

My Dreamy Old Husband Chapter 886

“Is it ‘Undercover Blues’?”

The moment he described that movie, Sophia immediately knew which one it was. In that film, he played an undercover cop where his character died after completing his mission. He bade his last farewell to the female protagonist before taking his last breath.

It was one of those rare films in which he had many lines for his role. That scene in itself never failed to make her cry every time she watched it. The emotions that the lines carried were so raw when he delivered them. Upon having mentioned the film, she immediately requested, “I wish to hear the lines from the final scene again. Will you recite them to me?”

Michael recollected that scene and recited the lines to Sophia.

She never used to make such requests from him. Nowadays, whenever she thought of any memorable scenes from his films, she would request him to quote them to her again.

As she enjoyed her late-night conversation with him over the phone, Linus struggled to fall asleep and decided to catch some air on his balcony while staring at the moon.

In the silence of the night, his alcohol had mostly worn off, leaving him alert and sober. In his head, he kept thinking about Sean’s words from earlier that evening when they drank.

Without the blessings and positive wishes from others on such matters, it’s better to tuck the feelings away in one’s own heart.

Now that Linus had everything that a man could wish for, he also had the means and ability to get anything else that he wanted and do whatever he felt like doing. He no longer had to care about what others think of him or be bound by the rules of society. For example, for someone like him who fancied a person of the same gender, there was nothing to stop him from expressing his sexual orientation to others. The Michel Family was powerful enough

that no one in their right frame of mind would dare to stick their noses into the affairs of its members.

However, there was one thing that stopped him from going after the things that he wanted.

Before meeting Sophia, he believed he had a perfect life. Now that she had appeared, he realized his life resembled a jigsaw puzzle that neared completion, but was short of one piece. *And that piece is none other than Sophia.*

He felt as though they already knew each other in their past lives and reconciled in the current lifetime. His gut feeling indicated that she was the one whom he had waited for his entire life and they were meant for each other. It was just that the right time had not arrived.

Unfortunately, she had found her other half—not only did she find herself a man, but she even bore him a daughter, who was now his niece.

Linus let out a self-deprecating chuckle. Fate had such a twisted sense of humor that it brought Sophia into his life and caused him to fall in love with her.

He took a couple more sips of wine before feeling the effects of the booze again. After quickly glancing at his surroundings, he realized that Sophia, who was strolling by the beach a while ago while on her cell phone, was nowhere in sight. *Where did she go?*

The beach was pitch dark—the lamps at the villa were not bright enough to reach far enough. He scanned the beach under the faint moonlight, but still failed to catch any sight of her.

Linus hurried downstairs with his cell phone in his hand and arrived at the spot where she sat earlier and noticed some footsteps on the beach.

Judging by the direction of the footsteps, she did not return to her room. Instead, her footsteps looked like she was heading farther out along the beach before disappearing into the dark.

He raised his cell phone and dialed for Sophia. In the midst of darkness before him, a light emanated not too far before it was followed by a familiar ringtone. He looked closely and found her ringing cell phone on the sand.

A chill went down his spine as he began to call out for her name while running alongside the footprints. They eventually led him to the side of the road where it ended. *Sophia is missing!*

After being unconscious for what seemed like an eternity, Sophia stirred from a throbbing pain behind her neck. She opened her eyes to see a glaring light with her body being tied to a pillar. *Whoever tied those ropes and knots really wants to make sure that I won't escape.* She heard the sound of high heels click-clacking around the room. Before she could identify where she was, a hand reached out and pulled her hair, sending a sharp pain into her scalp as she was forced to look upward.

“Sophia, you deserve it today!”

She squinted her eyes and saw that it was Irene before her. Irene had copious amounts of makeup on her; a little overdone would be an understatement since she could easily be mistaken for a zombie. There was an eerily crazed expression on her face that caused her powder-based foundation to peel and fall off.

Sophia regained her composure as fast as she could and gathered her bearings. The last thing she remembered was speaking on the phone with Michael at the beach. While listening to him reciting a scene, she felt a sharp pain on the back of her neck before losing consciousness. The next thing she knew, she saw Irene’s face after opening her eyes.

It appeared that Irene had not thrown in the towel yet.

Sophia remained calm and ignored Irene’s taunts as she wasted no time in scanning her surroundings—it looked like she was being locked up in a basement. There was no way to tell the exact time at that moment, but she felt that the seafood she had for dinner was still being digested in her stomach, which meant that it had not been long.

They were the only ones in the basement, but it did not look like Irene could pull it off on her own, so there should be someone else too.

