

# **My Beloved Has Risen from Death's Embrace Novel**

## **CHAPTER 51**

Posted by **AdminJ**, 2660 Views, Released on May 15, 2024

Chapter 51

**Is this magic? It must be magic, right?**

**Xanthea** was a fairy from a magic castle!

**Otherwise**, how could she perform magic?

Even though Orion had already suspected something, he was still astonished after seeing her series of smooth movements. His eyes shone with the same fascinated light as Sebastian's.

After finishing her act, Xanthea clapped her hands and looked at the uncle-nephew duo in front of her, who looked alike and wore identical expressions of admiration. A mischievous smile played on her lips, her vanity greatly satisfied, "So, what do you think, gentlemen? Ready to admit defeat?"

Xan, you're so amazing!" Sebastian exclaimed, his eyes lighting up as he rushed toward her. "Are you a fairy? How do you Can you teach me, please?"

"Back off, don't butter me up."

do magic?

Xanthea pushed him away disdainfully, still remembering his earlier antics in the study and his attempt to tickle her with a feather.

"Punishment first, then we'll talk."

**"What?"**

**Sebastian** frowned, regretting his earlier mockery of this beautiful lady. He knew she would seek revenge!

He tried to sneak away, but Xanthea caught him, "Orion, your nephew can't take a loss, what should we do if he tries to run?"

Orion replied, "He won't get far."

Sebastian looked up in shock at his uncle's icy tone and thought, "Uncle, aren't we supposed to be on the same side? Xanthea is going to punish us!"

**Xanthea**, with a satisfied nod, squinted her smiling eyes.

"Xan, that's cheating! You weren't this powerful at the

"**Sweetie**, too late now! So, will you take your

punis

**If** I knew you could do magic, I wouldn't have agreed!"

willingly, or shall your uncle do the honors?"

Caught between a rock and a hard place, Sebastian reluctantly accepted his fate, "Alright, Xan, how will you punish me? You're not going to tickle my feet with a feather, are you?"

"Seb, you seem really scared of feathers. I'm not that mean."

"You're the best, Xan!"

As soon as Sebastian finished speaking, Xanthea came up with an even naughtier idea, "I think **you** should wear a cute, pink frilly dress and stand in the corner doing a handstand!"

"Ah-

Sebastian's expression changed instantly, his mouth agape as h

around the room

in protest,

"No

way! I don't

want to

wear a girl's dress! If people find out, they'll laugh at me!"

Xanthea rubbed her hands together like the Big Bad Wolf preparing to catch Little Red Ridi Soon, she caught Sebastian, and with the help of **the** butler, dressed him in pi

nk dress. She then joyously took photos of him standing on his hands in the corner, making a face.

Hood.

**as**

hunting time!

a sparklin

“Seb, look at the camera, be **a good** boy!”

“Smile a bit, **you** look even prettier than the girls!”

“**Wow, Xan,** you are so mean.”

**With** her eyelashes curled and dimples shallow, Xanthea pinched Sebastian’s **nose** affectionately, **creating** a scene so sweet it seemed **almost** surreal.

**Orion** took out his phone and captured the moment.

**In** the photo, the sweetness of the girl playing with the child was nothing compared to the deep affection hidden in his **eyes**.

## **My Beloved Has Risen from Death’s Embrace Novel**

### **CHAPTER 52**

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#### **Chapter 52**

Sebastian had wriggled and squirmed for a good while before he managed to escape from Xanthea’s clutches. He glared helplessly at his uncle, who **not** only didn’t help but also seemed to enjoy the torment. He whispered into Xanthea’s ear, “Xan, you can’t play favorites with Uncle Orion! He’s bigger than me, so his punishment should be tougher!”

Watching Sebastian so quickly betray their little alliance, Xanthea couldn’t help but think their nephew—uncle bond was as flimsy as a cheap plastic toy. But she certainly wasn’t going to let Orion off the hook easily.

After happily saving the photos, she walked towards Orion with a mischievously gleeful look **in** her eyes.

“Mr. Lockwood.”

“Feeling peckish?”

He beat her to the punch.

She hadn't felt hungry until he mentioned it, but now that she thought about it, after a long tutoring session with Sebastian that left her fuming and a strenuous half-hour pool, she did feel a bit.

Wait a minute, this must be his gourmet trap! She absolutely couldn't fall for it!

“Not hungry, not at all!”

