

## Ex-Wife 1921

### Chapter 1921

"You can't think like that." Quinton rested his hands on Renee's shoulders, and said dotingly, "Just let me handle things like this. You have to lead a happy life with Adie and Abby. I'll earn money, get revenge, and revive our family,"

"I can't let you do everything, that would be selfish. We should do this together!" Renee said agitatedly, her eyes watery. She was too impulsive. She had only thought about her happiness and had forgotten about her responsibilities. To live a good life, she needed to take revenge and rebuild her family.

"I'm the one at fault here. I brought this up just when you made up your mind to leave, and it feels like I'm guilt- tripping you. Listen to me-just go live on the island with the kids and stay away from all of these conflicts. The further you are from this place, the less affected you'll be by that heartless man!" Quinton regretted bringing up their family honor. He was reluctant to part with her, but he felt like he had broken Renee's wings by forcing reality down her throat.

"Don't worry, Quinton. Don't you know me? If I don't agree with it, you wouldn't be able to guilt-trip me even if you wanted to." Renee took a deep breath, seemingly enlightened. "I'll talk to Adie. We'll return to Sun Island one day. but not now. I need to work with you to resolve everything in Beach City, then we can go back together. What do you think?"

"What's your plan?" Quinton was not happy that Renee had decided to stay. "I've been investigating the truth of our family's bankruptcy back then, and the families capable of such a thing aren't easy to deal with. If we want to go after them to revive our family, it'll take a long time... I don't know when you and the kids will be able to return to the island." The current Everheart family had neither power nor influence, and in its current state, there was no way it could shake the big families in Beach City, even with Carmine Pawnshop and the company Renee established with the Osborne family. Besides, they would make a lot of enemies, and it would become a very dangerous situation. He didn't want that for Renee and the kids.

"There's no rush to go back. Home is wherever we both are!" Renee clenched her fists and made up her mind. "Stop trying to change my mind, Quinton. I know what I should do."

"But..." Quinton hesitated, not knowing what to say. He knew Renee had made up her mind, and he wouldn't be able to change it.

"Also, I noticed a slight issue today..." Renee changed the topic, her eyes gleaming.

Quinton frowned. "What issue?"

"You need a girlfriend!"

### Chapter 1922

Quinton jerked back, his eyes wide in indignation. "You're being rude. How could you make fun of me like this? Why should I get a girlfriend?"

"Calm down, Quinton. We're of the same age, but I've got two kids now. Isn't it normal for you to have a girlfriend by now? It's simple biology," Renee said cheekily, trying to persuade him. If Quinton found a lover, he wouldn't be so lonely, and she would feel reassured even if she and the

kids decided to move back to Sun Island one day. "Nonsense! I refuse to get married or have children. I have no interest in women," Quinton scoffed. He had never considered such a thing over the years, and the only woman he had ever loved was Joanne.

"You're not interested in women?" Renee raised her brows and thought about it, then nodded wisely. "So, you like men."

Quinton stared at his sister, speechless. When had he said that? His sister might be the only person alive brave enough to insinuate that the infamous Night Demon liked men.

"It's okay-you don't have to feel embarrassed. Society is quite open-minded now, and I'm fine with it. It'll be great to have a brother-in-law!" Renee had always been an open-minded person, and she smiled at Quinton encouragingly. "Is there anyone you like? If not, I can introduce some guys to you. Azure Group recently hired some interns who graduated from famous colleges, and are pure men who specialize in research. I think they're all good candidates for you."

"That's enough!" Furious, Quinton smacked Renee's head. "How dare you call yourself my sister? You want me to like men?"

"You said you aren't interested in women!"

"Yeah, but I'm not interested in men either. I don't want to think about anything other than managing Carmine Pawnshop and Azure Group. I want to revive our family and avenge our parents quickly!" Quinton didn't want to consider romance until he settled those things. He wasn't interested in romance either.

"So, you're interested in women, but you don't want the complicated emotions of a relationship, right?" Renee asked.

"Well, you can put it that way." Quinton's expression was aloof as he said, "It's very troublesome to try and figure somebody out... It's more tiring than working. It's already exhausting seeing you and Stefan, and if I get myself involved in a relationship like that, I'll go mad."

"I understand." Renee snapped her fingers. "You want to, but you're afraid that you can't. It's fine, just leave it to me."

"What do you mean?" Quinton demanded, looking anxious. "What do you want to do?"

"Didn't I just tell you? I'm going to help you with your love affair." Renee grinned and smacked her brother's shoulder. "Just give me a few days... You'll only need to appear when I ask you to."