As there were two containers of gasoline in the basement, Irene grabbed Sophia’s head and pointed her toward those cans before gleefully speaking, “Do you see those gas containers? I’m going to burn you with them! Imagine Mikey discovering your charred remains here tomorrow—will he still love you? Your pretty little face and your hourglass figure will be gone. I’ll see what else you will use to seduce Mikey! You are a wh*re—nothing but a two-bit wh*re!”

Irene had absolutely lost her mind and continuously yanked Sophia's hair to the point where she was numbed from the pain. As she was all tied up, Sophia could not do anything to fight back.

Sophia bit her lips and refused to say a single word. Irene, who was overwhelmed with insanity, continued to pull Sophia's head up by her hair before giving several heavy slaps across her face. "Go ahead and cry or beg me. If you kneel down now, I might consider letting you go!" Irene roared in rage.

Sophia finally decided to speak up. She spat a mixture of saliva and blood before responding, "Do you even have the guts to kill someone? Back when I was taking someone's life, your menses had not even arrived yet!"

After being evidently provoked by Sophia, Irene angrily reached for the gasoline and spilled it across her body. As she did it, she repeatedly yelled, "Do you think I don't have what it takes? You will see for yourself whether I have the guts to end your life!"

At that moment, she behaved like she had an adrenaline boost. Her entire face twitched in exuberance as she muttered, "I don't have the guts to end your life? What a piece of bullsh*t. Let me show you what I'm capable of. In fact, I'll show it to you right now!"

Before long, Sophia was fully drenched in gasoline. The nauseating fumes surrounded her as she remained tied to the pillar. Irene took out a lighter and lit it up as she walked back and forth in front of Sophia.

"Do you see this? The moment I throw this lighter onto you, you will be burned to ashes! Getting burned to death is the worst way to die. Look at you being all tied up—you won't even get to struggle. I will make sure you suffer the worst pain possible. You'll be in so much pain till you will never be reincarnated!"

Sophia was unusually calm and maintained a stoic expression as she lifted her eyes to gaze at Irene, saying, "I've been living in Africa for years. In a daily warzone, there is nothing that I have not seen. Nothing you do will scare me."

She was fully aware that if Irene ever threw the lighter at her, she would burn in flames and suffer a fiery death.

Her steady composure had greatly annoyed Irene. She not only wished for Sophia's death, but wanted her to beg for her life before dying helplessly.

The flame was dancing menacingly on the lighter that Irene held. It was only less than a foot away from Sophia—any more closer and it would turn Sophia into a fireball. Irene then pointed at a knife nearby.

“You see that knife over there? If you beg me, I’ll let you have a quick death! Come and beg me!”

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Sophia saw the knife too, but she didn’t say anything. Irene found Sophia’s cold and distant expression especially unpleasant, so she grabbed onto Sophia’s hair while slapping her multiple times.

“Beg for mercy now, you b*tch! I am asking you to beg me!”

Sophia’s face was swollen, and blood was already oozing from her especially fragile skin. Her nose was also bleeding, but she flashed Irene an eerie smile. “General Weber and Mrs. Weber were heroic figures. If they could see what’s happening right now and learn what their daughter has become, I’m afraid they would turn in their graves!”

Irene was stumped when she heard that. General Weber is my father... But there is no way back for me at this point. I have no choice but to kill Sophia. Everything will be back to normal if she dies. Besides, nobody would ever know how she died. To be honest, killing her is not my only goal because I want her to die in humiliation. I want her to beg for mercy on bent knees. I want her to kowtow to me while admitting her mistakes.

Irene grabbed onto Sophia while beating her up, but Sophia refused to surrender. “Go on and hit me. I will never beg you even if you were to beat me to death. I will snatch Michael away from you in the next life even if I end up dead today. Michael is my hubby—do you hear me? He is mine! Mine! You don’t even stand a chance with me! Previously, you abandoned him, and so you do not have the right to get him back now!”

Irene was blinded by fury, and she screamed hysterically. She scolded Sophia while grabbing her by her hair and beating her up.

“Beg me not to kill you! Beg me!”

Sophia gritted her teeth when she retorted, “Go on and hit me! I’ll surrender if you are able to make me beg for mercy!”

Irene vented her frustrations by beating Sophia. She regarded Sophia, who was bruised all over, and she felt good about herself. However, something flashed through Irene’s mind, and she seemed to have realized something. Then, she spat at Sophia, “I almost fell for your trick! You are just stalling!”

Sophia chuckled while she replied, “It’s not too late for you to realize about it... Oh! I’ve succeeded in stalling for a few more seconds. By this point, the person must be here to rescue me. You will be dead if you don’t make a move soon!”

