

My Beloved Has Risen from Death's Embrace Novel

CHAPTER 100

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Chapter 100

It's her! it is her doing!

She must **have** poisoned her inside, trying to harm her!

The thoughts raced through Miranda's mind as she recalled all the recent actions of Xanthea—stealing her championship, stealing Matt from her, monopolizing her company's resources, and always playing the innocent while subtly tamishing Miranda's reputation in front of the family. It turns out all of this was not an illusion but a premeditated plan.

Brought back from the orphanage to the Nightshade family in her childhood, she was meant to compliment and showcase her, being her sister in name but in reality, a servant. Now grown up, seeing her progressing and thriving in the entertainment industry became intolerable, wanting to get rid of her!

This hypocritical, two-faced angel of deceit—she was out to get her!

Struggling to sit up in her hospital bed, Miranda saw Ethan enter the room.

"E—Ethan

She opened her mouth excitedly, trying hard to lift her hand.

"What's wrong, Miranda?" Ethan looked puzzled as he followed her gaze to a box of apple turnovers on the table, his expression freezing for a moment.

"Si—sis, she poi—"

Her voice tore with pain as she tried to expose Xanthea's malice.

Ethan approached the nightstand and picked up the box of apple turnovers, sniffing them cautiously.

"Ethan, you, you must—"

She looked at Ethan full of tears and hope.

However, after sniffing the turnovers, Ethan gently placed them back down, his gaze sharpening alarmingly as he turned back to her "Miranda, you can

take your medicine indiscriminately, but you must be careful with your words. Otherwise , your condition may become more severe than it is now”

Miranda’s heart raced with fear as her fingers trembled and tears rolled down her cheeks. Was Ethan threatening her?

She hadn’t even said anything yet, and he already seemed to know everything. So, he knew everything in advance, right? He knew

was out to harm her! Xanthea was out to harm her! He knew Xanthea

“Alright, you should rest now.”

Ethan picked up the box of apple turnovers and left the room, leaving Miranda to break down in hysterical tears.

She had thought her father and Ethan were the fairest in the family, at least they would treat her as a family member. Yet, she realized that her life was worth less than an ant in the face of Xanthea’s schemes. They might even be conspiring against her

Exiting the room with the apple turnovers, Ethan saw a doctor eagerly following Xanthea down the hallway, asking for her phone number. She seemed annoyed by his persistence, then turned around and cheerily gave him Samuel’s number instead.

Ethan chuckled, glancing at the apple turnovers spiked with a minor dose of poison in his hand and shook his head. “Little troublemaker”

The weekend came, upon returning from a business trip, Oliver called Xanthea “Xan, are you free today?”

“I’m reviewing a script; what’s up, uncle?”

“Stop that for now, I’ve got a surprise for you. Come to the office.”

A surprise?

At the President’s office.

Xanthea came out from the executive elevator, saw Oliver’s office door wide open, and was about to call out to her uncle when she heard a rising and falling cadence of Russian from inside.

She paused, peering in to see a vaguely familiar man lounging on the guest sofa.

He was dressed in casual light wear, with neatly styled black hair, a pair of flat, long, and straight

t eyebrows, clear and handsome facial features. At that moment, he was reading a Russian script marked with **colored** pens. His gentle and literate demeanor was very much like that of a news anchor, unfortunately his Russian was not very good.

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After a while of listening, Xanthea knocked on the office door during a brief pause.

“Hello, is Mr. Lopez here?”

Benjamin Jones was deeply immersed in practicing his Russian when a knock at the door interrupted him, his eyebrows lifted in slight imitation. However, his expression softened as he caught sight of the young woman at the door.

The girl stood in the entrance of the hallway, her soft, honey-blond curls gently lifted by the breeze, draping a few strands over her excessively long and curled eyelashes.

She brushed them aside with her hand, her skin as delicate and pale as the finest ivory, her brows finely arched and her eyes, bright and star-like, shimmered like a radiant galaxy, so captivating it was hard to look away.

Was this Xanthea?

She was even more stunning in person than on TV.

He stared a bit too long before hurriedly setting down his script and standing up to greet her with a smile, “Hello, Ms. Nightshade, nice to meet you.”

He knew her?

Xanthea looked at him with a hint of surprise, “Hello, and you are?”

“You don't know me?”

Benjamin paused, then found it somewhat amusing.

