

N Destiny 2051

Chapter 2051

Ethan lowered his head to kiss hers. "Last night was great." It was then that Josephine suddenly thought of something. She initially planned to buy some morning-after pills since he did not have any condoms last night, but at that moment, she held that thought and decided to let nature run its course! Now that she had recognized him as the one, having a baby would only complete their relationship.

That afternoon, he brought her to the city center for lunch. Then she received a call. "Hello?" "Joey, where are you now? Your grandfather fell ill. Can you come home now?" "What? What happened?" "Your grandpa... has a heart condition, and it's quite serious. Come home, quick!" Heidi urged.

Tears began forming in Josephine's eyes while she replied, "Okay, Mom. I'm on my way back." Then she looked at Ethan and told him, "Eeth, I need to return home. My grandpa fell ill." "I'll come with you."

"But your-"

'I'm fine. I don't feel comfortable leaving you alone,' he insisted. Since her grandfather was ill, he had to accompany her home. "Okay! Remember to tell your parents. I need to leave this afternoon." She was vividly anxious.

At that sight, Ethan immediately called his mother. Meanwhile, Heidi supported his decision to accompany Josephine because this might be when her daughter needed him the most.

That afternoon, they boarded his private jet and flew back to Zoravia. It was early morning the next day when their plane landed, and they got in the Jacobsons' car and headed straight for the hospital..

There, Peter was lying in the ICU with a respirator. When Josephine saw her mother's reddened eyes, she instantly understood her grandfather's condition. "Mom, Grandpa..."

Heidi forced her tears back and comforted Josephine. "The doctors are still trying, so we can't give up yet." Hearing that, Josephine staggered, prompting Ethan to hold her. Then Heidi told him, "Eeth, take good care of her!"

"I will, Mrs. Jacobson." He nodded. When Mills came out of the doctor's office with a stern face, Heidi quickly approached him. "What did the doctor say? Is there any other plan of action?"

"Dad's old, so the doctor doesn't recommend surgery because it might increase the risks." "How long would Dad still have if he woke up?" she asked with tears in her eyes.

"One week at most." His eyes were filled with tears as well. The next day, many relatives of the Jacobson family came to visit Peter, but unfortunately, he passed away in his sleep.

Josephine was in the lounge when her mother suddenly came looking for her. When she arrived at the ward and saw the doctors covering her grandfather with a white cloth, she felt her legs go weak. Ethan caught her, and she lunged herself into his arms, crying.

The funeral was held a week after that. Many came, and the Jacobsons held the ceremonies amidst grief. In the blink of an eye, the two had been back in Zoravia for two weeks. During that time, Ethan disregarded his recuperating body to take care of Josephine. Perhaps that was the power of love!

Two months later, the Jacobsons slowly walked out of Peter's death while Josephine remained somber. Ethan had been by her side during this period, meticulously caring for her as she spent many crying nights in his arms.

When she awoke today, she felt nervous seeing him pack his luggage. "Eeth, you leaving? No, I'm not. he bting you out for a trip. We're going together."

"Where to?" She blinked.

"You take a rest. I'll tell you once I finish packing." Still, Josephine did not feel like any more and got up to pack. They soon finished preparing their luggage and let the bodyguards bring it out. Then, Ethan held her hand and led her to the car.

On their way, he kept their destination a secret and did not reveal it to her, no matter how she teased him.

D, gave up and leaned against his shoulder, enjoying the scenery outside. Her mood brightened after being a hermit for two months.

Chapter 2052

However, Josephine keenly discovered the car was driving toward the pier. She blinked, wondering if Ethan was about to bring her out to sea. At that moment, she was shocked to see several luxurious cars driving toward them from different directions. Then their car took a turn, and she saw the scenery from the pier not far away. There was a huge cruise ship docked at the pier. She covered her mouth in shock before looking at Ethan. "Are we going on that cruise?"

His eyes narrowed when he smiled. "Yes. My family owns that." Josephine had witnessed his family's wealth, so she was not shocked by what he said. "But why haven't I ever heard the news about your family cruise picking up passengers downtown?"

"This is a special arrangement. It's here for you." He looked at her affectionately. She was utterly overwhelmed. "It's here for me? But I saw many luxurious cars on our way here!"

"They're just tagging along," he explained. An overpowering, sweet feeling surged inside Josephine's heart after she realized Ethan had secretly planned this and even arranged for his family cruise ship to pick her up. He did everything so he could bring her on a relaxing trip.