Orion said, “I'll cook.”

What?

Xanthea was almost doubting her ears. “You can cook?”

“Ms. Nightshade, *you* might not know this, but Mr. Lockwood isn't just good at cooking: he's exceptional. It's a pity I've only had the pleasure once, on his mom's 30th birthday, just one dish, but it was memorable. Sadly, I haven't had that honor again.”

The butler seemed nostalgic, his face brightening as he recalled the event.

Xanthea grew more curious.

Who would've thought? The once mighty prince of the Lockwood Group, now the top authority at Twin Towers, could actually cook! She had a soft spot for men who could cook, especially when they were as infuriatingly handsome as the man before her. The prospect of tasting his cooking...

Xanthea hesitated, swayed.

Sebastian, seeing her about to be swayed by the promise of food, tugged at her sleeve, “Xan, aren't you going to punish Uncle Orion?” Right, she had finally cornered this cunning mogul, and she might not get another chance. She definitely couldn't let him get away so easily!

“If you cook for me, I might consider not treating you as harshly as I did Seb

“Deal.”

He agreed without hesitation, making Xanthea feel slightly guilty. Was she being too harsh?

Her gaze wandered over him, lingering on his chest, recalling the scenes from that night at the Rlan Hotel that had left her heart racing. The memory of his physique and strength, his sculpted abs and biceps... He must work out regularly, right?

“Let’s keep it simple. Do some push-ups.”

“How many?”

Xanthea thought for a moment and held up a finger. He still had to cook, so she didn’t want him to exhaust himself too much.

“When you’re done, you have to say, Ms. Nightshade, you’re so awesome, I really admire you!”

She clasped her hands over her heart, mimicking an adoring fan. Orion, hearing the word ‘admire’ had a flicker of amusement in his eyes. “Okay”

Sebastian pouted beside them, “You’re really not fair. You’re letting Uncle Orion off so easy!”

“Well, that’s the privilege of having culinary skills!”

Xanthea followed Orion into the gym area, watching as he loosened his tie and then began to do one-handed push-ups!

this how strong men work out?

But

## **My Beloved Has Risen from Death’s Embrace Novel**

### **CHAPTER 53**

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#### **Chapter 53**

Orion had the kind of physique that didn’t scream gym junkie; instead, there was a subtle power behind his toned muscles, visible even through his crisp white shirt. The thought of him cooking dinner **for** her later brought a delightful rush, giving her the peculiar sensation of having hired some sort of CEO-level butler.

After completing ten push-ups, Xanthea called out to stop, catching Orion’s puzzled gaze.

“That’s **it!**”

What was he confused about?

“One hundred.”

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His voice was calm, and he continued the exercise. Xanthea was stunned. One hundred? One-handed? Had he lost his mind?

She **didn’t** claim to understand the extent of a man’s strength, but she often watched Samuel work out, and even he struggled past forty. And here Orion was, aiming for a hundred one-handed!

“Xan, don’t worry, Uncle Orion’s got the strength!” Sebastian chimed **in**.

\*Strength or not, doing a hundred one-handed push-ups could break him! Orion, don’t overdo it, get up. You still have to cook dinner!”

As a minute passed, Xanthea’s doubts were thoroughly squashed. Orion had completed nearly ninety push-ups with ease, his expression unbothered, his form perfect.

Sebastian, watching Xanthea’s astonished face, boasted, “See, I told you Uncle Orion is strong! He could even manage a hundred with you sitting on him, easily.”

Xanthea quickly covered his mouth. What kind of inappropriate things was the kid suggesting?

She was indeed shocked that Orion could effortlessly perform a hundred one-handed push-ups, but the terrifying thought of what could happen if she hadn’t escaped that night at the Rlan Hotel made her shudder. With his daunting strength, she feared for her life!

Soon, Orion finished the set and stood up, looking at her intently, “Want to give it a try?”

“Uh, what?”

Caught off guard by his suggestion and her own wandering thoughts, Xanthea shook her head frantically, “Try what? No, no, no!”

“Hop on.”

Xanthea paused, realizing he was still talking about push-ups.

“No need, you—you go cook.”

1 8 3 8 2 2 2 2 5 5 5 5 3 1/± x

Noticing her blush, Orion’s eyes narrowed slightly as he slowly moved closer, backing her against the wall.