It was a bright afternoon in an elegant dessert shop, where lively music was playing.

Renee ordered her favorite strawberry mousse cake and mango pancake. She enjoyed her food, waiting patiently for the special friend she was supposed to meet. They had arranged to meet at two, but it was already four o'clock and her friend was nowhere to be seen.

## Chapter 1923

Renee wasn't angry or surprised-she had expected that her friend might not come. After half an hour, almost all the customers in the dessert shop had left except for her. To anybody else, it looked like she was there for the free air-conditioning.

"Madam, you've been at the shop for more than two hours. Do you need any help?" A waiter came over and asked kindly.

"I'm waiting for someone." Renee looked up awkwardly and added, "Give me a taro tiramisu."

"Umm... Okay." The waiter nodded hesitantly and left.

Renee raised her brows, looking around. They couldn't kick her out as long as she kept ordering food.

Renee took out her phone and texted her friend. "Aren't you coming? The waiter said I've been here for too long... But it's alright-I'm a shameless person. I'll wait for you." She sent the message, but didn't get a reply.

Night was nearing, and the waiter kept glancing at Renee expectantly.

Finally, the windchime at the door rang as the door opened, and someone walked in.

"Welcome!" The waiter greeted the customer enthusiastically. The newcomer was a slim and gloomy woman with eyes like the moon. "Madam, how many people are with you?"

"The person I'm meeting is already here," the woman said calmly and headed straight to Renee, who had waited there for almost half a day.

"There you are, Joanne!" Renee stood up and smiled brightly. "I knew a kind person like you wouldn't ignore me." Joanne stood across Renee, her expression cautious as she asked coldly, "Is there anything you want with me?" "Do I need a reason to see you?" Renee stood up and pulled out the chair in front of Joanne. She reached out to take Joanne's bag. "Sit down. You came a long way, so you shouldn't be standing around. There are all kinds of tasty desserts in this shop you should try!"

"Don't touch me." Joanne scowled guardedly. She placed her bag beside her and slowly sat down. "I came to tell you not to contact me again. Do me a favour and leave me alone."

The atmosphere became tense, and Renee said nothing as she used her phone to order dessert for Joanne.

"Just have something small to eat. I told you the food here is very good. If you're in a bad mood, you should have some dessert. That's how I relieve stress!"

Joanne pursed her lips and smiled reluctantly. "Who told you I'm in a bad mood? I've been doing what I like with no one to disturb me, so I'm in a great mood."

Renee laughed awkwardly. "I guess seeing me ruined your mood then. I'm sorry!"

## Chapter 1924

Joanne stared at Renee contemplatively. "Just tell me what you want since you were so determined to meet me." It was not the first time Renee had asked Joanne out for coffee, and Joanne usually ignored all her texts. She knew Renee hadn't expected her to show up.

Renee sighed dramatically. "We escaped death together, but you still don't trust me. I just want to talk to you, so there's no need to be so suspicious!" Renee smiled at Joanne warmly, speaking like she was an old friend.

"Really?" Joanne relaxed slightly. She picked up the glass of lemon water in front of her and sipped it.

"Why should I lie?" Renee added sincerely, "You might not consider me a friend, but I see you as one. I've always wanted to talk to you over coffee."

Joanne pursed her lips, then lowered her head and stirred her drink absent-mindedly. "How have you been lately? I heard that... you got into trouble. You almost died, didn't you?"

"That's right." Renee nodded. "Honestly, my days have been full of ups and downs. I became blind and nearly died from poisoning."

"So, it's true..." Joanne's eyes widened in horror, and she looked at Renee sympathetically. She couldn't imagine what Renee had gone through.

"Don't feel sorry for me what happened to me is nothing compared to what you've been through. Don't worry, I'm a strong person!" Renee laughed and rubbed her nose awkwardly.

"We can't compare pain." Joanne placed her hand on Renee's and said solemnly, "I know how you feel-I've been there. I can tell that you're not doing so well."

"It's fine. Things are still good, so we should meet while we can. Fate is strange, and I could die tomorrow... Who would you meet for coffee then?" Renee said teasingly.

"Don't say that. It's unlucky!" Joanne scolded lightly. "You were right-we're friends who escaped death together. We shouldn't waste the time we have."

"You're right!" Renee nodded firmly. Even though Joanne had been through hell, she was still such a pure and kind soul. A person like her deserved happiness.

The waiter served them their desserts, and Renee enthusiastically introduced her favorite food to Joanne. They behaved like they had been best friends for many years. They tried each other's desserts and kept gushing over them, giggling like schoolgirls.

