

Chapter 1085 A Tangled Past

The small courtyard looked old and rundown at first glance. It was reasonably clean, but the faint smell of alcohol lingered in the air.

At this moment, a slovenly man with graying, disheveled hair was lying in a wheelchair, holding a bottle of liquor with bleary eyes.

There was something odd about the way he held the bottle, and upon closer inspection, one could see that he was missing both hands, and he was supporting the bottle with his wrists.

Lorraine's eyes widened in shock as she looked at Huntley, whose face remained impassive without offering any explanation.

He just stepped forward, casually cleaning up the old man's mess and wiping his body. "No more liquor." Huntley's voice came out low and cold amid the old man's muttering and swearing.

The old man mumbled incoherently but did not protest, turning over to fall back into a drunken stupor instead.

Lorraine approached hesitantly and stared at the old man's face. He almost gave off the appearance of a withered tree, his skin covered in wrinkles. Her eyes grew wide once again. It was Ghosthand! For a moment, she was struck speechless.

She had previously found a photo of Ghosthand when he was younger. The man in the photograph was young and spirited, his eyes full of life. Lorraine couldn't reconcile the image with the dirty and frail old man in the wheelchair in front of her.

Huntley covered the old man with a blanket, his eyes glinting with irony. As if he could hear Lorraine's thoughts, he said impassively, "Yes. He's Ghosthand."

His ever-stoic face finally stirred with emotion. "Fucking Ghosthand!" he spat with clear hatred, his jaw tightening as he gritted his teeth.

Lorraine was confused. She hesitated, then asked cautiously, "How did your father become like this?"

Huntley gave her a strange look and forced a smile that held more pain than if he were actually crying. "He's not my father."

His answer startled her, but before she could ask questions, Huntley gestured for her and Marco to follow him to the adjacent room.

The room was filled with various sundries and tools. Huntley skillfully fished out an old photo album and handed it to Lorraine.

When she opened it, she saw a young and vigorous Ghosthand, his arm around a somewhat reserved-looking woman who held a little boy in her arms.

Huntley looked at the woman, his cold eyes softening. "This is my mother," he said, his voice holding an uncharacteristic gentleness. "Ghosthand is my uncle. He's also my mentor."

He probably hadn't talked to people in a long time, and it took him a while to organize his thoughts before continuing, "When I was young, my mother took me to Zodiac to seek refuge with my uncle. He was very skillful, and while he did have a bit of a strange temper, many people still came with commissions. We had a decent life in the beginning. He treated me like his own son, and to make things easier, he asked me to call him 'Dad' outside. Then one day, he received a big order. That was when he created his proudest work, the Tear of the Sea."

At the mention of the Tear of the Sea, Lorraine felt a surge of tension in her heart.

Reverence and nostalgia flashed across his face, but his words were sharp with hatred. "But soon after my uncle completed that order, some people came and stirred up trouble. They smashed his stall, preventing us from doing business. Then, they sent people to threaten me and my mother on our way home from school and work. My mother's health was in poor condition, and the encounter scared her. But then..."

He closed his eyes and squeezed the words through his teeth. "My uncle didn't come back until it was very late, and my mother went out to look for him. When she finally found him, he was sprawled in a dirty alley, covered in blood. They had cut off his hands and left him for dead. My mother was freaked out. By some miracle, he survived. When his condition stabilized somewhat, we didn't dare stay in the hospital for fear of our lives. Some of my uncle's old friends lent us a hand and we used the rest of our savings to settle down somewhere far away. We also changed our names."

Huntley went silent for a long moment before continuing, "Not long after, the stress and anxiety got to my mother and she died."

Huntley had a pained expression as he finished his words. Then, his face shifted to one of fury. "Even then, those people didn't leave us be! I found out that someone had been investigating my uncle, so we became even more cautious, especially around rich people!"

Lorraine didn't know what to say. After hearing all of Huntley's story, she understood why he had been so vigilant. But making sense of everything brought an even bigger shock. She couldn't imagine who could be so vile to do such a monstrous thing.

It was her mother who commissioned the Tear of the Sea to be

remodeled by the man in the recording, and the attempt to kill after completion was obviously to cover up something.

Lorraine asked, "Do you remember what Ghosthand remodeled back then?"

Huntley pondered for a moment, then suddenly remembered something. He rummaged through some things and pulled out a yellowed design draft.

Lorraine took the sheet with trembling hands. The handwriting on it was undoubtedly Ghosthand's. Her eyes went over the page, noting the changes he had made.

In the details section of the necklace, there was a note that said, "The client requests installation of a baby monitor in the necklace."

