

## After Death 541

### Chapter 541

"Joel!" Eason shouted in a panic as he rushed up the ladder.

Steven glanced reluctantly at Eason and Joel. "Are you two reenacting the Titanic? I haven't even left yet. What's all the commotion about?"

Only then did Eason realize that Steven was still down there. Even the dogs were afraid of that lunatic.

Without a doubt, those ferocious dogs came to a halt about three meters from us, all baring their teeth and preparing to attack. I was astonished as well. These fierce dogs appeared to be afraid of something. Could it be that they were truly afraid of Steven?

"Come up quickly." I carried Ashton and Xandra out, passing Yara to Maverick, who was guarding outside. As I prepared to exit, the cover above was shut.

Maverick appeared visibly distressed. I should have realized from the start that there had to be someone else out there.

It seemed like the new rule of the Rebels was to only acknowledge the room card and not the individual. Those of us with a VIP room card were being targeted.

"Open the cover!" I slammed the upper cover.

Maverick was also pleading outside, "Please, open the cover. We're all from Huma. Sooner or later, we'll have to go ashore. You can't kill people. This is illegal."

Despite Maverick's continued attempts to reason with the group, it was clear that they were unwilling to listen. The leader stepped on the cover and issued a chilling ultimatum in a commanding voice.

"Those below, listen closely. If you wish to ensure the safety of these two children and the young girl, hand over your room card. Otherwise, I won't hesitate to throw your children into the sea."

I gritted my teeth and clenched my hands. Indeed, all the evil in human nature was unleashed at this moment. I turned to look at Steven, who was eyeing the dogs warily. I couldn't understand what set them off, but they were going wild, slowly closing in on us with the intent to attack.

Realizing he couldn't hold on much longer, I pushed the cover hard. "There are many of you. Allow us to go up first. Then, we'll pass you the room card."

The person above snorted. "I don't believe you. Hand over the room key and I'll let you out."

I took a deep breath. These people were indifferent.

At the base of the ladder, the ferocious dogs cautiously advanced. They appeared to be wary of Steven, but it was clear that they could attack at any moment. Eason noticed that these aggressive dogs were going to pounce on people, so he patted me.

I descended while allowing him to ascend. He exerted great effort in attempting to raise the cover, yet we were positioned beneath while they stood above. They applied pressure on the cover, making it arduous for us to push it open with our own strength.

"I'm a police officer. Let us out!" Eason shouted angrily.

"Police? Hahaha! This cruise is out on the open seas! Why do we need the police?"

People outside laughed. "How impressive are the police?"

Eason punched the cover furiously. Regardless, we needed to find a way out. "I have two VIP room cards in my hand. I'll give them..."

I was just about to ask them if they would allow us to leave when I heard Ashton's innocent voice from outside. "Sir, which color card would you like? I have them right here."

The man sneered. "You little rascal. How would the adults leave the cards with you?"

"Is this the one?"

I peered through the crack in the cover as Ashton pulled a golden room card. It was unlike the room card we held in our hands.

Ours was a plain gold card with no patterns, granting us access to the VIP area and high-end rooms within it. However, the card in Ashton's hand featured a gold pattern and looked even more luxurious.

"Fuck!" I heard the leader curse and then an exclamation.

"Who is this child? I noticed on the bulletin board that there are gold cards exclusively for VIPs and silver cards valid for below the 14th floor. The most common one is the white card, only usable for dining and activities below the sixth floor.

"Then there's the exclusive diamond card, reserved for shareholders and high-level internal personnel. With this card, one can access any area on the cruise, even restricted ones."

I frowned, wondering how many surprises these two kids had for me.

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"Sir, my parents were aware of these cards located down there, so we came to find them. All the staff down there are dead. They all possess this card. There are many of them," Ashton said again.

As he was a kid saying this, most people wouldn't doubt it. His words had a magical effect, triggering the greed and desire of those people.

The leader swore and hit the cover. "Fuck! No wonder they went down. Retrieve the remaining room cards for us. In return, I'll grant you permission to come up. Once you come up, we'll divide the cards equally among us."

"That won't work. These diamond cards are ours. If you want a gold card, I'll give it to you," I continued speaking, building on Ashton's words.

"Damn it! You have so many diamond cards and you're only giving us gold cards? Are you treating us like beggars? Hand over the diamond cards quickly," demanded the people outside, their anxiety palpable.

I fell silent. At that moment, they seemed more anxious than I was. As expected, those people were unable to contain their anger and lifted the cover to descend.