\*Joanne, what have you been up to lately? You're so hard to reach!"

## Chapter 1925

Renee munched on a soft cake as she casually asked Joanne.

The smile on Joanne's face froze, and her gaze turned icy. "Why are you asking?"

"I'm just asking; I don't have any hidden agenda, I promise." Renee put two fingers together and said seriously. "I swear I'm just concerned about you as a friend. If I lie, let me be struck by lightning."

"There you go again!" Joanne immediately frowned. "Stop saying such unlucky things!"

"What else can I do? I have to prove my innocence so you won't be so guarded around me." Renee shrugged and pouted.

"Fine, but just keep it to yourself." Joanne took a deep breath and confessed, "I've been working as a language teacher at an elementary school. Mr. Hunt helped me get the job. He even bought a three-bedroom house for me near the school. I spend the day with my students, and go home to watch dramas or scroll through my phone at night. It's calm and peaceful... It's the happiest I've been in years." Joanne felt like she had been reborn. She didn't want to think about her terrible past, and if there was a way to remove those memories, she'd gladly do it.

"Did Stefan... help you that much?" Renee asked in surprise. Stefan looked aloof and distant, but he had actually done something so kind on the quiet.

"Don't get me wrong-we're not in that kind of relationship!" Joanne waved her hand dismissively. "He's a good guy, but he's only helping me because he feels sorry for me. We're honorable people, and he's loyal to you, so don't get him wrong."

"I didn't even think of that," Renee hurriedly explained. "I'm just surprised he did something so kind... He's usually quite aloof." Stefan might have approached Joanne to defeat Quinton back then, but he had nothing to gain from helping Joanne now. It was unlike him.

Joanne shook her head. "You don't know him well. He's the most loyal and charming man I've ever met. He's second to none-you should cherish him well!"

"Yeah, but it didn't stop him from abandoning his family and cheating on me!" Renee burst out, unable to stop herself.

"He abandoned his family?" Joanne looked stunned. "That can't be. I'm sure there's some kind of misunderstanding. I can swear on my life that he's not that kind of person."

"Ah, who knows?" Renee wanted to stop talking about it, so she changed the topic smoothly. "You said Stefan's second to none... So, what about my brother?"

## Chapter 1926

The air seemed to crackle with tension. Joanne said nothing as she took a tissue to wipe her lips, then stood up to leave with her bag.

"Hey, Joanne! What are you doing..." Renee immediately gripped Joanne's wrist and smiled charmingly. "I was just messing with you, you don't have to answer if you don't want to. Why are you getting upset?"

"Why did you bring it up if you know I don't like to talk about it? It's like you want me to leave!" Joanne snapped, her previous warmth instantly gone.

"It's a special treatment!" Renee pursed her lips, sounding serious.

Joanne frowned. "What's that?"

"Immunotherapy!" Renee cleared her throat and elaborated, "You know, people couldn't cure fever in the past. The only resolution was to keep getting fever until their bodies built antibodies to fight off bacteria. After a while, less people fell sick, and finally, there was no disease in that area."

What kind of crap is that? Does it have anything to do... with you mentioning that person?" Joanne was still reluctant to talk about Quinton. She knew she couldn't take him out or remove those memories, but she could stay away from him and everything related to him, including his friends, family, and the topics relevant to him. She knew she shouldn't have agreed to meet Renee since she was Quinton's sister, after all. They were bound to talk about Quinton since Renee was so close to him, but Joanne had wanted to befriend Renee because she had risked her life to save her once. Besides, Renee was Stefan's most beloved woman and she was a charming person, so Joanne summoned the courage to meet her after turning her down so many times. In the end, she had brought up Quinton, and hearing that name made Joanne tense and become stressed... She hated herself for losing control like this.

"Of course!" Renee got up and pressed Joanne's shoulders to make her sit down, then carefully explained, "Don't you think my brother is like the bacteria causing the fever? He's strong now, so you're scared of him and try to stay away from him, but that isn't a solution. You should face him properly so you can become immune to him, then you'll gain true success!"

"That's ridiculous!" Joanne disagreed vehemently. "If you put it that way, your brother is more like a deadly virus. I stay away from him because I know that I can't defeat him. If I go near him, I'll die.'

"No, that won't happen!" Renee protested. "He's different now-he's not as vicious as before. He is like a virus that might make you sick, but he won't kill you. You won't know since you're not in contact with him. He's quite peaceful and gentle now. He rarely gets mad too... He's like a different man. He even moved on from his hatred towards Stefan. Knowing all this, do you still think he's scary?"