After they exited the car, the bodyguard carried their luggage on board while Ethan led Josephine forward, introducing the ship's history. Though he had lost his memory, he was on his way to being back in charge of the family business, and with his intelligent mind, he could understand many things quickly. Before they boarded the ship, the cruise ship manager approached them. "Mr. Ethan."

He nodded. "You guys can go about your business! I'm just here as a customer to experience the trip." After that, the couple boarded the cruise and began leisurely touring around the ship. Since he had amnesia, this trip became particularly meaningful.

On the other hand, Josephine had heard of this cruise ship before and knew it was a place to entertain wealthy people worldwide with every luxurious item. Now that she had seen it in person, she thought the rumors were true.

He brought her to the most luxurious suite, a room specially prepared for him that was closed to the public. When she entered, she was bewitched by the view outside the French window. The sea view is astonishing!

Around the evening, the cruise left the pier and continued its route to the following country. Subsequently, Ethan brought Josephine to the shopping floor for a spree. Though she was not materialistic and had no passion for that, he still wanted to give her everything he thought looked pretty on her.

His handsome appearance had caught the attention of many young women, and they were looking at him as though they wanted to swallow him whole.

When Josephine returned from the bathroom, she saw a sexily dressed young lady standing beside Ethan, trying to converse with him and asking for his contact number. With a slightly raised eyebrow, she strode confidently and stopped beside him. Then she held his arm and smiled. "Hey, darling."

In reciprocation, he held her waist and told the flirty woman, "I have a girlfriend. Please excuse us." That young lady instantly felt embarrassed. "Excuse me."

Once she left, he kissed Josephine's head and coaxed her, "Don't be jealous. I only have eyes for you." She shook her head. "I'm not jealous." You're just too popular.

On the third day of their cruise, the sea was utterly peaceful, and a beautiful sunset lay on the horizon. However, Ethan had been gone for more than half an hour while Josephine stood behind the railing, taking pictures of the stunning glow. At that moment, she was surprised by the doorbell ringing. Who could it be?

When she opened the door, she was met with four uniformed

store Josephine J8ebbson? We received a call from a customer asking that we serve you."

Josephine blinked. "Serve me for what exactly?" "We've chosen ue m beautiful evening and will Be. bing you with your makeup. That way, you can attend the masquerade ball tonight!"

Chapter 2053

Josephine thought about it and believed it had to be something Ethan had arranged. She nodded. "Sure!"

Subsequently, the clerks helped her with her makeup and into a beautiful blue evening gown. Once done, she resembled a stunning mermaid, noble yet mysterious. She looked at her reflection in the mirror, satisfied with her princess-like makeup and hairstyle.

"Miss Jacobson, we wish you a delightful evening. The four clerks left. Soon, Josephine received a call from Ethan. "Hey, where are you?" She had begun to miss him. "Open the door, enter the hallway, and come straight to the deck. I'll be waiting there."

She replied, "Sure. I'm coming." As she was wearing an evening dress, she could not help feeling like she was a fairy tale princess. Everything that happened to her was like a dream.

The deck would usually be crowded, but why is it so empty today? Just as she stepped foot into the hallway, she was flabbergasted because the deck had been decorated for a huge proposal. A live band was playing romantic songs on the side while Ethan donned a blue suit, standing there and watching her with a smile as she approached.

Josephine, come here," he instructed. When she approached him, she finally understood his disappearance. He had been here, decorating this place for their proposal. While looking at the large heart made of roses, the white veil moving in the wind, and the romantic dinner table on the side, she covered her chest, feeling so touched that she was about to cry.

Once she arrived beside Ethan, she was pulled into a gentle hug. After releasing her, he got on one knee before her and held her hand, asking, "Josephine Jacobson, will you marry me?"

"I do!" Josephine replied with determination. Ethan held her hand while slowly rising to his feet. Then he grabbed her waist with one hand and cupped the back of her head with the other, gently kissing her before the crowd. Josephine, thank you."

She did not expect he would propose to her before he regained his memory. "Why didn't you wait until you recovered all of your memories?" "I was afraid you'd feel displeased with me and escape, so I have to make you mine first," he announced.

That cracked Josephine up. 'Don't worry. I'm not going anywhere. Whether it's this lifetime or the next, I'm yours. You can't escape from me.'

