## **Chapter 6 My Master**

Lilly looked around, yet she still saw only an empty room. "Who are you?" she asked in a shaking voice.

"I'm your master," the voice answered calmly.

The little girl scowled at the absurd response. "I don't have a master," she said firmly.

Suddenly, a shadowy figure sat in the chair next to the bed. The young man, dressed in a white robe, was not visible to the rest. He had blood-red lips, piercing grey eyes, and a high nose. He exuded a cold, sinister aura.

The man glared at the little girl before him and thought, I thought she was going to be an ignorant dumb child. It seems like it isn't that easy to fool her...

"Tulip." Before he could continue, Lilly hissed, "My name is not Tulip. I'm Lilly."

The man rubbed his chin and said, "I'm really your master. Your mum asked me to be your master when she was still around."

"No, she won't," Lilly protested. She did not believe her mother would give her up to a stranger.

The man was speechless at her denial. When Jean was about to die, she saw him and begged him to protect Lilly and the Crawfords.

The little girl was only two years old then and could not see his spiritual body. However, the fact remains that he was her master! When

Lilly was on the verge of death two days ago, she could finally hear his voice. Nonetheless, she refused to believe his words.

The man rubbed his nose and stated, "Jean Crawford is your mother, and you are Lilly Hatcher. I know who you are."

Lilly pursed her lips and retorted, "Everyone knows that."

What a clever young lady. The Hatchers would never be able to bully her if it weren't for her petite stature and desire to be loved.

The man smirked and replied, "Don't overthink everything, little one. When you are well enough, we can do the ceremonious activities.

My name is Pablo Belmont. I was a formidable man in my past life."

Noticing Lilly's confused expression, Pablo explained, "It's natural that you don't know who I am because I wasn't born in your era. However, I'm a talented man. I can teach you many things, such as to protect yourself from bullies."

"Will great men perish?" Lilly inquired. When she realized her question had met with silence, she asked again, "If you're as capable as you said, how did you die?"

Pablo was rendered speechless by her difficult questions. Lilly clutched her sheets and pursed her lips. "If you're really my master, why did you leave me alone?" Nobody cared about her since her mother died, not even when she was crying or hurt. For the past year, she tried her best to avoid stepping on anyone's toes. Despite her efforts, her father and grandparents did not adore her. Debbie even beat her up at times.

"From now on, I'll protect you," Pablo stated solemnly. His face hardened, and he offered no further explanation. Lilly bit her lower lip and turned away from him.

Pablo patted Lilly's head and said, "Get some rest. I'll be back later. This is my welcome gift for you." He had rushed to see Lilly and needed to return to tie up any loose ends.

Lilly felt a searing sensation and found red threads circling her wrist. The room fell silent once again. She looked around but saw no one. To her surprise, her aching body felt better, and her heart was at peace.

After ten days, Lilly's wounds mostly recovered. Finally, she was well enough to return home.

"This is a miracle. She has managed to heal so quickly. Given the severity of her injuries, I expected it to take three months," a doctor said incredulously.

Gilbert soon arrived and observed Lilly on the bed, her eyes glued to the red string around her wrist. She looked immensely lonely and afraid.

"Lilly, what's wrong?" He reached out and patted her head gently. "What's this?" He pointed to the red string and asked curiously. He did not remember seeing the item on Lilly's wrist last night.

Lilly raised her head and asked, "Where's my rabbit, Uncle Gilbert?"

Gilbert recalled that while Lilly was unconscious, she held on to a worn-out rabbit stuffed animal. He quickly wiped the snow off the little girl and emptied her bag to get her ready for the emergency room. He tossed the filthy rabbit aside in his moment of panic.

"Was the rabbit important, Lilly? I'm afraid that it's gone," Gilbert spoke gently. He quickly added, "I can get you a brand new rabbit toy. I'm going to buy it right now!"

Lilly bit her lips as her eyes started to redden. She tried desperately to stop the tears from streaming down her cheeks. She squeaked, "Mommy got me the rabbit."

Daddy threw all of Mommy's belongings away. The little rabbit was the only thing left. It was the only thing Mommy had left for me, and it was now gone. Mommy's gone, my so-called master is gone, and my rabbit is gone.

When Anthony entered the room and saw Gilbert and a tearful Lilly, he scowled and asked solemnly, "What happened?"

"It's not my fault, Anthony! Lilly had left her rabbit at the Hatcher Mansion," Gilbert said innocently. He did not want to admit the rabbit was gone for good for fear of upsetting Lilly. If he said it was with the Hatchers, there was a glimmer of hope.

Anthony said warmly, "I'll get you a brand new toy, Lilly. Don't be upset." He was more than capable of purchasing all the rabbit toys in the world if she desired.

"It's the only gift Jean left for Lilly," Gilbert said, shaking his head.

"Let's go get it back," Anthony instructed. He did not know whether the rabbit was still at the Hatcher Mansion. If it wasn't, he swore to dig through all the bins in South City to get it back.

"I want to go too, Uncle Anthony!" Lilly said. Apart from the rabbit, she still had something important to retrieve.

At the Hatcher Mansion, Richard and Stephen were seated in the living room, looking unkempt. The place had lost much of its former splendor after the debtors seized everything of value.

Stephen sat on the couch, unshaven and tired-looking.

"Why did you owe so much money, Stephen? What are we going to do?" Paula cried.

The Hatchers were declared bankrupt the day Stephen was admitted to the hospital. Not only were their assets seized by the creditors, but the Hatcher Mansion was also forcefully reclaimed. They were now without a place to stay.

Richard yelled, "Why the hell are you crying? None of this would happen if you treated Lilly better."

"Why are you blaming it all on me? You weren't nice to your granddaughter either!" Paula protested.

"Stop arguing!" Stephen bellowed. He had spent the entire day dealing with his company's bankruptcy. Furthermore, he could face jail time as the court became involved in the case.

Richard and Paula remained silent, regretting their previous mistreatment of Lilly. Given her relations with the Crawfords, they might have had a chance to join the upper echelons of society had they been kind to her.

"Ungrateful brat. She has completely forgotten about us after becoming rich," Paula said bitterly.

We are her grandparents after all. How can she be so heartless and ungrateful? A family is where we learn to forgive and forget. Moreover, this wasn't even our fault. She pushed Debbie down the stairs and caused her miscarriage.

Just then, Debbie walked down the stairs and coaxed, "Don't worry. Lilly will definitely come back."