As the first

time someone had said they didn't recognize him. This new and fresh feeling was both

Since his debut at the age of ten, it was novel and amusing.

Uh, should she know him?

Bemused by his incredulous tone, Xanthea racked her brains. His face did seem familiar, but she couldn't quite recall where she **had** seen him before

"Are you a friend of my uncle?"

Benjamin laughed, "Didn't Mr. Lopez tell you why you're here?"

"No, he just mentioned he had a surprise for me."

"Then let's wait for Mr. Lopez then," Benjamin offered, gentlemanly pulling out a chair for her. Xanthea thanked him and **sat** down, noticing the notebook in his hands filled with circled words, "Were you practicing Russian?"

"You understand it?"

Benjamin was surprised. Xanthea nodded, "A little. I heard you reading from outside. Your tone, pitch, cohesion between sentences, and grammar usage were quite good. It's just that some of your pronunciations were off. You struggle with R's, don't you?"

Her pinpoint accuracy in identifying his weaknesses stunned Benjamin. She had only heard him from outside for a short while but could keenly identify the issue. She definitely understood more than just a little.

"Indeed, I've been learning Russian for a while but still can't roll my Rs properly. It's quite embarrassing. If Ms. Nightshade doesn't mind, I'd appreciate any advice."

"It's not about giving advice; I can share some tips with you."

As she read in Russian, the delivery was good, and the pace and emotion were just right – even a level that would impress professional interpreters. Yet she had modestly claimed to only understand a little.

Surprisingly, she seemed no older than 16 or 17, yet possessed such high linguistic talent and knowledge, remaining humble and unassuming. This set her apart from all the high-society debutantes he had met, who seemed to flaunt even the most trivial achievements as though they were of great importance

Benjamin's gaze on her shifted from initial superficial appreciation to something

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“Your ‘R’ sound was slightly off just now. Try curling your tongue lightly, creating a sound similar to the English letter ‘L’” Xanthes looked up and explained to him. Benjamin was momentarily startled, then quickly regained his composure and started to follow her instructions, but to little avail.

After several failed attempts, Xanthea put down her notebook, “Why don’t you come sit closer?”

“Okay.”

Benjamin obediently moved across the table, sitting directly opposite her. Xanthea slightly opened her mouth and began demonstrating.

“When you’re trying to make the ‘R’ sound, lightly curl the tip of your tongue like this, let your tongue gently touch your upper palate without too much force; otherwise, the sound won’t be accurate.”

She was like a dedicated teacher, but all Benjamin could focus on were her captivating eyes, the graceful arch of her nose, her rosy lips, and the glimpse of her delicate tongue ... He was mesmerized once again.

Oliver walked into the office with some documents just in time to witness this scene.

Xanthea was sitting across from Benjamin, gesticulating as if trying to explain something complex, while Benjamin stared at her, as if he were enchanted.

“I haven’t arrived yet, and you’ve already started discussing the script, haven’t you?” Oliver remarked.

“Uncle!” Xanthea exclaimed, standing up. Benjamin quickly averted his gaze, only realizing after a moment that his heartbeat was thundering.

“I was just teaching **this** gentleman how to pronounce the trilled R sound.”

“This gentleman?” Oliver chuckled, “Xan, don’t tell me you don’t recognize him?”

“Isn’t he your friend?” she replied, puzzled.

“Ha!” Oliver clapped Benjamin on the shoulder, introducing him grandly. “This, my dear, is the young master from the northern parts of Crestwood, a national movie star who has shattered box office records multiple times—Benjamin Jones!”

Benjamin? National movie star?

Suddenly, Xanthea remembered where she had seen him before.

“I’m sorry, Benjamin. My niece has always been so focused on her studies that she hardly pays attention to anything else, so she didn’t recognize you.”

“No worries. It’s precisely for that reason that Ms. Nightshade is so outstanding,” Benjamin responded, looking forward to seeing her excited reaction to his name.

“I remember now! The poster in my mom’s room, that’s you! You’re my mom’s favorite actor!”

“What?” Benjamin was stunned, never expecting this answer, “I just started early. I’m not that old.”

“Ha, Benjamin became famous at a young age, he’s only 26 this year, and has already made unparalleled achievements in the film industry. If you could star in ‘Realm of Illusions, I’d rest easy knowing Xan is in good hands!” Oliver added.