After his workout, the mild scent of cedar from his body was intensified, mingling with a distinctly masculine hormone—driven aroma, enveloping Xanthea tightly, making it hard for her to breathe.

Yet, he kept advancing slowly until he cornered her, her lips trembling slightly, “What—what are you doing?”

Orion lowered his gaze; his thick eyelashes cast shadows on his cheeks as he leaned in close to her ear.

“Ms. Nightshade, you’re so awesome, I really...”

He paused, his voice trailing off, and all she could hear was a faint whisper of admiration.

His deep, magnetic voice, slightly breathless from the exercise, was undeniably sexy at such close quarters. The warm breath hitting Xanthea’s ear sent tingles down her spine, blanking out her mind momentarily.

## **My Beloved Has Risen from Death’s Embrace Novel**

### **CHAPTER 54**

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#### **Chapter 54**

Until Sebastian implored from behind, “Xan, you’re squishing me.”

Only then did Xanthea realize Orion had already left.

**Damn!**

What had just happened to her?

It was as if she had been spellbound for a moment, unable to move. Could Orion be a wizard?

But men after a workout, his voice was too vibrant, too seductive, right? She almost felt her

stiffen!

Wait a minute, did Orion just play a trick on her? The word she really needed to hear was admire.”

In the living room, Sebastian and Xanthea sat on the carpet, building with Legos.

he just swallowed them up?

The Thompson family’s staff gathered in a corner, gossiping quietly as they watched Orion meticulously preparing food in the glass-walled kitchen.

“I’ve been working for the Thompson family for ages, but it’s the first time I’ve seen Mr. Lockwood cook!”

“The butler mentioned that Mr. Lockwood only cooked once before during his mother’s 30th birthday, and even then, it was just one dish. Today, he’s ordered a whole array of ingredients!”

“It’s nearly midnight, and he’s still so dedicated to making a midnight snack. I’ve never seen Mr. Lockwood this thoughtful for anyone. Do you think Ms. Nightshade might be his girlfriend?”

“She seems too polite and formal with him for that.”

“Yeah, but Mr. Lockwood’s behavior is evidently special. Could it be Mr. Lockwood has a crush on Ms. Nightshade?”

“You silly, this piece goes here,” Xanthea took a block from Sebastian’s hand and placed it on top of their Lego ship. Sebastian, hands cupping his chubby cheeks and eyes twinkling, stared at Xanthea, “Xan, you’re so magical!”

“What do you mean? Are you overwhelmed by my beauty and brains?”

“Not me, Uncle Orion is!”

Xanthea raised an eyebrow, “**Orion?** What do you mean?”

“I have never seen Uncle Orion so nice and gentle with any girl. He personally washed fruits, played ball, and even made snacks. You’re the first!”

The little rascal, seemingly brash and carefree, but with such keen observations.



Xanthea laughed, “Maybe it’s because there aren’t many girls around him, so you haven’t seen much.”

Orion’s reputation

in the outside world was fearsome, a simple internet search could chill the spine, and most girls naturally steered clear, just like she would have in her past life. If it weren’t for witnessing him avenging her death and learning that he was her lifesaver, she probably would never have the courage to approach him in this life.

Only upon getting closer did she discover he was nothing like the rumors.

“Not at all,” Sebastian shook his head vigorously, pointing at the Lego in front of him, “There are loads of girls around Uncle Orion, as many as this ship!”

Xanthea was shocked.

“Usually, lots of well-dressed girls come to visit when Uncle Orion is here. It’s so annoying! I asked the butler, and he said they are all distinguished ladies **from** across the country, claiming to visit Mom but actually coming to see Uncle Orion!”

“Really?”

Xanthea was taken aback. Despite the fearsome reputation Orion had in the outside world, it seemed many women were still drawn **to** him like moths to **a** flame.

## **My Beloved Has Risen from Death’s Embrace Novel**

### **CHAPTER 55**

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#### **Chapter 55**

**It** seems that the combination of beauty and money holds power beyond her wildest imaginations!

Sebastian said, “Yeah, I’ve even seen a few girls who frequent the garden confessing to Uncle Orion in the backyard!”

“Seriously?”

There are such brave souls, and not just one!

“Seriously, I never lie!”

\*So what happened after they confessed?" Xanthea asked curiously, to which Sebastian shrugged, "Not much, I overheard them talking **for** ages, and then Uncle Orion asked who she was."