There were a few more scribbles, and another sentence was added, "And a signal jammer."

As she read the words, her body shook all over. She trembled so much that she stumbled a step backward. Marco caught and steadied her. At his touch, it was like a dam burst and she broke down.

Tears streamed down her face, and she said hysterically, "It's Jaden Benton! It must be him. He was the person who customized the necklace for my parents. The signal jammer must have been his request. It was him! He killed my parents!"

Chapter 1086 The Truth

At the mention of the signal jammer, Loraine immediately grasped its significance.

Back then, Jaden had earned the Torres family's deep trust and was working with Aldo to expand the branch company in Zodiac. He was the ideal person to help Loraine's parents modify the Tear of the Sea.

In a trembling voice, Loraine said, "My grandpa always wondered why my parents couldn't call for help when they were in danger. They had plenty of time from the moment of the accident until they blacked out."

But a greedy couple from Woodshill had taken the necklace from Loraine. Jaden had hidden the necklace's existence, causing Aldo to slowly lose hope.

Now it seemed the people hunting Ghosthand were also connected to Jaden.

After all, if someone found the necklace and tracked down Ghosthand, they could uncover what Jaden had done back then!

Loraine's heart broke into pieces, and she cried out in anguish, "Marco, I only survived because my mother pushed me out of the car... If it weren't for this signal jammer, they could have called for help and maybe they wouldn't have died!"

She finally broke down, sobbing. The keepsake her parents had lovingly entrusted to her had become the reason for their deaths.

Huntley watched her cry, then silently stepped back, his

expression filled with sorrow.

Marco hugged Loraine, gently patting her back and whispering comforting words, his eyes filled with pain and anger.

He kissed Loraine's forehead and vowed, "I won't let Jaden get away with this. I'll make him pay and let your parents rest in peace."

Loraine sobbed, her eyes cold and determined. She shook and said firmly, "I swear, I'll bring him to justice!"

No matter how much time had passed, even if all evidence had turned to dust, she wouldn't let Jaden keep escaping the law!

Just then, Ghosthand's impatient voice echoed from outside, "What's with all the racket? Huntley, where's my damn drink?"

Huntley shot Loraine an apologetic look before heading out to calm Ghosthand down.

Loraine wiped away her tears, mustered her resolve, and left the room with Marco.

Meanwhile, Ghosthand was causing a scene, clamoring for booze. His pallid face was even more lifeless than Huntley's, tugging at Loraine's heartstrings. She understood he was drowning his sorrows in alcohol.

The once brilliant craftsman had inadvertently caused his sister's death and ended up disabled. Without the numbing effects of alcohol, he'd likely have descended into madness.

Just as she pondered this, Ghosthand glanced up and caught sight of her.

Her recent tears had left her face with a fragile delicacy. Combined with her compassion for Ghosthand, she seemed gentle and mournful.

Commented [Ma1]:

However, Ghosthand screamed as if he'd seen a ghost and toppled out of his wheelchair. Ignoring the pain, he crawled on his disabled limbs, terror in his voice. "I didn't see you! I didn't hurt you! Stay away, I don't know anything..."

Loraine was taken aback, watching as Huntley helped Ghosthand up, reassuring him. "Don't worry, it's not her."

After a while, he guided Ghosthand back to his room to rest, closed the door behind him, and returned with an apologetic smile to Loraine.

Loraine inquired, "What's going on with him? Who's 'her'?"

Huntley sighed, starting to explain, "When my uncle was being chased, they showed him a photo, asking if he'd seen the woman in it. I think she resembled you."

Hearing Loraine's earlier words, Huntley deduced that the woman in the photo must be Loraine's mother.

While Ghosthand didn't mean harm to Loraine's parents, his actions indirectly led to their demise. This weighed heavily on Huntley's conscience, and he added softly, "I'm sorry about your parents, but my uncle has suffered too. Please don't hold it against him."

Loraine shook her head firmly. "I know who my enemy is, and I'm not about to take it out on your uncle."

Huntley took a deep breath and lifted his gaze. "Miss Torres, while I understand your situation, I need to clarify that my uncle and I are only trying to get by. We're not looking for trouble. Today, let's just pretend you never crossed our path."

Loraine was caught off guard, realizing that Ghosthand wouldn't testify against Jaden.

She felt a twinge of disappointment but grasped that

Ghosthand was in a bind, witnessing their dire circumstances. She didn't feel it was right to push further.

At this juncture, Loraine had no choice but to nod and make her exit.

Behind her, Huntley's voice rang out.

"Miss Torres, I just recalled something that might be useful. When I was delivering the necklace for my uncle, I overheard someone mention that they asked Denny to arrange the car."