“What? Uncle, are you saying today’s surprise is inviting the Movie King to play the lead male in Realm of Illusions?” “That’s right, Ms. Nightshade. That Russian you were teaching me earlier is actually a line from the script,”

“Ah.”

Xanthea scratched her head, and seeing her look troubled, Benjamin was a bit puzzled, “Do you feel there’s something not quite right, Ms. Nightshade?”

“Not at all! It’s an honor to have such an experienced colleague join ‘Realm of Illusions. I’m just worried that it being my first time acting, my many shortcomings might cause you trouble.”

“That’s Okay, I don’t mind,” Benjamin shook his head without a second thought, “Just like how you instructed me in Russian, I can assist you in acting.”

Oliver was secretly astonished at Benjamin’s words. It was well-known that Benjamin was very demanding of his co-stars. If someone’s acting skills were unsatisfactory or they lacked professionalism, he wouldn’t even consider them. Having invited him personally to discuss starring as the male lead in “Realm of illusions,”

Oliver had assumed that Benjamin would outright refuse upon learning that Xan was a novice, and had been prepared to negotiate heavily.

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Unexpectedly, Xan **had** barely been there a few minutes to win Benjamin over.

Indeed, there's no one in this world who can resist the charm of his darling niece!

"That's fantastic!" Oliver clapped his hands and laughed, pulling them both to sit down, "Let's get down to business and talk about the contract!"

The discussion moved from the contract to the script, and it wasn't until the afternoon that they wrapped up.

Benjamin stood up, still enthusiastic, and looked at Xanthea with admiration, "Ms. Nightshade, you truly have a brilliant mind. Your insights into the script even put me to shame."

"You flatter me, Movie King"

"There's no need for formalities, Ms. Nightshade. You can call me Benjamin, just like Mr. Lopez does."

Calling him by his first name? Isn't that a bit too impolite?

Although Xanthea didn't know much about the intricacies of entertainment industry, she knew that this industry valued etiquette, especially the respect shown to seniors. But recalling his earlier mention of age, it seemed he was quite sensitive about being considered old

"Alright, then you can call me Xan."

Xan, Xan.

Benjamin murmured the name in his heart and nodded with a smile.

"Uncle, I need to discuss something **with** you."

Before leaving, Xanthea pulled Oliver aside, “I talked to the project team earlier and found out that the filming location is quite far from home. I was thinking of renting a place in the western areas of Crestwood for convenience.

“No problem, I’ll take care of it!

At the top floor of the Lockwood Group headquarters.

Jacob rushed into the president’s office with a stack of documents, “Chairman, the investigation into Ms. Nightshade’s motorcycle explosion has been completed. Due to the severe destruction at the scene, all traces have been obliterated

To prevent the leakage of audition materials, there were no cameras installed in the makeup room or rehearsal area that day. After screening all who entered the Glory Building, only two had the opportunity to commit the crime—Miranda and Isabella

But one is Ms. Nightshade’s stepsister, and the other claimed she had **stepped** out to smoke, intentionally hiding to avoid paparazzi, with her agent and assistant as alibis.”

“Miranda?”

“Yes! We initially wanted to investigate her, but it turns out she suffered a severe drug overdose recently and is currently hospitalized. It’s likely she won’t be able to speak for months.”

Orion pondered for a moment, “Continue the investigation.”

“Will do!” Jacob closed the file, slightly surprised by how much the chairman cared for Ms. Nightshade, even suspecting her own sister. “Also, chairman, while investigating the accident, I noticed that Ms. Nightshade moved into a new house for filming ‘Realm of Illusions’ right next to your temporary residence in the western areas of Crestwood.”

Hearing this, Orion slowly looked up.

“Ah, moving is exhausting!”

After settling all her belongings in her new home, Xanthea took a relaxing bath and flopped onto the bed in her bunny pajamas.

As the evening breeze picked up, she remembered her undies still hanging outside, and she planned to retrieve them. However, to her surprise, when she went outside and searched around, she couldn’t find them anywhere. Just as she **was** puzzled, she unexpectedly spotted her pink Hello Kitty panties lying on the neighboring balcony’s planter!

She was startled and immediately tiptoed to look across. She only saw a pair of men’s gray slippers on the balcony.

Did a man live next door?

This was so embarrassing. She needed to retrieve her undies quickly!