Xanthea couldn't help but burst into laughter. So, the girls thought they were at a point where **they** could confess, but Orion didn't even have a clue who they were?

She could already imagine the awkward atmosphere and the flushed faces of the girls. Although the story sounded absurd, **it** strangely fit Orion's character.

"Also, there was this really scary incident at home." Sebastian began, lowering his voice suddenly and looking **around** **before** leaning closer to Xanthea, "I must tell you, Xan, but you can't tell anyone else, okay?"

Xanthea nodded, "Your secret's safe with me!"

"The woman who used to teach me piano sneaked into Uncle Orion's room one night when he was drunk."

At the mention of 'drunk, Xanthea tensed up.

She had seen what Orion was like when drunk; it wasn't pretty. She hoped he hadn't done anything to the piano teacher.

\* F \* 6 F F 3"

"Turns out, Uncle Orion walked in and nearly strangled her!"

This shocking twist scared Xanthea.

"The incident blew up big time. Uncle Orion was furious, the teacher was kicked out, and we haven't hired any young women since."

Sebastian pouted slightly as he spoke, seemingly confused as to why his uncle was so harsh, but Xanthea understood.

It was clearly a trap set by the teacher, either because she was infatuated with Orion or because she wanted to climb the social ladder by throwing herself at him while he was vulnerable. Unfortunately, it backfired.

Such things weren't uncommon in high society.

“She was actually quite nice to me.”

“This situation isn’t as simple as you think, you’ll understand when you’re older. For now, just know that your uncle cares about you more,” Xanthea reassured him, patting his head. She realized she was fortunate not to have encountered Orion in such a fearsome drunken state; perhaps he was too drunk that night, lost his senses, or mistook her for his ‘honey’ or ‘babe’?

“Seb, has your uncle ever had a girlfriend?”

“Never!” Sebastian shook his head decisively. “Mom says Uncle Orion never really interacts with girls, she even suspects he might not

**like** them at all!”

Huh?

Xanthea was puzzled. Who was the ‘babe’ he kept calling out for that night then?

**Could it** be every man’s fantasy, a non-existent perfect goddess? Maybe he mistook her for her because of their resemblance?

Oh, the curse of her devastatingly beautiful face!

Xanthea held her face **in** her hands **and** laughed narcissistically, causing Sebastian to look at her strangely, “Xan, why are you laughing **so** creepily?”

## **My Beloved Has Risen from Death’s Embrace Novel**

### **CHAPTER 56**

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#### Chapter **56**

“I’m not creepy!”

**Xanthe** grabbed a wooden block and threw it at him, and he yelped, picking up two to throw back, “Xan, you are a grown-up, you can’t bully little kids!”

“Little kids are the easiest to bully!”

Peals of laughter drifted into the kitchen, where Orion, through the frosted glass, watched the joyous inter

play of the girl and the boy below. The scene was a mirror of the countless sleepless nights filled with dreams, yet infinitely more enchanting.

Even though it was just a fleeting illusion, he wished it could last a little longer, much longer, ideally forever.

An hour later, the butler descended the stairs and bowed, "Ms. Nightshade, Sebastian, Mr. Lockwood has prepared a midnight snack. Please join him in the dining room on the second floor!"

"Alright!"

Xanthea and Sebastian, washed up and racing each other, entered the dining room on the second floor and were greeted by a lavish table set with an array of mouthwatering Willowdale specialties.

Sebastian exclaimed, "Wow, it smells amazing and looks so bountiful, Uncle **Orion**, you're awesome!"

"Did you make all this?"

Xanthea was amazed as she looked at Orion. Even before tasting, the presentation and colors alone were not the work of an amateur!

She had expected some simple cold cuts for a snack, but instead, it was a table full of exquisite dishes!

Orion urged, "Ms. Nightshade, please, have a taste."

"Sure, don't mind if I do!"

She quickly picked up her utensils, scanning the table with a touch of decision paralysis. Crab cakes, roasted chicken, and fluffy mashed potatoes. Finally, she forked a piece of crab cake, its rich, creamy filling perfectly soft and deliciously fragrant.

"**Mmm!** This is so good, how can it be this delicious!"

It was so delectable that her eyes squinted in satisfaction, emitting sounds of delight like a content fox.

Sebastian, too, lifted his spoon enthusiastically, "Super delicious!"

Xanthea, overwhelmed with the flavors, tried every dish on the table, finding each more delicious than the last anything she had on the plane!