Irene was furious, and she took a lighter out from her bag. Just when she was about to strike the lighter, a small hand reached out swiftly to grab her wrist. The tiny and slippery hand was exceptionally strong, and there was an audible crack. Irene heard a crisp snap, and her arm felt numb. The lighter, which had not been ignited, fell onto the ground.

At that moment, an intense pain came shooting from Irene’s wrist.

“Argh!!” Irene held onto her limp hand, and she wailed at the top of her lungs.

“What did you do to me? What did you do to me?!”

Sophia, who was bound to the pole, somehow managed to reach out with a hand. It was covered with petrol, so it was particularly slippery. Furthermore, her hand was small and thin, so she managed to release herself from the rope.

Earlier, she kept chatting with Irene as a front to buy herself more time.

Currently, Sophia had managed to release one hand, and so she broke Irene’s wrist with precision. She still had time, and with a few more seconds, Sophia would have released her other hand too.

Nevertheless, Irene realized Sophia's motive, and so she endured the horrible shooting pain from her wrist. She scrambled to snatch the lighter away from the ground because she was determined to burn Sophia to death today.

However, she did not expect the sudden turn of events. Irene, who had just grabbed the lighter from the ground, wailed in agony suddenly. Then, she slumped onto the floor while moaning in pain.

The lighting was poor, and so Sophia squinted while she looked behind Irene. She saw that Irene was on the ground, but there was a knife sticking out of her back. In fact, Irene had prepared that particular knife to kill Sophia.

A pale and slender hand was holding onto the knife. When the perpetrator noticed that Irene was still struggling, the hand grabbed and retrieved the knife to plunge into Irene's back several times. The knife stabbed into Irene's vital points a few times until she died.

Sophia stared in stunned silence at Irene, who was already dead on the floor. She then looked up at the black figure who had barged in suddenly earlier.

The figure was staring at Irene's body, as if struggling to come to terms with the fact that it had murdered somebody. After a pause, the figure approached Sophia, and she saw Sean, who was covered in blood.

"Sean, it's you!"

The person who barged in was none other than Sean.

He was covered with blood, and his fair face was contorted into a scary and murderous expression. However, the expression faded, and the color drained from Sean's face while he stared at Irene, who was slumped on the ground. His eyes were filled with complex emotions, including hatred and satisfaction, but it was mostly fear.

However, the emotions were fleeting, and he soon pulled the knife out of Irene's body. Blood gushed out onto the floor, and Sean used the knife to cut the rope tied around Sophia.

Nevertheless, the rope was tough, and it was wound around Sophia multiple times. Therefore, the knife just couldn't cut through it; even a fire couldn't get the job done. There was no way of unfastening the rope because they were planning to burn Sophia alive while

she was tied to the pole. They were beyond malicious because they wanted her to suffer excruciatingly, and so they made it impossible to rescue her.

“Why are you here? Where are my dad and uncle?”

Sophia struggled against the rope, but it was tied so tightly around her that she could barely breathe right now. Although she was lucky to have freed a hand, it was almost impossible to completely break free.

Sean seemed to be in shock because it took him some time before he finally rambled incoherently, “They are on the way here. I rushed over before they did once I learned about the news.”

Sean thought of Irene when Sophia was in trouble. Hence, he looked up Irene’s car number plate and searched the surveillance cameras. In the end, he confirmed the location.

He explained while trying his best to cut the rope to free Sophia. However, the rope was extremely sturdy.

After murdering somebody for the first time, Sean was trying his best to keep his cool. Nevertheless, his trembling hands revealed his panic and fear.

Since I’d made it here, Irene wouldn’t have been able to defeat a man my size. Besides, help was on the way, and I managed to get the knife.

I shouldn’t have killed Irene just now.

However, when I saw Sophia being tortured, the scene from the hospital—where Irene was on top of Stanley, glaring at me deviously—flooded my mind. At that moment, Irene didn’t look like a woman; instead, she looked like a monster. In fact, her gaze from that time intertwined with her crazy gaze just now, and I lost control of my actions.

I wanted to make this woman disappear from this world forever! I can’t believe I killed Irene! By the time I snapped back to my senses, everything was too late!

I know what it means for me to have killed Irene. At the same time, Sean heard a continuous blare of the police siren. True enough, she had something up her sleeve!

Meanwhile, Sophia thought to herself, After helping Irene catch me, they allowed the two of us to destroy each other. In the end, one of us would end up dead. Everybody would be happy if I had died, but since Irene died, I would be dragged into the situation.