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The penthouse of Sunset Hills Estates comprised only two expansive apartments, 3001 and 3002, with their balconies separated by a charming Russian-style cantilevered flower bed.

Xanthea, attempting a rather precarious maneuver, stretched a clothes pole across the garden to snag her underwear from the neighboring balcony. However, due to the pole's insufficient length, her efforts proved fruitless. Looking down suddenly, she was frightened into a cold sweat by the dizzying height of the building.

She decided it might be less hassle to just knock on the neighbor's door, rather than risk drawing too much attention and creating an awkward scene.

Standing in front of apartment 3001, she rang the doorbell.

Ding-dong.

*Ding-dong.

After the doorbell rang twice without any response, Xanthea thought no one was home and was about to give up, the door finally clicked

open.

"Hello, sorry to bother you, I'm..."

She began, but the words caught in her throat as the door slowly revealed the man behind it.

The man was dressed in a light ash-grey lounge outfit. His attire, though loose and soft, couldn't hide his well-sculpted figure, from his slim waist to his long legs. The slightly open neckline revealed an enticing collarbone, and his features, framed by plain spectacles, were impeccably handsome. But under those glasses, Xanthea recognized a familiar gaze and her astonishment quickly turned to shock.

Wasn't this Orion?!

Normally, when she saw him, he was in a suit and leather shoes, exuding an air of unapproachable nobility. Seeing him now in such an elegant and seemingly benign manner—pah! More like a hypocritically genteel scoundrel – she almost didn't recognize him at first!

As realization dawned, her shock swiftly morphed into anger.

Orion, opening the **door**, was unexpectedly greeted by what appeared to be a fluffy “little bunny” in white, with droopy large ears hanging by the shoulders, and a cute stubby tail at the back, which brought a faint smile to his thin lips.

“Ms. Nightshade?”

He was smiling?

After all the teasing and even extorting copyright fees from her uncle, he could still smile upon seeing her again. Was he mocking her? Irritated, Xanthea clenched the hood of her pajamas, causing the two ears on her shoulders to immediately stand up.

When the fluffy white rabbit ears unexpectedly popped up on the girl's **head**, Orion's dark eyes slightly tightened as if he were charmed, yet also as if it reminded him of some special **and** secretive adult costume.

Realizing what he might be thinking, Xanthea quickly let go of her grip.

He was laughing at her pajamas!

What rotten luck to have him as a neighbor.

She had imagined their next encounter would be on a glittering stage, where she'd be accepting a prestigious **award**, using her stellar results from “Realm of Illusions” to metaphorically slap him in the face.

Instead, here she was in a bunny **pajama**, knocking on his door.

“I dropped something on your balcony,” Xanthea said coldly without any expression. “I'll just take it and go.”

Orion raised an eyebrow and glanced towards the balcony.

Seeing him silent, Xanthea's brow furrowed, perhaps doubting the sincerity of her claim. She hastily added, “I just moved into the next door, 30021”

What was that look for? Was he thinking she was some social climber, deliberately dressing up to knock on his door in the middle of the night? Ha, he thinks too highly of himself!

Orion responded, "Alright, I'll get it for Ms. Nightshade"

Seeing him turn to head for the balcony, Xanthea's eyes widened in **fear**, and she abruptly grabbed his

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Orion's gaze fell on her hand tightly gripping his wrist.

"No need, I can handle it myself!"

She darted into the house like a sprightly rabbit, heading straight for the balcony. If he saw her Hello Kitty underwear she would never be able to face him again!

Watching her short, trembling bunny-like tail, Orion's amusement deepened as he slowly turned the complex **lock**.

On the balcony, Xanthea made a beeline for her **goal**, planning to grab the underwear and make a run for it. But to her dismay, in the very spot where her Kitty underwear should have been lying innocently, there was nothing!

She paused, scanning the area thoroughly. She looked everywhere, top to bottom, inspecting every visible spot on the balcony. Still, she found nothing!

Refusing to give up, she crouched down and began searching inch by inch.

It was bizarre, they were right here a moment ago, clearly visible from next door! How could they have vanished so suddenly? Had the wind blown them off course, or had they been swept off the balcony entirely? Yet, the breeze didn't seem strong enough for that.

As Xanthea continued her search, she suddenly noticed a pair of gray slippers in front of her.