5 25 25 2 2 2 2 2 2

It seemed almost unbelievable. How could Orion, a busy CEO, not only cook but cook so divinely?

Was it fair for someone to be so perfect?

even better than

After sampling every dish, she noticed Orion's gaze fixed on her and paused awkwardly, "Am I being too unreserved? Your cooking is just tear-jerkingly delicious!"

"Not at **all**."

Not unreserved, but adorable, and very endearing.

"**If** you like it, please have some more."

"Sure!"

"There's also soup."

"Sure!"

"It's getting late; perhaps, Ms. Nightshade, you could stay over."

"Sure!"

Xanthea nodded automatically, and only a few seconds later realized what she had agreed to. Stay over?

She looked up to see his pleasantly upturned eyebrows and that lethally charming smile.

Staying over then, with a handsome man and delicious food **could** life get any more blissful?

"Why don't you join me in eating, instead of watching?"

"Alright."

The three of them dined together, a harmonious, picture-perfect **scene**. The butler, reassured, silently agreed with the staff's whispers, they really did look like **a** family.

Chapter **56**

Xanthea picked up a forkful of fluffy mashed potatoes, pulling out her phone, “It’s yummy, I have to take a photo to remember this **moment!**”

## **My Beloved Has Risen from Death’s Embrace Novel**

### **CHAPTER 57**

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#### Chapter 57

“Why are you snapping photos?” Sebastian barged into her shot, boldly declaring, “If you marry me, pretty lady, you’ll get to enjoy Uncle **Orion’s** cooking every single day!”

“Hey, why wouldn’t I just marry your uncle then?” Xanthea blurted out without thinking.

The moment the words left her mouth, Orion paused mid-bite, and Xanthea froze, realizing her comment was even bolder!

She looked across at the man who definitely heard her and quickly clarified, “I was just joking with the kid, don’t take it seriously, okay?”

**Orion just** nodded.

“He’s kind of scary anyway.” Sebastian began, but the icy glare from the man next to him cut him short. He zipped his lips and gave Xanthea a look that screamed: See? Really scary!

Xanthea chuckled, “Biting the hand that feeds you, huh? You’re still eating the food he made, and you dare to speak ill of him!” **Orion** spoke up, “Liam, the desserts should be ready in the kitchen.”

“Right away, sir. I’ll bring them over,” Liam replied.

“Dessert? Awesome! I love desserts!” Sebastian clapped his hands excitedly, only to be doused by Orion’s chilly, “Not **for** you.”

“What? Uncle Orion, I’m sorry, I won’t speak ill in front of Xanthea again. Let me have some, please!”

“My young master, you misunderstood,” the butler said affectionately. “There really isn’t any for you. Mr. Lockwood made a special one just for Ms. Nightshade.”

Just for her?

Xanthea was flattered as she took a delicate bowl from the butler’s hands.

She peered into the bowl, delighted, “Is this Willowdale’s famous dessert a Refreshing Delight?”

‘Yes, the Refreshing Delight is a characteristic chilled dessert of Willowdale Island, made with red beans, peanuts, jelly noodles, and coconut, crafted from local produce. Since it’s cooling, Mr. Lockwood added dates and barley, which are beneficial for women, to ensure you can enjoy it without any health concerns.”

Overwhelmed, Xanthea looked at Orion, her admiration reaching new heights, “Mr. Lockwood, you’re too thoughtful! How is there such a wonderful man like you in the world? Whoever marries you will be so lucky!”

She had always loved such treats, but her parents often refused her, citing it was too cold for a girl to consume. She never imagined Orion’s Refreshing Delight would cater to her taste while balancing the cooling properties—it was perfect.

Ms. Nightshade, I’m flattered.”

Not at all! Where would I even find a handsome, rich, and culinary-gifted man like you these days? You’re so precious!”

Holding the small bowl, she sincerely praised him, her clear amber eyes reflecting his figure as if casting a divine halo around him, parking a greedy seed deep within his heart.

Matthew **can’t** cook, can he?”

His question startled her, and a mysterious silence fell between them.

Orion’s lashes lowered, hiding the immediate regret that surged beneath, wondering why he had asked the question.

Xanthea didn’t dwell on it, but hearing the name of that scoundrel Matthew during such a pleasant time felt utterly disappointing.

