven say that.

When I looked back, the nanny had already closed the door and was locking several big locks.

"Isn't this too exaggerated?" I asked.

The nanny whispered, "Ms. Larson, you're truly impressive for being able to stay in there with him for so long. You have no idea how scary he is... He has killed people!"

She looked around hesitatingly before continuing, "Mr. Lincoln Senior has found women for him before. You're the luckiest. The others have been scared crazy."

I ignored her words, not caring about the Lincoln family's birth plan.

Arriving in the living room on the first floor, I saw James on the couch. Ignatius was also there.

"Is she pregnant?" Ignatius spoke first.

"It seems to be the case..." The nanny handed him the pregnancy test strip that showed two lines,

He didn't look at it. "Take Stephie to have her blood drawn. Let Dr. Adrian check on her."

I kept my head down and didn't speak to avoid saying anything wrong.

"Dr. Adrian said that you need to draw blood to check your HCG levels. You also need to take a B- ultrasound. The conditions at home are limited. It's best to do it in the hospital."

I breathed a sigh of relief. Once at the hospital, I had a chance to escape.

Ignatius was in a good mood and looked at me. "Go ahead. Be careful."

I nodded and still didn't speak.

He then looked at James. "Stephie is a blessed one. You must treat the child as yours after it's born."

James smiled and nodded. "Yes, Dad."

I lowered my head and sneered secretly. How could James treat the child of others as his own?

"Take care of Stephie well. She's now our hero," Ignatius said happily.

"About my family..." I asked tentatively, fearing that others would suspect I wasn't the actual Stephany.

The reason why Stephany came to the Lincoln family was to help Larson Group tide over the difficulties. If I ignored the Larson family, they would be suspicious of me.

Ignatius said nothing while James said unhappily, "That's none of your business. Your family will get their benefits once the child is born safely."

I nodded and left with the nanny.

Chapter 60

This unborn child would be the key to saving my life.

I arrived at Huma Hospital with the nanny and driver. I stood still for a long time after getting out of the car.

The hospital and its surroundings felt familiar to me. I wasn't dreaming. I had returned with a new identity.

"The autopsy report is out. Stephanie was indeed pregnant when she died. She was pregnant..."

In the hospital corridor, I saw familiar figures—Zion and Rachel.

My legs stiffened, and my breathing quickened. My eyes reddened as I opened my mouth. I tried to say something, but no sound came out.

I wished I could rush over to hug Rachel and reveal my true identity.

But I could never live the same life while holding a different identity than Stephanie.

"It's Michael! I want to kill him! Let me go! Let me kill him!" Rachel was on the verge of collapsing, desperately wanting to kill Michael.

Zion tried to stop her without making any comments.

Rachel shouted in desperation as she struggled forcefully, "Let me go! Let me kill him! Why are they still alive? Why? Yasmin and Michael killed Stephanie. You're a policeman. Why don't you arrest them? Go arrest them!"

Zion continued to block her silently. The atmosphere became tense.

My legs felt numb as I attempted to move forward. My steps were burdened by an unusual heaviness. Rachel..."

"Ms. Larson, this way." The nanny ran back to guide me toward the doctor's office.

I turned to see Rachel. It seemed that Rachel had spotted me as well.

"Stephie..." Rachel pushed Zion aside, scanning the crowd for me.

I stood at the doorway, observing Rachel as she passed by.

I almost forgot that I was no longer Stephanie, even though Stephany's appearance was similar to mine.

"Rachel." Zion chased after Rachel and grasped her wrist. "Please, go back first."

“Zion, you’re a policeman. You’re aware of the numerous suspicious aspects of this case. How could Steve possibly be the murderer? It’s clear that he’s taking the blame for someone else. The real murderer is still out there.

2/2

“Yasmin is highly suspicious. Why did all the red-dressed girls die while she alone survived?” Rachel nervously looked at Zion, imploring him to solve the case quickly.

Zion lowered his eyes, nodding. “I’ll investigate the case thoroughly...

Despite his commitment to a comprehensive investigation, there were numerous uncontrollable factors in this case.

“Did you know that Steve once struggled with a mental illness? He was a genius boy from that orphanage. Do you know why the orphanage later changed its name to Double Stars Welfare Home?

“The term ‘Double Stars’ signifies two genius boys. One of the genius boys was Steve, and another died in a fire many years ago, Simmy.” Rachel shared her findings with Zion.

I stood by the door, listening quietly. The name Double Stars Welfare Home sounded familiar to me.

Suddenly, a headache swept over me, accompanied by flashes of memory fragments crossing my mind. However, I couldn’t make the connection to these fragments.

“How could a genius end up like this?” Rachel wondered why Steven had turned from being a genius

to a madman.

1

I had the same question as Rachel in my mind.

Steven definitely would not share the story behind it. I refrained from asking Rachel more, fearing it might scare her.

Zion said, “Let’s go back.”

“I don’t want to...” Rachel looked around. “I think I saw Stephie a moment ago...

Zion took a deep breath and pulled Rachel away.

1

I sneakily hid by the door, watching Rachel leave before turning into the consultation room.

“Dr. Adrian, is my child developing normally?”

That was another patient in the consultation room.

That patient’s voice made me tense up. It was Yasmin!

Looking up, I found that Yasmin was seated next to the doctor, with Michael accompanying her for the prenatal check-up.

I sneered. They seemed to be leading a happy life.