No matter who ended up dead, there would be a drastic change in the relationship between Cooper and the Fletchers.

Sophia knew who was the person calling the shots behind the scene because she knew that whoever benefitted the most from this would be the one pulling the strings in secret.

"Sean, you need to leave right now!"

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Sean looked as though he did not hear her; instead, he continued cutting the rope in silence.

The police siren was getting closer, and it sounded urgent, but Sean did not leave. Sophia knew that the enemy had set this trap, and Sean had murdered somebody for her. Therefore, she did not want to drag him into the situation. She advised him hastily, "Sean, you need to listen to me. You have to leave right now. I know how to handle the situation!"

Nevertheless, Sean obviously did not listen to her because he continued cutting the rope seriously. The damn rope wouldn't cut through; he won't be able to leave if he delays any longer.

Sophia was panicking, and so she urged him. "The enemy is trying to destroy the alliance between my father and the Fletcher Family. If I had killed Irene, it would be more of a personal grudge, but since you did it, it would mean that the Mitchells killed her, because there was no bad blood between you and Irene. Therefore, the enemy would have a reason to spread rumors."

Sean recollected himself, and he had already considered the consequences after killing Irene. She was the descendent of a late hero and the apple of the Fletchers' eye. Killing her meant that I would be in trouble, and the Mitchells, whom Cooper represents, would suffer too. In that case, I can't let Sophia take the hit for me.

Sophia was furious because Sean wouldn't be able to escape if he refused to leave right now. Cooper would get me out of this if I get in trouble. Besides, I'd been kidnapped, and Irene tried to burn me to death. Hence, killing Irene would have been self-defense. On the other hand, Sean killing her would be considered as voluntary manslaughter.

With that, Sophia snatched the knife from Sean's hand to press it against her throat.

"Are you leaving or not? I'll kill myself if you refuse to leave right now!"

Nevertheless, Sean refused to leave, and so Sophia slapped him across his face while yelling at him, "Leave! I'm asking you to leave! Get lost! I don't want to see you! Leave!"

Sean's eyes were brimming with tears. In the end, he gritted his teeth while turning around to escape from the scene.

While watching Sean disappear through the basement door, Sophia wiped away his fingerprints from the knife in a hurry.

After that, she felt exhausted, and so she slackened her body. However, the rope tied tightly around her body suffocated her, leaving her out of breath. Hence, she was still breathing heavily.

The basement was humid and cold, but it was also filled with the scent of blood. Sophia gasped for air, but she was overwhelmed by the metallic stench that was nauseating.

Irene was slumped dead on the ground in front of Sophia. Her body was covered with blood, which was pooling across the floor. In fact, the blood was seeping through the bottom of Sophia's feet, but she could only sit in Irene's blood since she had been rendered motionless.

At that moment, Sophia's tense body finally relaxed. It was then when she felt pain all over her body. There was blood on her hands, and her nosebleed was trickling down the corner of her lips.

She heard some urgent footsteps, and soon, a large group of people arrived at the basement.

The enemy scheduled everything to the second, because among the first group of people who came, there were swarms of reporters apart from the police. When the police set up the picket line, the large group of reporters ignored warnings from the police; they charged into the scene like maniacs to take photos of Sophia, who was tied onto the pole.

She was disheveled from the beating, and her head was bowed down with blood trickling from her nose.

Nevertheless, the group of reporters were still screaming at her to look up at them, just so they could get a headshot of her.

Cooper witnessed that scene when he entered. His daughter was tied to the pole, covered in blood. There was blood on her, on the floor, and everywhere. Sophia was sitting in the pool of blood with her head bowed. In fact, she stayed still despite the commotion.

At that instance, Cooper felt as if the world was collapsing around him, and even the simple act of breathing gave him heartache.

"Get lost! Get lost!" Cooper roared while pushing aside all the reporters and police officers. He charged into the picket line, and he kneeled down on the floor with a thud before cupping Sophia's face.

Her face was bruised and swollen; she was also bleeding from her nose. Then, she looked up at him weakly, and her lips parted when she called out softly, "Dad."

Cooper's tears almost rolled down his eyes. Then, he turned and glared at Irene, who was already covered with a white cloth. Soon, Cooper released Sophia as fast as he could to send her to the hospital.

That day, the headline in Bayside City was 'Young Lady Mitchell Killed the Descendent of a Late Hero, Irene Weber'.

'Taylor Murray's Wife Killed His Lover!'