"Don't come down!" Eason ordered angrily. They would die if they came down.

"Hand over the diamond cards." Several people jumped down from above, each wielding a knife.

I furrowed my brows, ready to inform that there wasn't a diamond card to begin with. However, my attention was quickly diverted as I noticed Ashton crouching beside me, flashing me an innocent smile. " Mommy, crouch down."

I was momentarily stunned and suddenly felt a chill down my back. I watched him snap his fingers at the aggressive dogs, and they swiftly charged in our direction. A few of us instinctively crouched down, and the dogs attacked those wielding the knives. The sound of screams filled the air.

"Get up quickly!" Those dogs never stopped once they started biting.

I climbed up and lifted Ashton, my gaze filled with determination. "Ashton! Do those dogs obey your commands? Instruct them to stop! Ashton Lincoln, resorting to violence is not the way to address issues!" Ashton looked at me with confusion in his eyes. He couldn't comprehend his mistake as no one had ever taught him that was wrong. In his perspective, in the law of the jungle, only the strongest survived.

"Listen..." I coaxed gently.

Fortunately, Ashton was easily coaxed and then whistled sharply downward. Despite their reluctance, the fierce dogs bared their teeth and retreated. The entire underground cabin was permeated with the scent of blood. Those who had been bitten were terrified, trembling, and covered in blood.

"Go up first." Eason headed up first, followed by Joel and Steven. Afterward, they guided the others up as well. We couldn't simply stand by and witness them being bitten to death.

"Lock this place. If those dogs come out, everyone will suffer." I searched and found a wire to tighten the bolt on the cover with all my strength.

Those people were injured and did not dare to confront us for the time being, but they were aware of our possession of diamond cards. This could potentially cause trouble.

"Ashton, Xandra, remember that you must respect life under any circumstances." I brought them closer and emphasized the preciousness of life. I stressed the importance of proper defense without going overboard.

After saying that, I was stunned for a moment. If I were alone, I would probably leave these people to fend for themselves. However, with the two children here, I was actually afraid that they would learn from me and go the wrong way.

Some people believe that the parents' actions and words were the most powerful lessons for their children. I was worried that Ashton and Xandra would be like me.

They might struggle to fit into society, face exclusion and isolation, and be treated as outsiders. Therefore, they needed to learn to adapt and integrate into society better than I did. They had to love and cherish life.

Once upon a time, I found it difficult to grasp the true value of life. While I could witness the passing of others with a detached demeanor, the thought of losing those dear to me was unbearable.

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After leaving the cabin, we saw that the entire cruise was empty. Everyone had gone inside their room and was too afraid to come out.

After all, people could only get food with their room cards. If their cards were stolen, they would starve to death. Some even formed alliances to steal cards and get more food to stock up.

Steven and I held a child each while Eason led Yara. We quickly made our way to the elevator entrance. It was crucial to return to the room and lock the door as soon as possible to ensure our safety as it would be dangerous to remain outside.

Maverick glanced around, his voice hushed and urgent. "Hurry, get in the elevator. Something doesn't feel right."

Indeed, as soon as the elevator door opened, several strong men emerged, brandishing sticks, knives, and other weapons. They instantly grinned when they caught sight of us, like hunters spotting their prey. "Which floor are you on? Take out your room key cards and show us," the towering man in the front asked in a commanding voice.

Maverick quickly presented his white card. "Sir, we're on the common floor. We're out to find something to eat. Our kids are hungry..."

The man groaned in frustration as we held the most basic white cards, and they weren't the best. After all, a white card could only be used to receive basic foods such as milk, bread, and eggs.

"Dude, no worries if they have white cards. We'll just snatch them first so that we can have an additional person's meal," suggested the man standing behind him.

The leader agreed, "It makes sense. If you give us all your room cards, we won't harm you. But if you don't, don't blame us for what happens..."

Before the leader could finish, Steven raised his hand to his head and forcefully hit it against the wall.

I couldn't believe my eyes. The man was strong and muscular. Yet, Steven effortlessly pinned him against the wall.

Despite Steven being taller, he didn't appear as strong. How could he resort to violence just because of a disagreement? There were two children present. He should set a positive example for them.

I instinctively lowered my head and glanced at Ashton. "Well, it seems like your dad is engaging in a friendly conversation with them..."

Ashton's eyes sparkled, bearing a striking resemblance to Steven's. He joyfully clapped his hands, exclaiming, "Daddy is amazing!"