Slowly lifting her eyes along the man's excessively straight legs, she inadvertently caught sight of the substantial bulge beneath his loose pajama pants!

Her heart skipped a beat, and she instinctively pulled her hands back, steadying herself.

That was quite eyesore!

How could such casual home wear fail to conceal his... In a restful state? No wonder they say men wearing gray pants are committing a

crime

“Ms. Nightshade, have you found it yet?”

Orion leaned down, his gaze intensifying as he looked at her. Flustered from her recent awkwardness, Xanthea averted her eyes, her hands involuntarily fiddling with the potted plant in front of her, “No, not yet, just a moment longer.”

Observing her relentless mistreatment of the potted plant, Orion remarked, “Is Ms. Nightshade’s item small? Should I turn on the light?” With his reminder, Xanthea realized what she was doing and quickly withdrew her hands.

“No need! I can see just fine!”

Continuing her search, she crawled under the storage platform, contorting herself into a difficult position. But she still couldn’t find her Kitty underwear.

Meanwhile, Orion, standing at the balcony door, watched her intently, his gaze almost piercing through her.

Xanthea paused, realizing the compromising position she was in.

Remembering the look he gave her at the door, filled with suspicion, and now, after searching the exposed balcony for so long without finding anything

He couldn’t possibly suspect that she was the kind of **woman** who shows up uninvited at midnight, like Seb mentioned about a teacher who tried to seduce him when he was drunk!

“Maybe the wind blew it away. It’s not something important anyway, so I’ll stop looking!”

She slowly crawled out from under the storage bench, Orion’s gaze reluctantly shifting away from her shapely form, deep and impenetrable, as he stepped aside to let her pass.

Crap! How embarrassing!

What she’d intended as a small act of revenge had backfired, and now she was mistaken for that kind of woman! **She’d** never felt more humiliated in her eighteen years. She wished she could just vanish into thin air!

Blushing and frustrated, Xanthea rushed to the door, grabbing the handle. But, as fate would have it, what she feared most...

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The smart door unexpectedly started shouting and, after three calls, it locked itself completely.

Xanthea was baffled. Twisting the knob again, the screen displayed—
Trigger child lock protection mechanism, please try again one

Child lock protection mechanism? What the heck? Is that even such an operation?

Instinctively, she started to call out for Orion but stopped midway.

The man behind her heard her call and quickly approached, "What's the matter, Ms. Nightshade?"

"Your door seems to have a bit of a problem"

Onon glanced at the message on the screen, "It looks like you turned the knob the wrong way and triggered the child lock."

"Child lock?"

A safety feature specifically designed to prevent children from operating devices out of curiosity and potentially causing harm. Once activated, all other functions are temporarily disabled until the set time is reached.

"Why have such a feature when there are no kids around?"

"All houses in Sunset Hills Estates have it, yours included."

"So what do we do now?"

here for an hour"

Onion replied, "We'll just have to ask you to wait h

Xanthe thought: I must have overlooked my horoscope today. The more I try to avoid him, the more tangled up I get, and now I'm literally trapped in his house!

Owon glanced at the clock. "I was about to make some late-night snacks, how about you stay and join me, Ms. Nightshade?"

"No, thanks. I'm not hungry!"

Xanthes promptly refused

"Maybe watch some TV?"

"No, thanks, I don't feel like it

Xanthea refused again.

Would Ms. Nightshade like something to drink?

"No, thanks, I don't want anything!"

With her third consecutive refusal, Orion looked at her deliberately distant and frosty demeanor, "Then please make yourself at home, Ms. Nightshade. Call me if you need anything"

As Xanthea watched him head to the kitchen, she scoffed internally. All pretense and ostentation. If she hadn't seen through his despicable nature, she might actually have been charmed by his gentlemanly demeanor

Xanthea sat on a bench in the hallway, prepared to quietly wait an hour away.

Unexpectedly, a rich and enticing savory aroma slowly drifted from the kitchen, directly appealing to her taste buds and causing Xanthea's stomach to immediately start rumbling in celebration. This smell was just too much!

It seemed like sweet and sour pork ribs, pan-fried bass, and pineapple pork, all dishes she loved from back home!

Having just moved, she was both physically and emotionally exhausted, and hadn't had a chance to eat before getting trapped here. Now, the smell of the food was like a bone to a hungry wolf, her appetite was roused.