The news shook the entire Bayside City, and it especially affected the financial world. Everybody was speculating whether the alliance between Cooper and the Fletchers would cease to exist over this matter.

This wasn't the first time Irene had stirred up trouble, but the Fletcher Family had been turning a blind eye so far. Besides, they had been supporting her ever since she returned to the country. Hence, it was obvious how protective the Fletchers were over Irene. Sophia was considered the Fletchers' daughter-in-law, but her relationship with Taylor was a mystery. Hence, at this point, nobody knew whom the Fletchers would side with...

Michael only managed to rush back home at noon from the film studio the next day after the incident. Currently, the Bayside City newspapers were filled with news of Sophia murdering Irene. There were a few pictures of her, showing her covered in petrol and blood while being tied to a pole, published on the front page.

Stanley phoned Michael to inform him that Sophia was fine, but Michael was extremely worried. After arranging the matters involving the film crew, he took the first flight back to Bayside City. Then, he found the private hospital where Sophia was admitted to.

However, he did not expect to be blocked by bodyguards when he arrived at the entrance of the hospital.

"I am sorry, Mr. Michael. The boss ordered that from today onward, you are not allowed to go anywhere near Miss Sophia."

Michael knew that Cooper would blame him over this matter.

That's understandable, because it was my fault. I did not expect Irene to be so insane. If something bad had truly happened, I wouldn't have been able to see Sophia again today.

However, I truly need to see her right now.

Michael begged them. "Please just let me go in to have a look at her. I'm only asking for a quick glance. I will leave once I confirm that she's fine."

I'd be happy even with just a quick glance.

However, the bodyguards were unmoved, and they blocked his way into the hospital.

Joel was blocked outside of the hospital too.

Similar to Michael, Joel did not expect the degree of Irene's insanity.

I admit that I had disappointed her, but we were both clear that she merely got together with me for the influence and power. I had always given her whatever she wanted, and I put her on a pedestal. In fact, I'd given her everything she dreamed of.

Did I abandon her?

I never felt like I'd abandoned her because Irene had always been unstable. Once upon a time, she noticed that I was more successful compared to a failing Michael, so she started flirting with me in secret. At that time, I was still young and immature. Besides, I was determined to compete with Michael, and so I played along.

Irene was already tempted lately after she realized that Michael had succeeded in life, and that he even won an Academy Award for Best Actor. In fact, she had been hinting heavily at Michael. She tried pursuing him while having control over me. She wanted whoever she could get, and she had been treating the two of us as her backup plan.

However, never in my wildest dreams would I expect her to make such a move!

Joel and Michael were blocked outside of the hospital. Cooper's instructions were to allow only Maddie into the venue because the latter was a part of the media. Currently, all the news were revolving around stories of Sophia committing murder intentionally, and so he needed somebody to report things in a positive light.

Therefore, Joel and Michael were blocked outside of the hospital entrance while waiting for more news.

Soon, Michael saw the lawyer, Mr. Fields, arriving in a rush. It seemed that Sophia had admitted that she killed Irene, but it was a blurry line between justifiable and unjustifiable defense. Furthermore, Irene was the descendent of a late hero and a rapidly rising star in film, television, and music. Hence, her death shook the society, which also meant that the police were facing tremendous pressure from the public. It was vital for Sophia to have a powerful lawyer at this instance.

Naturally, Cooper had already summoned the best lawyers from the get-go; Mr. Fields was just one of them.

A huge crowd packed Sophia's hospital room. Some were police officers, lawyers, reporters, and some were family members looking after Sophia.

She was giving her statement. Apart from a mild concussion and losing some hair, the rest was just external injuries.

Sophia did according to her lawyer's instructions by claiming that her actions were self-defense in order to protect her life.

Irene's fingerprints were on the gasoline can, lighter, and rope at the scene. It appeared as if she was trying to burn Sophia alive, but the latter somehow managed to escape. Then, Sophia must have fought back, killing Irene in the process.

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Sophia handed the rest of the issues to her lawyer. She would not comment further because the lawyers would know how to get her out of the situation. Besides, Maddie was already here, and she was reporting the news in a positive light.

During the interview, a subordinate entered and whispered softly by Cooper's ears, "Mr. Michael is here."

Cooper's expression turned frosty. "Ask him to get lost."

He was extremely disappointed with Michael right now.

If Michael had handled the situation appropriately, my daughter wouldn't have had to suffer so much. It is fortunate that my daughter is fine this time. If something had happened to Sophia, I would have made sure Michael would be buried with her.

Sophia seemed to have noticed something when she saw Cooper's cold and distant expression. She knew instinctively that Michael had arrived.