## **My Beloved Has Risen from Death’s Embrace Novel**

### **CHAPTER 58**

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#### **Chapter 58**

“**I’ve** never tried his cooking,” she said, shaking her head and scooping up a spoonful of Refreshing Delight into her mouth. “Why **do** you suddenly ask about him?”

“The Nightshade and Martinez union is the talk of Crestwood. Ms. Nightshade, aren’t you set to get engaged to him on October 6th?”

He knew he shouldn't have brought it up, let alone continue, but he simply couldn't control himself.

3 F 2 2 2 2 2

Xanthea looked at tam in surprise. She thought a business mogul like him wouldn't care about such trivial high society gossip, yet here he was, knowing the details down to the exact date.

“Yes.”

October 6th wasn't just her engagement day, it was also the anniversary of her past life's demise!

That night, dressed in a pristine wedding gown, she had been pushed from the rooftop by a treacherous pair, her blood staining the ground, a sight still vivid in her memory.

This time around, it would be Matthew and Miranda's turn.

Once the hidden cameras she had installed captured their illicit affair, their engagement day would mark their public disgrace!

The thought thrilled Xanthea. She looked at Orion, recalling their encounter in the cemetery.

To this day, she didn't understand why Orion had dug up her grave, carried away her body, and killed Matthew and Miranda. But one thing was certain: he too despised that deceitful couple. Since this was the case, misery loves company!

“Orion, would you come to my engagement?” she asked, her words slicing through the air like a poisoned blade, fears and darkest horrors.

posing his deepest

Orion's usually gentle eyes suddenly frosted over, turning into a dark, endless abyss, void of any light, sending a chill down her spine.

That look was identical to the one he had last life on the rooftop of the Twin Towers, when he had terrifyingly ended Matthew and Miranda. Now, staring at her, he seemed like a vast vortex, ready to swallow her whole.

Had she said something wrong? His anger was palpable.



Not just Xanthea, but even Sebastian beside her felt the chilling atmosphere. The butler, seeing Orion's expression, was visibly shocked. Ms. Nightshade, engaged?

What would Orion do?

Orion's knuckles turned white as he gripped his cutlery, pale as if the bones beneath might show. Only when he caught Xanthea's startled gaze did he manage to look away.

It took him considerable effort to rise from the dining table, his tall frame trembling slightly as he turned.

"Liam, after dinner, escort Ms. Nightshade upstairs to rest," he commanded.

The butler, hearing his suddenly hoarse voice and seeing his trembling sleeves, felt a pang of sympathy. "Yes, sir."

Xanthea wanted to speak, but she was at a loss for words.

She didn't fully grasp what she had said wrong to cause such a drastic change in his demeanor, turning the once joyful and harmonious atmosphere into the current tension.

Orion ascended the stairs, his figure disappearing without a backward glance.

Consumed by despair and jealousy, he feared that turning around would shatter his last bit of sanity, pushing him to do something irreversible.

## **My Beloved Has Risen from Death's Embrace Novel**

### **CHAPTER 59**

Posted by **AdminJ**, ? Views, Released on May 15, 2024

#### **Chapter 59**

The darkness in the bedroom cloaked Orion's face, twisting his chilled smile into something more haunting than tears. Orion's grip tightened, shattering an old photo frame that hung on the wall.

Illusions, no matter how long they linger, eventually shatter—they never morph into reality.

"Xan, what's wrong with Uncle Orion?" Sebastian asked Xanthea cautiously after a long silence.

Though he didn't fully grasp the situation, he could clearly sense that his uncle was deeply distressed, as though he had suffered a tremendous blow.

Xanthea shook her head, her thoughts murky.

In the middle of the night, she tossed and turned on the guest bed at the Thompsons', restless and uneasy. She had thought that after a day full of activities, sleep would claim her the moment her head hit the pillow. Yet, every time she closed her eyes, she saw Orion's expression as he left the dinner table.

What had she said wrong?

Was it just because she had invited him to the engagement party? Why had his reaction been so severe? Could it be he was also reborn? Did he know what would happen to her on that day, hence his reaction?

That seemed unlikely. On the plane, he didn't even recognize Miranda. If he knew her fate, he'd surely help her. Dealing with Matthew would be a walk in the park for him. He wouldn't have shown such utter despair, as if he was out of options.

Pondering until five in the morning, Xanthea still couldn't piece it together. Exhausted, she watched the early dawn light creep in and sat up, defeated. She needed to leave; staying here any longer would only muddle her thoughts further.