This time, the group of strong men was completely furious. "Damn it! You're asking for trouble! Get him!" Joel quickly kicked and punched the person with great agility. Eason wasn't skilled at fighting, but he could bite people. Once he bit others' fingers, he used the opportunity to elbow them.

Maverick trembled with fear as he protected Yara, myself, and our two children. I quickly stepped into the elevator with Yara, Ashton, and Xandra. Ashton's eyes were fixated on Steven as if he were observing him intently.

I whispered, "Ashton, what are you looking at?"

"Dad is clearly capable of killing them in a short time, but he's choosing not to. Why?" Ashton couldn't comprehend it.

Clearly, everyone possessed vulnerable areas, making it remarkably easy to eliminate them by precisely targeting these weak points. So, why did Steven bother to fight?

I was stunned for a moment and glanced at Steven. If Ashton hadn't pointed it out, I wouldn't have realized it... It became clear that Steven had already considered the kids without anyone noticing. It turned out that he also subconsciously wanted to be a good father.

I smiled, not entirely sure why it felt so strangely subtle, especially considering the danger of the situation.

"Because your dad understands the value of respecting life and only resorting to extreme measures when absolutely necessary," I explained softly.

Ashton and Xandra tilted their heads, appearing to digest my explanation.

"Dad, strike the opponent's chin hard. The chin is connected to the brain nerve," Xandra said calmly.

Steven glanced at his angelic little daughter, then swiftly backhanded his opponent on the chin. The man staggered and fell to the ground with a resounding thud.

Afterward, Xandra observed the opponent fighting Joel. He was clearly well-trained and instinctively guarded his chin during the fight. Xandra suggested, "Old man, aim for his eyes."

Instinctively, the opponent raised his hand to shield his eyes. Hence, it allowed Joel to deliver a powerful blow to his stomach, ultimately bringing him down with a forceful punch.

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Joel looked back at Xandra in shock. "Kid, did you just call me 'old man'? I'm not that old!"

Meanwhile, Eason relied on his genius instinct to guide the man toward the stairs. He kicked him down and sprinted back to the elevator to catch his breath.

"Again, just call me Joel." Joel couldn't stop thinking about Xandra calling him "old man" even after the elevator doors closed.

Xandra looked at Joel and said, "But you're clearly older than my dad."

Joel was stunned and fell silent. Eason looked at Joel and asked, "Who's as old as her dad?"

"Don't ask so many questions," Joel retorted.

Eason patted his chest in fear. "Let's go back to our room quickly."

The elevator stopped at the top floor. After getting out cautiously, we found a rich man being stabbed to death in the corridor. It seemed like someone from a lower floor came up to kill him and took his room card.

"Shh." I made a silent gesture and walked slowly toward the room.

The door creaked open, and a group of gangsters emerged. It was clear that they didn't belong on this floor among the wealthy. These murderers had stolen the room cards of affluent individuals. I was shocked and locked eyes with them.

"Come out. There's work to be done." The man shouted toward the room. About five or six young gangsters came out from the other room. They all had tattoos, and some were adjusting and wearing their pants.

"Help..." a woman cried out in the room.

The rich man was obviously killed, and his partner was harassed by these people. This was human nature. "Wow, this woman is gorgeous!" A bold hand eagerly reached out, yearning to caress my face. "There's a young girl here, underage..." The man holding up his pants behind him smiled maliciously at

Yara.

The gangsters showed no mercy, not even to the children. What they displayed was not human behavior but that of beasts. Yara cowered behind Eason and Joel, consumed by fear. I shielded the two children and cast a wary gaze upon the gangsters.

"As usual, kill the men but spare the women and secure their room keys." The leader ran his fingers through his hair, drew a knife, and plunged it into Steven and the others.

One of them tried to force me into the room. Without hesitation, I boldly stepped inside and firmly shut the door with my foot. Killing people in front of children was inappropriate.

In that room, a man was bullying the woman. Along with the man who forcibly pulled me inside, there were two men in total.

The man smiled menacingly as he approached, grabbing hold of my hair. "Here comes another one of excellent quality."

I was pulled over and thrown onto the bed. The tortured and dying woman cried and shook her head at me, her eyes filled with compassion. It was clear that she was in despair. I remained still without resisting or moving.

By the time he took off his pants, my knife was already between his legs. "If you can't take care of your manhood, then I'll ensure it receives the care it needs."