Although she wanted to see Michael, she just didn't know how to face him right now.

Irene deserved to die; even if I hadn't taken the blame for Sean, and even if Sean hadn't killed Irene, I would have killed her if I had been holding the knife.

If she hadn't been murdered, Irene would have used her status as the descendent of a late hero to free herself from any accusations to continue with her troubled ways. The Fletcher Family had been caught in a tight spot when it came to Irene. She exhausted the last bit of love and patience from the Fletchers by flaunting her influence. I suppose I've acted on behalf of God by removing the disaster from the hands of the Fletchers.

If she had failed this time, Irene would have had a second attempt. I wouldn't want to wake up one day, only to again find myself tied to a pole while somebody splashed gasoline on me.

Nevertheless, Irene was Michael's first love after all. Besides, she was the apple of the Fletchers' eye and the descendent of Old Master Fletcher's favorite pupil. Hence, I still feel bad for her murder, and so I just need some time alone.

I suppose it's best to not see him for now.

Michael and Joel waited for almost the whole day at the entrance, but Cooper refused to let them in. Maddie finally walked out of the hospital in the afternoon, and she spoke to Michael. "Taylor, I interviewed Sophia just now. She is fine, and she is doing well currently. Don't worry; I will send over the interview video after I've edited it at home." She paused. "I will definitely write a positive report. I would absolutely not deviate from the truth!"

Maddie was well aware of Irene's nature. In the past, she would stir up trouble in Maddie's department every other day, and so everyone in the department was afraid of Irene. Hence, Maddie was forced to take two military dogs with her to work to get Irene to stop. However, Maddie did not expect this to blow up in such proportions.

After that, Joel and Maddie left together. Just before they left, Michael asked Joel, "Did Old Master Fletcher... say anything?"

We can't possibly keep something so huge from Old Master Fletcher.

Joel maintained a blank expression when he replied to Michael, "He is getting old—he is already 100 years old, so he probably doesn't want to get involved in issues involving the younger generation."

Michael asked again, "What about the Fletcher Family?"

Joel answered truthfully, "We are in a society with a legal system, so we would abide by the law."

After all, even though Irene was stabbed to death, she was to blame because she made the first move, so the Fletcher Family wouldn't make a big deal out of it. However, this matter involved the Fletchers' honor, and so Cooper had to provide them an explanation.

The relationship between the Fletchers and Cooper was delicate right now. If one were to be careless, the alliance between the two families might just be destroyed.

Michael refused to leave even after watching Joel and Maddie leave. He parked his RV just around the corner of the hospital so he could observe everything going on in the hospital despite knowing that he wouldn't be able to see Sophia in the near future.

He did not have the audacity to meet her right now anyway.

On the other side, after being scolded badly by Sophia, Sean drove away in a daze. Soon after he left, police officers and reporters came rushing to the scene upon learning the news.

Sean watched the news of Bayside City, where they reported that Sophia killed Irene, and he hid in a deserted place to cry for the longest time.

He had committed murder for the first time, and he felt extremely fearful afterward. However, the person was dead, and he had no way to turn back time. He did everything automatically at that moment, and it felt as if his actions were beyond his control.

I do not know how to face Sophia or Cooper. I can't even imagine facing Stanley and the Fletcher Family.

Sean stayed hidden, and he refused to answer his phone even when Stanley and Sophia phoned him countless times. After disappearing for three days, he finally showed up at the private hospital that Sophia was admitted into.

Upon meeting Cooper, Sean slapped himself while confessing. "Uncle Cooper, it was all my fault. I stabbed Irene to death, and Sophia took the fall for me. It was my fault. I will surrender if need be to atone for my sins."

However, Cooper did not blame Sean because he had read Irene's post-mortem report. It was stated that Irene had been stabbed to death from the back. There were seven to eight stab wounds, and the perpetrator must have committed such a violent crime under extreme fear or anger.

If Cooper had been at the scene, he could almost guarantee that he would have been angrier than Sean.

In the end, he patted Sean's shoulder while helping Sean, who was kneeling, up. "Don't worry; it is a small matter. In fact, I should thank you for saving Sophia's life. If it weren't for you, Sophia wouldn't be here with us right now."

Nevertheless, Sean was mentally burdened. "Would Sophia end up in jail for my actions? Would you fall out with the Fletchers because of this?"

These were small matters to Cooper at this point.

"It will be fine, because I have the best lawyers here. As for the Fletcher Family, you don't have to worry about that."

I am the second largest arms dealer in the world, and I will soon be the largest. No matter what happens, the Fletcher Family will never have a fall out with me, Fass Michel.