This onion, absolutely detestable! Why make such a lavish late-night meal!

No, she must resist, she must hold back, absolutely must not embarrass herself in front of him again!

Xanthea forced herself to close her eyes, steadying her mind, repeating inwardly, “I don’t want to eat, I don’t want to eat, I don’t want to eat, I don’t want to eat, I want to eat, I want to eat, I want to eat, eat, eat, eat.”

The kitchen door swung open and the mere strands of scent that had escaped before now engulfed her in waves, almost causing Xanthea to lose control of her drool.

She cracked open one eye and saw Orion placing all the dishes on the table, exactly as she had imagined. The enticing **look** and smell

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of the food immediately brought back **memories** of her days in Willowdale.

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To be honest, Onon wasn’t exactly Mr. Nice **Guy**, but his cooking is top tierf

After eating just once in Willowdale, she found the flavor unforgettable, and her taste threshold was suddenly elevated. Meals cooked by her aunt and mother at home no longer satisfied her.

Onon caught the fleeting glance she threw at the sweet **and** sour pork ribs and with a slight tilt of his elongated, deep eyes, he teased. “Ms Nightshade, won’t you join me?”

“No, no thanks!”

Xanthea swallowed hard, rejecting the offer with great difficulty.

She glanced at the digital clock. Why was time moving so slowly? Every second felt like an eternity!

“Ms. Nightshade.”

His voice, dripping with temptation, reached her again. Unable to resist, Xanthea cut him off, “Mr. Lockwood, I think our relationship hardly qualifies for sharing a dinner, right? Even if we had some past interactions, after your behind-the-scenes manipulation during the ‘Realm of Illusions’ audition, that should have ended.”

After her words hung in the air for a few brief seconds, just when she thought she might finally get some peace, Orion suddenly said, “I was just wondering, Ms. Nightshade, if you heard any strange noises?”

Instantly, her cheeks flared up in embarrassment as she reflexively covered her stomach, “What strange noise? No, not at all, maybe it’s just your kitchen’s exhaust fan still running!”

Orion’s lips curved in a smirk, watching her feign innocence, sweeter than the pineapple on his plate, “Hmm.”

She couldn’t sit still any

any longer, the hunger r was so intense she felt she could eat her own hand. She needed a distraction, and fast! Xanthea looked around, and her gaze ultimately fell back on Orion by the dining table because, whether it was the dishes or him, they were the most eye-catching presence in the room.

“Orion.”

She suddenly called out to him, causing a puzzled look to cross his face as he hadn’t expected her to initiate a conversation given their earlier standoff.

“Ms. Nightshade.”

“I have a question for you. At the novel rights auction, you fought tooth and nail against me over ‘Realm of Illusions,’ and then publicly eliminated me during the auditions. So why did you end up selling the rights to my uncle? Was it just to make a \$10 million in profit?” When she first heard this from her uncle, she was furious. But after calming down and thinking it over—who was he? The chairman of the prestigious Lockwood Group, a fixture on the Forbes list, casually gifting diamonds and jewels worth millions. What did a mere 10 million dollars mean to him? Why would he hand over something he worked so hard for, just for that amount?

And more so, he dotes on Isabella, right? Why wouldn’t he give ‘Realm of Illusions’ to her when she loves it so much?

After asking, she looked at him with a puzzled expression, but he looked down at the dish in front of him, seemingly not prepared to answer her question.

“Orion.”

“If Ms. Nightshade would dine with me, I could answer your question,” Orion replied, lifting his gaze slightly. The combined allure of his look and the **food** was too much for Xanthea. Before she could verbally respond, her body honestly stood up, “Alright.”

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Xanthea had no idea how she found herself at the dining table, not how she ended up with the utensils in her hand. All she knew was that the sweet and sour pork ribs were incredibly tender and juicy, the oysters tofu was delightfully fresh and smooth, and the pineapple-glazed ham was refreshingly tangy!

With each delicious bite. Xanthea, who had been bustling all day and was famished, nearly shed tears of joy

As the girl ate, a satisfied curve appeared on her beautiful face, her cheeks pulled out adorably, and her fluffy ears on her head twitched with each bite, making her look like a bunny munching on a fragrant carrot—which was so endearing that it was hard not to want to touch and caress her

Orion’s grip on his cutlery tightened slightly, suppressing the urge as he piled more meat onto her plate.