The man fell to the ground, screaming in pain. His body twitched as blood instantly covered the area between his legs.

However, compared to the woman's injury on the bed, his injury seemed minor.

The woman lying on the bed gazed at me in shock. She was tortured and drenched in blood, unable to move. Meanwhile, the man atop her appeared equally stunned, consumed by a murderous rage directed toward me.

Acting swiftly, the woman lifted her legs to ensnare the man, fighting with all her might to keep him from attacking me.

The man raised his hand to hit the woman, but before he could strike, my knife had already pierced his shoulder. "There are major arteries here. If you pull out the knife or move, you'll bleed to death.

"I advise that if you want to survive, take your emasculated friend and head to the medical capsule immediately. If you delay, all of you will be dead."

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The man gazed at me with sheer horror as though he had just witnessed something truly horrific.

"I've already been kind to you, considering I just became a new mother today." I kicked the man out and opened the door.

Steven and the others had defeated the rest in the corridor. Zion was also outside and must have heard the noise. "Let's go back to our room!"

I turned to the woman who had been through unimaginable suffering, "Would you like to join us?"

In such an environment, it was challenging for a woman to live alone. We had all embraced Maverick, and we could welcome another one as well. Moreover, she genuinely made an effort to help me earlier.

Suddenly, the woman burst into tears. After she fixed her hair, it became clear to me that she was the female celebrity the Sacco family's scion had saved in the VIP banquet hall. She quickly put on her coat and limped out. Grabbing the key card, she followed us.

"Thank you. My name is Xandra Zander," she sobbed out the words.

I was stunned for a moment. "You have the same name as my daughter."

Xandra Carlson eagerly reached out to Xandra Zander. "Hello, pretty lady. My name is Xandra as well."

"Thank you, all." Xandra quickly wiped her hands on her clothes, feeling a sense of filthiness engulf her. She thought she would be killed by those people.

om for a meeting," Zion informed everyone.

"Come to my room

I escorted Xandra into our room and instructed her to take a bath. I then retrieved some topical medicine from the medicine box and placed it on the sink for her. "We'll be in the adjoining room. It's safe for you to stay here. Don't wander off. We'll come in later."

I retrieved the room key and asked Xandra to stay in the room. Her eyes were red, and her entire body trembled as she expressed her gratitude.

I gently caressed the two kids' heads. "There's no need to worry, Ashton and Xan will watch over you outside.

"Kids, I've entrusted you with an important mission. While the lovely lady enjoys her bath, you'll be playing in the living room. Your role is to protect her, understand?"

Ashton and Xandra nodded in agreement and obediently took a seat on the couch. I walked out and closed the door. After ensuring the safety of the area, Steven and I went into Zion's room.

"Why did I just hear screams in the corridor?" I asked Steven in a hushed tone.

Steven seemed innocent. "The person who attacked you somehow broke his hand and was screaming. He's really unlucky,"

I felt completely helpless as I watched Steven's unwavering determination to seek revenge.

"We've now reached the high seas, a deep sea area where our satellite phone can no longer contact the police. Our leaders have instructed us to protect ourselves. They've notified the peacekeeping police in the Mileria, who will cooperate with us to carry out the mission.

"Supplies on the cruise are exhausted, and our priority now is to reach the shore. Once on land, we can coordinate our efforts inside and outside," Zion briefed us on the situation.

I grabbed the telescope from his bedside, stepped out onto the balcony, and peered into the distance.'

Once this cruise depletes its supplies, it won't dock. We're approaching uncharted waters..."

Through the telescope, I could see several ships nearby, which I assumed to be the ships of Genome Society.

"The members of the Genome Society are advancing methodically, yet they're not rushing to board the ships for rescue. They seem to have resigned themselves to the situation. They're waiting for the cruise to vanish completely from the surface of the sea, at which point they'll consider themselves safe."

The cruise carried many secrets of Genome Society. Over a thousand people from different countries were on board. If these people were allowed to disembark, the secret would become known. Hence, everyone on the cruise would be trapped in a dead end.

Genome Society refused to allow us and those Rebels to disembark, just as the Rebels aboard this cruise ship also prevented anyone from going ashore. The Rebels were determined to eliminate all the financial supporters of Genome Society.

From their viewpoint, every individual aboard our ship was already considered deceased.

Rachel lay on the bed, coughing weakly, her eyes red. "Stephie... are we unable to go back?"

"Don't worry, I won't let you die." I turned around and promised Rachel.

The room fell silent.