However, Sean just couldn't face Sophia, and so he observed her from outside of her hospital room before leaving.

Just when he had taken a few steps forward, Sean saw Stanley rushing toward him from outside.

When he saw Sean, Stanley was both furious and elated. “Sean, where have you been for the past few days?! Why didn’t you answer my calls? Do you know how worried I was? Can you even imagine?”

Two days had passed, but Sean felt as if a few centuries had gone by. The guilt was crushing him. The fear and guilt for the past two days had been overwhelming for him, and so he couldn’t sleep or eat well. Hence, he had lost a lot of weight.

Sean mumbled something, but he finally answered Stanley, “Stan, I am sorry. It’s j-just that I-I...”

He didn’t know how to explain the situation to Stanley.

“Alright, that’s enough. Stop speaking. Look at yourself—you are filthy and smelly. You look so disheveled too. My guess is that you haven’t had anything to eat; am I right? Let’s chat after having a meal.”

Without any further comment, Stanley dragged Sean back to the company, where they always slept in anyway. After a shower, Sean started gobbling up food without even being bothered to dry his hair.

He hadn’t really had anything to eat for the past two days, so he was famished; he finished Stanley’s stash of instant noodles in no time. In fact, he wolfed down three tubs of instant noodles.

“Pace yourself; there is more here. Besides, food delivery has arrived.”

Stanley had ordered a luxurious crayfish set meal, and he peeled the shells off for Sean. It was obvious that he was starving—he seemed hungry and haggard while devouring the food like a wolf.

After the meal, Sean put down his chopsticks. Then, he looked up at Stanley and burst into tears suddenly.

Stanley held him straight away while reassuring him, “It’s alright. You are okay now. Everything is in the past now, and what’s done is done. Sophia is alive and well, and Uncle Cooper will not blame you either. So don’t worry.”

Stanley thought that Sean was feeling guilty for he had failed to protect Sophia efficiently, resulting in her kidnapping.

In the end, Sean uttered between sobs, "Actually, I killed Irene, and Sophia took the fall for me. I am sorry, Stan... I murdered her. If the Fletchers want someone to pay for her death, just take me in!"

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Sean had already thought about it. If the Fletcher Family wants somebody to pay for Irene's life, I will offer myself. Sophia is the victim, but she is also the one taking the blame now. I am the true murderer here, yet I'm not thing but a coward.

Cooper doesn't blame me, nor does Sophia, and because of that, the guilt is just eating me up.

I am afraid not because I've killed a person, but because I've killed a member of the Fletcher Family. And it so happens that Stanley is a Fletcher. I am sure that the Fletchers would look into this matter. In that case, I will be on the opposite side of Stanley.

The worst fear in my life is to be on opposite sides from Stanley.

After learning the truth, Stanley was stumped for a moment. Nevertheless, he chuckled bitterly. "If I were at the scene, I would have most probably murdered her too."

Stanley had gone to the site with Cooper earlier, and he had witnessed the scene. The whole floor was covered with gasoline, and he saw a lighter there that could have easily been ignited. He also saw Sophia, who was waiting for her death, being tied to the pole.

If we had arrived a moment later, we might have witnessed a charred body tied to the pole. The rope was made with a special material for military use, and only Irene would have been

able to secure that. If the gasoline had been ignited, Sophia would have been burned alive because she couldn't move at all. In fact, she couldn't have struggled at all. What a cruel way to die!

Stanley patted Sean's shoulder. "My heart aches because I don't understand how the kind and innocent Irene I knew turned out like that. However, it is undeniable that she brought this to herself. The Fletcher Family understands this as well, and they wouldn't demand for someone to atone for her death."

"But..." Sean recalled the interview on the news he watched today. "Didn't the Fletcher Family ask Uncle Cooper for an explanation?"

Stanley chuckled in amusement when he heard that. "The Fletcher Family isn't concerned about this matter at all. They are merely interested in one of Uncle Cooper's fighter jet's stealth technology, and so they just wanted to take advantage of the situation."

Sean was stumped when he heard that, but he didn't respond in the end. He needed time to accept the reality that he had murdered Irene.

Sean felt much better after some reassurance from Stanley, and he felt relieved.

Ever since he was a child, Sean would hide in the room to cry in secret whenever he was upset about something.

Usually, children would cry at the top of their lungs while deliberately howling somewhere with people present. As for Sean, he would always cry in secret because he knew that nobody would console him no matter how hard he cried.

But there is an exception.