In the early morning, Orion approached room 303, ready to knock on the door.

The butler hurried over with a note, "Sir, Ms. Nightshade has already left. She left behind a fan and this note."

What?

He took the note and read the neat handwriting.

[I had to rush back to Crestwood for an urgent matter and couldn't say goodbye. I apologize if I said something last night that offended you. Mr. Lockwood, I hope you can overlook my thoughtless words. This fan, a charm I got yesterday, is both an apology and a thank you for last night's dinner, Xanthea.]

Below the note lay a beautifully embroidered hand fan with a conspicuous message stitched onto it: You will find your true love in Willowdale.

Clutching the fan so tightly the material strained under his grip, regret and despair rose in his eyes.

The butler, seeing his expression, opened his mouth to speak but ultimately said nothing, guessing that Orion had intended to apologize to Xanthea in the early morning.

Back in Crestwood, Xanthea slept through the day and night, a deep, troubled slumber. Upon waking, her first act was to check the surveillance footage on her phone.

To her surprise, it revealed nothing incriminating—just Matthew visiting various exhibits and performances, without a sign of Miranda.

It was odd. If they had been bold enough to embrace in the risky confines of their backyard, why was there no trace of them taking advantage of such a perfect opportunity?

Had they become aware of her **too** obvious setup?/

Capturing them together in a photo was now going to be even harder, and with the wedding date drawing near, failing to gather evidence would ruin all her plans.

## **My Beloved Has Risen from Death's Embrace Novel**

### **CHAPTER 60**

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#### **Chapter 60**

[Xan, have you arrived at school yet?]

[Xan, how is the thesis revision?]

[Xan, why didn't you reply to my message? I was worried about you.]

The incessant buzz of texts from Matthew had Xanthea tossing her phone aside in irritation when suddenly her ringtone blared.

"I'm kinda swamped right now."

"Xan. are you super busy?"

It was Oliver on the other end, and Xanthea quickly changed her tune, "Oh, Uncle! Not too busy. I thought it was a telemarketer."

"Ah, I've got a bit of a thing to discuss today."

“What’s up, Uncle? Just lay it on me, I’m all ears!”

\*Director Hawthorne is shooting a music video to promote the upcoming festival. It’s a big deal, filled with A-list celebrities. It’s a golden chance for newcomers to get some spotlight! We need someone to play the ‘Queen of Pop’ **and** I immediately thought of you. After your win on The Masked Singer, you’ve become quite the sensation online, nearly ten million followers **on** Twitter! Director Hawthorne is quite impressed with you!”

After hearing him out, Xanthea refused immediately, “Uncle, that stint **on** ‘The Masked Singer’ was just a spur of the moment thing. I’m not looking to break into the scene. Please don’t set up any gigs for me. I’m not interested, and I can’t act.”

“It’s just a music video, love. Your personal shots won’t take more than five minutes, no lines to memorize, no acting needed. Just follow the director’s cues, and post-production will handle the rest!”

“But...”

“**Xan**, do it as **a** favor for me, would you? Remember the hustle I went through for your appearance at The Masked Singer?”

“Fine.”

“Oh, you’re an angel! I’ll send you the details soon. Make sure you’re there day after tomorrow, on time!”

Hanging up, Oliver sighed deeply.

Oliver had navigated the entertainment industry for years and his ultimate dream was to mentor a superstar. Despite his efforts, the talents in his company always seemed just shy of that breakout potential.

Seeing Xanthea on stage that day, he believed he’d found his star.

Now at the Elevation Building on the day of the shoot,

**In** the makeup room, assistant Wendy burst in, whispering excitedly to the star in the chair, Isabella, “Isabella, have you heard? Judy has been replaced. The new actress is on her way here!”

“Really?” Isabella stopped dabbing lip balm in surprise. “Someone managed to oust the industry’s darling?”

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“I know, right? It’s a dog–eat–dog world. Finally, someone’s put Judy in her place! She’s been so arrogant, flaunting her connections. Thinking she could overshadow you, a mere singer–turned–actress wanting the lead in a music video? She even had several haute couture gowns ready to outshine everyone!”

“Apparently, she spent a fortune and got replaced before even stepping on set. Must be fuming now!”

Laughter filled the room as Isabella admired her fiery red lips in the mirror, “I’m curious about this replacement. Who could she possibly be?”