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Eason remained silent and appeared quite despondent. Joel also remained quiet, appearing lost in deep thought.

As a tourist on the cruise, Maverick lost his family and witnessed a massacre. He hid away, silently weeping,

Rachel's complexion appeared pallid, accompanied by intermittent coughing.



"Rachel's running a fever, putting her at risk of infection. She must take antibiotics." Maverick, the doctor, quickly noticed that something was amiss with Rachel. He immediately rushed to assess her condition.

Zion grew nervous and immediately stepped forward, gently touching Rachel's head. "Why didn't you tell me you were unwell?"

Rachel shook her head, her eyes teary. "I didn't want you to worry..."

I clasped my hands together and took a step forward. "The medical capsule on this cruise ship is fully equipped with a wide range of medicines. Just tell me what you need and I'll go get it."

"It's too dangerous outside," Maverick replied anxiously.

Venturing outside was like risking one's life. It was surely chaotic out there. With supplies only accessible through a room card, they had to be controlling the medicine too. Those in need of medicine for a headache or fever would have to visit the medical capsule. The medical capsule at present was unquestionably perilous.

"I'm uncertain about when this cruise ship will be able to dock, and I'm not even sure if it can dock. We can't afford to prolong her condition any further," I declared seriously.

Despite the tremendous danger, I felt compelled to go. Rachel's life was at stake, and I couldn't bear to lose my best friend. As I caught a glimpse of Rachel, her eyes became filled with tears. She closed her eyes, seemingly devoid of strength.

She desperately wanted to say something, but it appeared that the words simply eluded her.

"I'm coming with you guys." Zion was certain that I would go with Steven.

"No, it's too dangerous for just you guys to go. It would be best for everyone to go together." Eason insisted as he stretched and glanced at Joel.

Joel regained his composure and nodded affirmatively. "Sure. Let's go together."

Eason was quite astute and recognized that Maverick couldn't be left alone. After all, as an outsider, he couldn't be fully trusted. "You're a doctor. Come with us. Otherwise, we wouldn't know which medicines to take."

"I... I can't do it. It's too dangerous, and I'll hold you back," Maverick rejected nervously.

He was visibly scared. "Besides, I can still take care of her if I stay. Don't worry, I'll never leave this room until you come back."

I glanced at Zion and checked the time. "I'll bring Ashton and Xan over. Xandra should've finished her bath by now. Let's bring them here to keep Rach company."

I didn't trust Maverick, but I could trust the two children. From my perspective, I saw that Maverick didn't harbor any serious malice. He was simply timid and afraid of death. It was fine to let him stay.

Steven nodded and went to pick up Xandra and the two children. "There's food and water in this room. Remember, no matter what happens, do not leave the room until we come back, and do not open the door for anyone. Do you understand?"

Xandra nodded.

Steven crouched down and gazed at Ashton. "You're a brother and a man. You must protect your sister, yourself, and Rachel. She's your mom's best friend. Do you understand?"

Rachel's eyes gleamed with excitement. It was as if a surge of energy had revitalized her. She sat up with her arms propped up. She looked at the two children in shock. "How long was I unconscious? What have I missed?"

After saying that, she rubbed her eyes and said, "These two kids look so much like you both."

I smiled and proudly introduced, "These are my newborn son and daughter. I've just become a mother without experiencing any pain. They're able to walk straight after being born."

Rachel was utterly astonished. "I can't believe it..."

Ashton politely introduced himself to Rachel. "Hello, Rachel. My name is Ashton Lincoln, and my sister's name is Xandra Carlson."

Rachel was filled with excitement as she looked at me. "I'll take great care of them. Please stay safe and return as soon as you can."

I nodded and glanced at Steven and the others. "Everyone must return safely."

"The pharmacy is located beneath the medical capsule. To reach the pharmacy, we have to go through the medical capsule. It's going to be a tough challenge," Joel said in a hushed tone.

I realized that going to the medical capsule this time was a narrow escape. With Rachel's persistent high fever, we couldn't stand by and watch her succumb to the infection.

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I was quite surprised not to encounter anyone during our journey to the medical capsule. Most people did not possess the "killer gene" and chose to stay in their rooms. However, a few individuals with this gene formed alliances and committed acts of violence in order to gain resources and advantages.

"It has been incredibly quiet." Zion frowned.

Everyone noticed how unnervingly quiet the journey had become, instilling a sense of panic. As I moved to press on, Steven's firm grasp stopped me in my tracks, preventing Eason and Zion from advancing further. Clearly, he had sensed that something was amiss.