## Chapter 1927

Renee sounded like she was exaggerating Quinton's good sides and ignoring his flaws, but what she said was the truth. The current Quinton was not as extreme and cruel as he used to be, which might have been because of the love Renee and the kids showed him. He had become a rational, gentle, and kind person, so Renee wanted to meet Joanne because she hoped to bring them together. Even if they didn't get together, she would be happy if they resolved the grudge between them. She knew that Quinton hadn't forgotten about Joanne, and she didn't forget him either, They were just waiting for a chance, which Renee

shamelessly saw herself as.

"He stopped... hating Mr. Hunt?" Joanne's eyes widened in disbelief. She had grown up with Quinton and had witnessed the worst sides of him. How could a vengeful person like him let go of his hatred that easily?

"Why would I lie to you? Renee sounded firm. "Not only did he let go of his hatred, they've become acquaintances. But they aren't on the best of terms right now because Stefan and I are separated. Quinton can't accept it-he thinks that Stefan is a disloyal scumbag."

"Mr. Hunt isn't a scumbag! I'm sure he's just facing some issues." Joanne instinctively defended Stefan.

"That's not important. Anyway, let's not talk about Stefan... We should talk about Quinton. Renee tried again. "My brother has changed a lot. Why don't you meet him and reminisce about the old days with him?"

"I'll never meet him for the rest of my life!" Joanne suddenly slammed her fist on the table, looking distressed. "I suppressed my hatred for him and chose to meet you because I see you as a friend. However, if you keep trying to push me towards him, then I'm sorry to say that we'll be strangers from now on. It's best if we stop contacting each other."

"Do you hate my brother that much?" Renee was surprised at Joanne's stubbornness. She had thought that Joanne would give in with a bit of persuasion and give Quinton a chance.

"Of course! But I don't want to hate him now-I just want to forget about him. He's a demon who hurt me a lot, so please don't let him hurt me again!" Joanne trembled, biting her lip to stop herself from bursting into tears.

"I hope you both can eventually face your conflicts because I don't want him to keep hurting you. If not... the hurt will stay. It won't disappear if you keep avoiding it. It'll be a slow and painful torture!" Renee said passionately. She had been hurt by the person she loved the most, so she could understand Joanne's feelings. The only resolution was for Joanne to face her fears.

"Thanks for your kindness, but I don't need it. Goodbye!" Joanne sneered and got up to leave.

## Chapter 1928

Defeated, Renee returned to Everheart Manor, feeling glum.

At that moment, Everheart Manor was filled with a rare liveliness and warmth. Adie had recovered and left the hospital, so Quinton and Leia were holding a small family gathering. Their close friends were there too, but they hadn't mentioned anything to Renee—they were waiting for her to come back to surprise her. However, as time passed, their excitement died down, and they soon grew hungry.

When Renee opened the door, everyone cheered and clapped excitedly.

"Great! Ren is home. Let's eat!" Leia waved at the others, gesturing for them to take their seats.

This is..." Renee picked a piece of confetti from her hair, looking confused. "What day is it today? What is everyone doing here?"

"It's just an ordinary day, but it's a happy one!" Quinton led Renee into the house and gave her a large sunflower bouquet. "Renee, you and the kids have suffered a lot recently. I hope that you three can be happy every day from now on. Don't let annoying people and things affect your life!"

Thank you, Quinton..." Renee took the flowers and looked at the grinning group of people, feeling moved. It was wonderful to have family and friends. As long as they were around, they would always be her sanctuary no matter what she went through.

"Phoenix, it's a good day today. It's not much, but... this is for you. I hope it can make you happy even for a while." Justin got to his feet and handed Renee a delicate gift box.

"What is it? You sound so mysterious." Renee accepted the gift, then asked eagerly, "Can I open it?"

"Sure." Justin stuffed his hands into his pockets and shrugged.

Everyone looked at Renee expectantly. "Hurry up and open it. Let's see what Mr. Baldwin got for you, Ren."

The two children gathered around Renee, staring at Renee's gift eagerly.

"Okay, I'll open it now." Renee opened the carefully packaged gift quickly.

"This is..." When Renee saw what it was, her eyes lit up. "Phantom!" "A keyboard?"

## Chapter 1929

Everyone's eagerness turned into disappointment.

Leia frowned and glanced at Justin. "You're so stingy, Mr. Baldwin. You rarely get Renee gifts, but the one time you do, you get her a keyboard?"