Looking at her plate, which was almost overflowing. Xanthea hurriedly waved her hands, “That’s enough, no more. I won’t have that piece of fish, I’m afraid it’ll get stuck again.”

“Sea bass, it’s boneless”

“Really?”

Not even a tiny bone? She remembered getting choked on one last time.

Xanthea bit into it skeptically and then savored the bite. True enough, there wasn’t a single bone, only the exquisite softness and crispy delight.

“Mmm, this is the first time I’ve had such crispy, pan-seared bass. How did you do it?”

“Want to learn?”

“Yes, please!”

Xanthea nodded vigorously

“You don’t need to learn.”

Xanthes: “Fair enough”

She had never been gifted in cooking. After failing numerous cooking classes and even causing a star chef to advise her to quit wasting ingredients, she knew it wasn’t her forte

Onon watched her face fall in disappointment, biting back the words that almost escaped him: I like you–i can always **cook** for you, no matter when, in any role.

The next moment, she perked up again, her smile radiant as she looked at him, “But really, your culinary skills are extraordinary. If you weren’t a CEO, you could definitely become a renowned chef!”

“I don’t need worldwide fame, satisfying one person is enough.”

Without realizing it, he spoke his true feelings.

“One person?” Xanthea curiously asked, “Who’s that lucky person?”

Orion looked at her intently, **his** deep gaze burning with an intensity she couldn’t quite decipher, “My future girlfriend.”

Girlfriend?

She hadn’t expected him to be so romantic. Going by past experiences, wasn’t his future girlfriend Miranda?

The moment the name ‘Miranda’ popped into her head, she seemed to realize something, her enthusiastic chewing and the **smile** on her face freezing momentarily

What the heck?

Was she really sitting here, chatting and laughing with Orion, this deceitful man? Had she forgotten that she had already blacklisted him?

The **allure** of good food was too misleading. This time, she had to be more cautious, not to be deceived by his pretentious kindness

again!

With that thought, she put down her silverware and straightened her face, “Mr. Lockwood, I’ve already dined with you, why did you decide to sell the rights to Realm of Illusions to my uncle?”

now

can you tell

Orion, watching the little bunny who turned hostile after being fed, couldn't help but smile.

Xanthea, feeling somewhat guilty as his gaze seemingly brushed over the leftover food, awkwardly licked her lips. Although it seemed like she had been the only one feasting, he was the one who invited her.

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Chapter 109

"The proposal and risk assessment for 'Realm of Illusions' were not approved by the board."

"What?" Xanthea could hardly believe her ears, "Just because of that?"

Orion replied, "Yeah"

"And you being the chairman doesn't make a difference?"

"I tend to respect the opinions of my team."

"Ha—
ha Xanthea burst into laughter, her eyes twinkling with amusement as she looked at him, "Respect for the team, huh? But I must say, their vision really is not that great."

Orion nodded in agreement, "I think so too."

Xanthea raised her hand, "Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying your vision is any good!"

"But my vision, indeed, is very good," he asserted confidently.

She rolled her eyes at him. Such a narcissist!

"If it were really good, you would've gone against everyone's advice to keep the project, not sold it off so easily! Just wait, Orion. Once I make 'Realm of Illusions' into a film. You'll regret it!"

Regret eliminating me at the audition; regret favoring Isabella!

“Alright, I’ll wait to regret it,” he said with a slight smirk, his eyes betraying no sign of actual regret

“By the way, what about Isabella? She seemed quite upset about not landing the role of Phoenix. Aren’t you Xanthea ventured cautiously, only to see him passing a fleeting look of confusion, “Who?”

“Ah, never mind!”

concerned?

She felt a secret thrill **and** quickly gestured towards the door. “The child lock seems to be off. I should be going!”

At the auction and during the auditions for “Realm of Illusions,” she had seen Isabella standing proudly behind him, presuming some unspeakable intimacy existed between them.

After all, such relationships are quite common in the entertainment industry—a business tycoon and a popular actress seemed well matched

But when she mentioned Isabella just now, not only did he show no emotional reaction, he seemed genuinely puzzled. Perhaps she had misunderstood their relationship.