But Joel kept walking forward on his own. Steven didn't stop him, nor did he notice that several of his good teammates had stopped behind him.

Joel shrugged and continued to walk forward with pride. "A storm is coming. History books often mention that when things go awry, demons are believed to be close by. Be careful, there may be an ambush somewhere."

Before he could finish speaking, someone lunged at him with a knife and slashed. He jinxed it! "Fuck!"

Joel kicked the person away and looked back, shocked. "Damn it! Are we all in the same group? You're being disloyal!"

Eason couldn't help but laugh. "You were moving forward as if you were sightseeing."

Joel fought the attacker and then noticed seven or eight people sitting in the corner, casually eating snacks. It was clear they were waiting for something to happen, and the person who had attacked was just bait.

"Young kid, where are you going?" A strong man loomed around the corner and asked coldly, stepping against the wall.

At first sight, Joel appeared to be a high school student, inadvertently giving the impression of youthfulness. This led others to underestimate him.

"I need to get to the medical capsule. Please, sir, let me through. My sister has a high fever, and I must get her medication." Joel pretended to be obedient.

"Young kid, there's only one way to access the medical capsule. It's fine for you to go there, but you must understand the rules. Do you have anything valuable to contribute?" the leader inquired.

Joel lowered his head and gazed at the watch on his wrist. "This watch holds considerable value, you see

"

They burst into laughter. "Haha... We're clueless about the destination those bastards would sail to. It's a good thing this watch is valuable."

He reached out to grab Joel's watch. "But food is more important on this cruise. How about handing over your room card instead?"

"I believe all of you are reasonable people. Why not consider this? We'll provide you with a room card and all our valuable belongings. In exchange, would you be willing to let us go?" Eason approached them to negotiate after realizing that Joel was unable to handle the situation.

The man looked at Eason and smiled. "Okay, let me see if you have anything valuable."

Eason also removed his watch. "It's a Rolex, worth over 100,000 dollars."

The man nodded in agreement. "Great! Pass me your room card. Both of you can go through."

Eason handed Maverick's white room card to the other person and also offered him his watch. Despite the pain in his heart from parting with the watch, there was nothing he could do. Sometimes, losing material possessions was necessary to avert a greater disaster.

I shifted my gaze toward Steven, then toward myself. I realized I had nothing of significant value.

"How about you guys?" The leader stood up and stared at me.

I shook my head. "I don't own jewelry or anything valuable. My family is poor."

"You look very beautiful. Stay here and let them get the medicine," the leader said as he pinched my face with obvious bad intentions.

Gasping, I offered a brief prayer for his hand. Just as I imagined, before he could release his grip on my face, Steven swiftly intervened. There was not a hint of emotion on Steven's face as he delicately broke the leader's hand, producing a distinct clicking sound.

His bulging muscles contorted with agony, revealing his astonishment. Clearly, he had not anticipated Steven, despite his lean and tall appearance, possessing such formidable strength.

"If you don't need your hand, I can break it," Steven declared in a commanding voice. He used his backhand to immobilize the leader's neck, applying just enough force. In mere seconds, the man lost consciousness.

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The leader didn't even have time to cry out in pain. When Steven launched his attack, the leader's friends couldn't sit still. They all stood up to step forward and take action.

Joel and Eason exclaimed, "Why couldn't you mention that you were going to fight earlier? I offered up my watch for nothing!"

Eason and Joel attacked two people from behind, and a fight started. Seven or eight people were on the other side, and I didn't even make a move. When Steven went crazy, he could handle everyone by himself.

Eason clenched his teeth as he witnessed Steven render the last person unconscious against the wall, instinctively seeking shelter behind Joel. "Sure enough, never mess with a lunatic. Is he even human? His hands are so powerful. It's like he could crush people's heads."

Joel flexed his fingers. "I can do it as well. Shall I try it on you?"

Eason looked at Joel with disgust. "Stop bragging. Let's leave right away."

Once we had secured and moved the unconscious people to the staircase, a few of us hurried to reach the medical capsule. However, we soon discovered that the situation was far more complex than we had anticipated.

Those people we encountered posed no threat. It was the armed bodyguards of the wealthy who were the real danger.

Not far away, we noticed two bodyguards dressed in black standing at the entrance of the medical capsule. It was clear that they were there to secure the entrance.