Xavier sighed and said mockingly, "I, for one, am relieved to see Mr. Baldwin's gift. Renee... I think you can wait a little longer if you want to get another man." He had always regarded Justin as Stefan's greatest rival in love, even more so than Jovan. Justin's family background was similar to

Stefan's, and they both shared a love of programming. Their characters and tempers were alike too, and they almost seemed like soulmates. However, after seeing Justin's gift, Xavier felt that Stefan didn't have to worry.

"But the keyboard looks unusual... There must be a special meaning to it!" Quinton looked at the keyboard that Renee was holding approvingly.

Renee unpacked the keyboard carefully, as if she was holding some kind of sacred treasure.

"Ah, you all don't understand. That isn't a regular keyboard!" Adie was the third top programmer in the group, and he crossed his arms and explained, "This is a supreme speed keyboard with a high sensitivity and silent typing. One can easily adjust its size and softness based on their preference, and even if you use it all day, you won't feel tired. It supports remote control and can project on any location. The most amazing thing about it is that it's the exclusive keyboard of Master Josiah, the greatest hacker in the world... He's my mommy's idol!" Adie grew more excited as he spoke and carefully touched the keyboard. Mommy, I'm so jealous. Every programmer dreams of having a keyboard like this! Mr. Baldwin, you're amazing. How did you persuade Master Josiah to give you this keyboard? What a suitable gift for my mommy!" Adie looked at Justin with deep admiration.

"It's nothing. I told him a touching story, and he's retiring anyway, so he was willing to give it to me. He hopes that I can become a better hacker using this keyboard." Justin said calmly. then looked at Renee. "Renee, I hope you like it!"

"Of course I do! I love it so much!" Renee held the keyboard lovingly, moved to tears. Even though it was of high quality, she liked it because it belonged to Master Josiah. The reason Renee fell in love with programming was because she had read about him. After that, she started researching it and grew interested in technology like electronics and chip manufacturing. She couldn't believe she now owned the tool her idol used all the time.

"I'm glad you like it. I was worried you wouldn't!" A soft sigh escaped Justin at the sight of Renee's joy and excitement. He had at last done something to make Phoenix happy. He was happy he brought a little light to her gloomy life.

"Haze, thank you. Thank you so much!" Renee hugged Haze enthusiastically. "My life is a mess right now, and I almost forgot what I was once obsessed with... When I look at this keyboard, I'll think of the time we ruled the hacker world. I feel so hopeful and alive now!"

"Umm..." Renee's sudden embrace stunned Justin, and his cheeks burned in embarrassment. His arms stiffened by his sides and he replied awkwardly, "That's.. great."

## Chapter 1930

Xavier quietly took his phone out and snapped a photo of Renee hugging Justin. 'Yes... Keep it up. Just ignore me, I need to use the washroom.' He snuck out of the living room.

Xavier walked to a corner and looked around, then went on Facebook and found Stefan's profile. He sent him the photo he had secretly taken just now. "Stefan, don't forget that Renee is close to Justin. I don't care what you're going through, but if you don't stop this, you're going to lose her for real!" Just as he sent the picture, someone snatched his phone from his hands.

"Who-" He turned around and saw Leia holding his phone. He sighed and said calmly, 'Give me back my phone.'



"No!" Leia took a few steps back and started scrolling through Xavier's chats. "Such a good friend to Stefan... Are you just spending time with us so you can spy for him?"

"You make it sound like I'm doing something illegal..." Xavier tried to defend himself. "I make friends everywhere I go. Stefan is my buddy and Renee is my good friend, so obviously I'll come to your gatherings."

"You're so shameless. We didn't even invite you." When Leia discussed the gathering with Quinton, she had never considered inviting Xavier because he was close to Stefan. They didn't need him informing Stefan about everything they did. However, Jeffrey had accidentally mentioned it while he was shooting a film, and Xavier had shamelessly followed Jeffrey back to Everheart Manor. Since things had come to this, Leia couldn't throw Xavier out. However, as expected, Xavier was indeed spying on them.

"There's no need to be so hostile!" Xavier started grinning and approached Leia. "I could be your double agent, you know. You can turn me against him to serve you. Isn't that a better option?"

"Turn you against him?" Leia looked disgusted by the idea. "No one would believe a cunning person like you. You might rat out my bestie instead." Xavier was the smartest and most confusing person Leia had ever met. Compared to him, Stefan was simpler and more sincere. Leia knew that she couldn't outsmart Xavier, so she chose to stay away from him to avoid falling for his traps.

"How could you say that?" Xavier grabbed his chest dramatically, pretending to be hurt. "We once dated, you know. Don't you know what kind of person I am?"

"Yeah, I know I can't get involved with you again. I know that I can never trust you."