This meant she didn’t **have** to worry about him backing Isabella, making it impossible for Isabella to surpass her anyway! Orion looked towards the smart door which now showed it was unlocked. That was so quick

“Alright, I’m leaving!” Xanthea stood up, patting her satisfied belly, “Even though you insisted on inviting me to this dinner, I still want to thank you for your hospitality. But let’s keep it strictly professional, it’s probably best if we don’t have any interaction in the future.” “There are desserts in the kitchen, would you like to try some?” Orion offered.

“Desserts? What

kind?

No sooner had Xanthea spoken than she regretted it. She had just made a firm statement, and here she was, tempted by desserts. This was so embarrassing!

Orion chuckled, “Hang on”

“Ah, maybe not, Xanthea awkwardly waved her hand, I’m too full already. I can’t eat anymore

“Ms. Nightshade could take some for later, in case you’re hungry again.”

“Ah?”

Xanthea blinked in surprise. Before she could respond further, **Orion** was already heading into the kitchen. “Well, let’s see, but if it’s not delicious, I’m not taking it.”

A few minutes later, Xanthea walked out of the suite 3001 with an elegant gift box, sighing deeply.

19:02

My Beloved Has Risen from Death’s Embrace Novel

CHAPTER 110

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Chapter 110

Hadn’t she promised herself that the next time she saw Orion, she would definitely give him a piece of her mind? But when the time came, not only did Xanthea not give him any grief at all, she ended up shamelessly accepting a meal from him. Worse yet, she had even taken leftovers home! It was utterly spineless!

How could she face him next time and righteously criticize him the next time they met?

One thing was clear as a leader, Orion knew exactly how to win people over.

Staring at the gift box in her hand—
which girl could resist a sweet cherry topped mousse cake?

Orica: “Ms. Nightshade, good night.”

Although Xanthea didn’t want to engage, there was an old saying that one should not bite the hand that feeds. Thus, before closing the door, she still managed to say, “Good night, sweet dreams!”

But that didn’t mean she had forgiven him! Or that she had, well, best to try the cake first!

Had she just greeted him?

Orion paused, his hand on the doorknob, savoring her “sweet dreams” over and over before finally closing the door.

The large room felt empty and silent, devoid of any of the joy or liveliness when the girl was present

He slowly pulled his hand from his pocket, revealing a piece of delicate, sexy lace underwear embroidered with a cute Hello Kitty—her favorite cartoon character from childhood.

For the first time, he was this close to her—separated only by a **w**all, so close her most intimate piece of her clothing in his palm, yet he felt it wasn't enough, nowhere near enough.

He desired to have her, to embrace her, to kiss her, to possess her completely and perhaps even to confine her to a place where she could only ever see him.

Despite knowing he shouldn't get close, he repeatedly lost control, indulged himself again and again, until he was too deep in the mire to let go.

In the misty night, the glow of a cigarette lit up the pink Hello Kitty and the man's face, which was slightly contorted by strong desire, as if the gentleman shedding his disguise to reveal his true, sinister self.

Cedric was awakened in the middle of the night **by** a phone call, "Hello, boss, it's late, do you have any instructions?" "When is the launch event for "Realm of Illusions?"

"The day after tomorrow, at the Glory Building." Cedric perked up at the mention of "Realm of Illusions," "Boss, you're not planning to attend Ms. Nightshade's launch, are you? The trip to Highcliff for the Everhart family has already been scheduled for the day after tomorrow, and you have a very important contract to discuss!"

"I'm just passing by."

Hearing the phone click off, Cedric put down his phone in resignation

He knew his boss wouldn't miss any chance to see Ms. Nightshade, even if she was still mad at him.

Before Ms. Nightshade had even noticed the President, he had gone out of his way to create coincidental meetings and gather information about her, not to mention now that Ms. Nightshade occasionally flirted with him, the President definitely couldn't resist! Upon arriving at Oli hea Media, Xanthea immediately noticed Oliver and Benjamin, who had been waiting for her in the office for a long time.

"Uncle, here I am... Movie King, what are you doing

hero?

Oliver explained, "Benjamin thought it would be better to go with you to the launch event today, to avoid any nonsense from the gossip

media"

"Nonsense?"

"You're new to the industry. Benjamin's status and popularity far exceed yours, and it's his first time in a TV series. If he arrives late, those marketing accounts will claim he took the role only due to financial pressures and is not interested in working with you. If he arrives early, they'd spin it as you are playing a diva."