Inside the medical capsule, numerous affluent individuals sought refuge while their bodyguards stood watch to thwart any attempts by the Rebels to approach and harm them.

"I don't want to argue with you. We just want to get some medicine," I said as I walked over with my hands raised. That was all I could do at that moment. They were armed with guns.

"No one is allowed to enter or leave the medical capsule," the bodyguard said coldly, pointing the gun at

us.

"Medications are a resource that we all share. If anything goes wrong and we don't unite internally, the Rebels will inevitably attack us. How much longer can you hold on? Why not allow us to enter and retrieve the medication?"

"We'll figure out a way to establish contact with the police and ensure our safe return to Huma as soon as possible." Zion stepped forward, revealing his identity as a police officer.

The bodyguards exchanged glances, instantly informing those inside through their headsets. Moments later, the door swung open, revealing Dayton from the Sacco family.

"What medicine do you need?" he inquired.

"Antibiotics," I responded immediately.

"Wait here for a moment. I'll go find the doctor to get it," he said, then turned and left.

I had placed a great deal of trust in him. His willingness to defend Xandra demonstrated that he possessed a kind heart. However, I had miscalculated the depths of human nature.

Dayton eventually emerged, but he didn't bring the medicine I had hoped for. Instead, he was forcefully expelled by those within.

He felt resigned. "They refuse to share the medicine, claiming that the medical resources are scarce and must be reserved for emergencies."

"Then why did you come out?" Joel was annoyed.

Dayton hung his head low, still feeling a lingering sense of grievance. "They believe I'm too kind and instructed me to leave... Hence, they forcefully expelled me."

I pondered for a moment. I knew I couldn't rely on him. I asked softly, "How many people are inside?"

"There are 31 bodyguards inside, plus the two outside, bringing the total to 33. In addition, there are over a dozen employers, all with strong ties to Winston," Dayton implied that breaking in was unlikely.

Winston was the one who seriously injured Rachel. He also intended to take the opportunity to remove Rachel's heart and replace his own. How could he give us the medicine after being exposed by us and attempting to kill us?

I furrowed my brows, struggling to come up with a solution. I turned to Steven, realizing that he was our only hope. Without a doubt, all eyes rested upon him.

Steven was silent, indicating that he was just a genius, not God.

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"Let's go. If they don't let us in, what else can we do but leave?" Steven shrugged and said he had no other option because they were carrying guns.

"But..." Zion was a bit reluctant. They managed to reach the medical capsule, and Rachel was still suffering from a high fever.

"If we go back..." Eason also thought that something might happen to Rachel if they went back like this.

Steven disregarded the words of others and gestured for everyone to leave. Observing Steven's action, I chose to follow suit without uttering a single word.

A loud bang suddenly rang out. Without anyone paying attention, Steven swiftly turned around and forcefully bumped the two bodyguards' heads together, causing them to faint instantly. Steven picked up the guns from the ground and tossed them to Zion and Eason.

"You should've given me the gun," Joel said excitedly. With his young mind, he always craved thrilling adventures.

Steven completely ignored Joel, kicked open the door of the medical capsule, and boldly stepped inside. The individuals within immediately noticed it and instantly aimed their guns at Steven.

Not to be outdone, Eason and Zion promptly counteracted by raising their guns. However, they faced a formidable number of adversaries on the opposing side.

Steven raised his hand and showed his injured palm. "If you shoot me, you'll all die. Mr. Thorpe, you should be fully aware of why the Rebels are seeking the president of Crowdstar Group. Your only chance of survival is to locate and deliver the president of Crowdstar Group to the Rebels alive."

Winston pondered for a moment and looked at Steven warily. "As far as I know, you're from the Lincoln family. You can't be the president of Crowdstar Group."

"Why is it impossible? Everything's possible. What if I truly am?" Steven sneered as he negotiated with Winston.

Winston sat in the wheelchair, gripping the handle tightly. "If you're truly the president, we just need to detain you for now. Once your hand recovers, we'll bring you to test your palm print and irises."

I looked nervously at Steven. In such a brief period, the strategy he devised was... to sacrifice himself?

"Okay, I promise to stay. Once my hand is healed, I'll go with you to the safe for testing, but I have conditions. Get the medicine my friend needs. Also, send a doctor to accompany them and treat the injured," said Steven firmly.

I stepped forward anxiously. "Steven..."

Steven flashed me a comforting smile. He whispered to me, "Don't worry. If I'm staying, they should be the ones who are afraid."