Stanley has attended the same kindergarten, primary school, high school, and university with me. We studied and have been working together for more than twenty years. Each time, it seemed as if Stanley would be able to guess where I was hiding while crying my eyes out. In fact, he'd always succeed in locating me.

Then, he'd offer me sweets and bring a puppy along to cheer me up, and I'd stop crying then. He has never changed over the years.

"Here, pat the dog. Just look at our son! Look at how adorable it is!"

Stanley led Judge over to Sean. After Judge had been beaten earlier, its fur had finally grown back, and it was back to its formal handsome self. It stuck its head out for Sean to pat it.

Sean giggled while patting Judge's head.

"Here, son. Call me daddy!"

Stanley was rubbing the dog's head.

Judge tried its best. "Woof, woof!"

Stanley pointed at Sean while instructing the dog, "Call him mommy."

Judge barked again. "Woof, woof!"

Sean burst out laughing while saying, "I am your god daddy!"

Judge barked in response. "Woof, woof!"

It was already impressive that Judge managed to bark twice at command, and so it honestly didn't matter whether it was calling Sean mommy or god daddy at this point.

When they were children, Stanley and Sean would always play house. Stanley would always assume the role as the father, whereas Sean would be the mother, and they had gotten used to it.

The two of them soon found a place to sit down. Looking down from their company building through their full-length window, they could easily enjoy the night view of the busy Bayside City.

The two of them and the dog were like a family of three.

Stanley downed the rest of the wine bottle in his hand in one go. The floor was full with the emptied mini wine bottles. He pointed at the magnificent night view of Bayside City while speaking in a grand manner. "Sean, do you see this? This is the empire that we've built together!"

Plum Technology had been listed and was expanding steadily. It was now involved in a variety of industries. Once upon a time, they only had one floor in the building, but now, they had purchased two buildings for their offices. There was a view of another large building from the director's office.

We've built this empire...

Sean took a sip of the liquor while pointing at their empire. "It is still too small. We have to continue expanding our territory, just like Michel Group, to all over the world."

Stanley opened up another bottle of alcohol, and he clinked bottles with Sean. "I wouldn't have been able to achieve great things without you three," he said.

Once upon a time, the four of them owned Plum Technology together. However, a few years ago, Phantom Wolf kidnapped Sophia, and there were only three of them left. Now that Sophia was back, she was slowly taking over responsibilities in Plum Technology. Hence, she would be back in the company sooner or later.

The two of them patted the dog as they drank the bottles of alcohol while reminiscing about the past. They were inseparable during their schooling time from kindergarten, primary school, to high school. Sean always wore women's clothing, and people would call him a weirdo. However, Stanley had never given him the cold shoulder because he knew that Sean was simply waiting for his mother to pick him up.

They were still inseparable when they started attending university, started their business, and graduated...

Thud!

Stanley was drunk, and his head lolled against Sean's chest.

Sean held Stanley while having his back against the wall. He sat on the floor, surrounded by empty liquor bottles. Sean stared far ahead while mumbling quietly, "I will always accompany you for the rest of my life..."

In the hospital.

Sophia had been admitted in the hospital for a week now. Her external injuries had almost fully recovered. Michael abandoned the film crew, and he had stayed put for a week too. Nevertheless, Cooper just refused to let him in to visit Sophia.

Today, Carmen came by. Michael carried Carmen in his arms when he reminded her, "Good girl, once you manage to get in, convince Mommy and Grandpa to get Mommy to meet me, alright?"

Carmen patted her chest confidently. "No worries; just take a shower and wait for the good news, daddy!"

Michael scowled at her. "Why should I take a shower?"

Carmen covered her nose. "Because you stink, Daddy!"

Michael sniffed himself. True enough, he had bad body odor that was mixed with the stench of tobacco. He had rushed back to see Sophia, and since he didn't get to see her, he had been worried the whole time. He didn't eat, let alone have a shower. During this time, he even became addicted to smoking, and even his teeth were a shade darker now.

After watching Carmen enter the hospital, Michael immediately went off to the nearest hotel for a shower.

Carmen entered the hospital, and she played with Sophia for a while. After having a meal, she left the hospital. Michael, who had freshly showered, asked hastily, "Baby, how did it go? Did Mommy and Grandpa agree to see me?"

Carmen answered him gravely, "That's a tricky one. Grandpa says that he is getting me a new daddy."

It was such a sticky situation this time that even Carmen couldn't handle it. Michael didn't want to burden her, and so he urged her to go to her kindergarten while he'd try to figure a way out.

In the afternoon, Michael received a phone call from Justin. "Celie has escaped."