I breathed a sigh of relief, but I was still a little worried. What if these lunatics were inhumane?

Winston sneered. "What if I don't agree?"

"Then both sides will suffer big losses. Even if we die, we'll manage to kill half of your bodyguards. You're aware of the current situation outside. Those crazy people are targeting all the wealthy individuals in the VIP area. The room cards and resources that you possess are what they're looking for now."

Steven was correct. Without bodyguards, they would die miserably on the cruise. Eason and Joel exchanged glances and agreed. Steven proved himself to be a skilled negotiator. He made a clear and

concise argument.

It was important to recognize that even if they were to die, both sides would experience significant losses. Winston knew that the risk was not worth it for a few antibiotics.

"Go and get the medicine, and find a doctor to follow them," Winston finally agreed.

I looked nervously at Steven. Despite Maverick being a doctor, Steven still requested another doctor, implying that he didn't fully trust Maverick. We needed to return to Rachel's room as soon as possible.

## Chapter 550

Steven tenderly brushed his fingers against my cheek. "Go back and take care of Rachel. Whatever you cherish, I'll do anything necessary to help too."

He was willing to do whatever it took to protect everything that I held dear. My eyes were filled with tears, and I cast my gaze downward.

He said "you" and did not mention the name "Stephie". At that moment, I felt a sense of self-righteousness and believed that he truly cared for me as a person, my soul, and who I truly was. He loved me for who I was.

"Those lunatics from the Rebels will make more moves soon. We won't be apart for long. Listen to me," Steven comforted me in a hushed voice.

I nodded and waited for the doctor to bring the medicine. Then, we left. Zion also turned and looked at Steven thankfully. Without Steven, they might not have made it out of the ruined building in Manchernius. "I'm sorry for sharing your food." Steven grinned as he was escorted to a corner by Winston's subordinates.

Winston insisted that the doctors handle his hand with utmost care to avoid any damage to his palm print. Unfortunately, even the most advanced surgical procedure was unable to fully restore the original shape of the print. Upon learning of this, Winston was furious. He intended to kill Steven.

Luckily, someone intervened to stop Winston. "The design of the safe primarily relies on palm prints, specifically the lines of our palm and our fingerprints. The injury he sustained was to his palm, which is not a critical area, so it should not pose a significant concern."

After hearing this, Winston felt a wave of relief. "We absolutely can't allow someone with an injured palm to escape. We need to locate the president of Crowdstar Group as quickly as possible and hand him to them.

"But we're all part of the same group, all members of the business industry. Should we really hand over our companions?" someone, still guided by their conscience, asked nervously.

Winston exclaimed with rage, "If we don't hand him over, everyone will die! This cruise is getting closer to the deep sea. Genome Society has been following us, yet they never boarded the cruise to rescue us. Why? They're waiting and watching.

"They're watching all of us go on the brink of death before they sink the cruise!"

Therefore, they needed to save themselves. They had to promptly meet all the Rebels' requirements so that they could return or dock nearby.

"Have you considered the real purpose behind the Rebels' request for you to locate the president of Crowdstar Group? They aim to sow discord among you, fostering suspicion and ultimately driving you to kill each other.

"Even if you go back alive, you'll distrust each other, which will prevent further investment in Genome Society. Ultimately, the financial support for the Huma branch of Genome Society will be lost, and it'll disappear," Steven calmly stated that this was the true intention of the Rebels.

Hence, the Rebels put forth great effort to orchestrate a lame killing game, but their primary objective was not to condemn all passengers on the cruise to death. It was just that without some casualties, they wouldn't be able to tap into the darkness and animosity inherent to human nature.

Thus, the game had to be played, and someone had to die.

Steven continued with a smile, "Natural selection, survival of the fittest. Only those who make it to the end can truly leave alive. However, the Rebels will undoubtedly redefine the game rules for those who survive. For instance, only half of you present will manage to survive."

The moment Steven finished speaking, the rich people present visibly paled, and their expressions changed. They wondered whether he meant that they had to kill each other.

Indeed, as soon as Steven's words fell, the new game rules echoed throughout the entire cruise's speakers on a loop. "There are approximately 200 people on each floor. However, only half of you can survive. Have fun!"

They aimed to decrease the number of people from 1,000 to 500. Afterward, it would be further reduced to 200. Then, it would continue to decrease gradually.

As soon as the broadcast ended, Winston lost control and grabbed the gun from the bodyguard beside him. He directed the gun at Steven. "Who exactly are you?"