Ethan leaned his forehead against hers. "How would I bear to leave you alone if you're willing to stay beside me?" Music began to play, and he hugged her waist. "Dance with me!"

Then the couple waltzed to the slow music. Rather than saying they were dancing, it would be more appropriate to say they were pacing slowly while embracing each other. Under the dazzling sunset and a gentle sea breeze, a romantic atmosphere filled the space while several cameras were placed on the side, recording everything.

She raised her head and asked, 'I heard there's a masquerade ball tonight.' "Would you like to join?" "Will it be fun?"

"Of course!"

"Sure. I'll join the ball," she said. On the other hand, another young lady was currently in a state of surprise in spite of the low proposal. Her assistant ran over and told her, "Miss Presgrave, guess whom I saw on the deck!"

Willow was in a daze while propping her chin on her hand. She asked. "Who?" "I saw the man who proposed to the beautiful woman!"

"You mean Ethan?" Willow exclaimed in surprise, not expecting to bump into him here.

"Yes, it's him. The proposal was so romantic, but guests were allowed to disturb them. We could only watch from far away. Why don't you go and congratulate them?"

Willow beamed. "Of course | should do that!" Once she spoke, she got up and ran out the door. When she arrived at the deck, she saw bodyguards standing there, stopping tourists from heading on. "I'm sorry, miss. This area isn't open for guests today," said the bodyguard.

"I'm a friend of Mr. Quarles. I'd like to congratulate them. Can | do that?" She smiled while explaining to the bodyguard. The bodyguard looked at her pretty face and felt conflicted, so he asked, "May | know your name?"

"I'm Willow Presgrave." Since the bodyguard knew the names of Ethan's friends, he asked, "Who is Jared Presgrave to you?"

"He's my older brother!" she replied. Then, the bodyguard immediately apologized, "Pardon me, Miss Presgrave. I'm sorry | offended you. Please head inside!"

Willow thanked him sweetly before heading toward the deck. It just happened that Ethan and Josephine were sitting together enjoying the sunset, unaware that someone was approaching them until they heard a crisp voice yelling, "Ethan, Josephine, hello!"

He turned around to see who it was while Josephine exclaimed in surprise, "Miss Presgrave! What a surprise." "I came here to have fun and didn't expect to

see you two either." Then she sweetly congratulated them. "I'm here to congratulate you. | wish you a happy and long marriage together and hope you'll be happy forever."

Josephine burst out laughing. "We've yet to hold a wedding ceremony, but thank you for the wishes."

"Ethan, what's the matter?" Willow found it strange that he did not greet her. Then, Josephine pulled her aside and explained, "Miss Presgrave, don't mind him. He recently lost his memory and has forgotten many things and people."

"Huh? What happened to him?" Willow was concerned. "It's all in the past, and he's currently trying to recover his memories." After that, Josephine introduced Willow to Ethan. "Eeth, she's Willow Presgrave, the younger sister of your best friend. She's your friend too."

“Miss Willow... Presgrave,” he greeted. “Ethan, just call me Willow! I’m used to that,” Willow replied, feeling quite disheartened about his amnesia.

“Sure, Willow.” He smiled while having a natural, familiar feeling of treating her like a younger sister. Josephine offered Willow a glass of red wine, asking, “When did you get on board?”

“I came on board in Averno too! We might've missed each other. Josephine, are you here on vacation too?”

“Yes. We're here to relax.” “I see! No wonder the ship suddenly docked at Averno. If I had to guess, I would say Ethan called this ship over just for you!” Willow was quick to understand the situation. Smiling sweetly, Josephine admitted. “Yes. That’s what he told me.”

“Oh, wow! It means I must've ridden on your coattails to be able to board the ship in Averno!” Willow exclaimed. “There’s a masquerade ball tonight. Will you be attending, Miss Presgrave?”

While looking at her, Willow suggested, “Josephine, why don’t you call me Willow like Ethan does? We're going to be family very soon!”

Before today, Josephine dared not call Willow by her name because she was the jewel of the P@sgave tarhily

and had high Status. Yet she discovered Willow was an easygoing, kind- hearted girl who was also down to earth. “Sure, Willow.”

“I'm also looking forward to the masquerade ball tonight, and I’ve already prepared a mask for the party. Will you be going too?”

“Yes! I heard it'll be fun, so I wouldn't want to miss it either, Josephine answered. When he noticed how Josephine seemed more relaxed while happily chatting with Willow, became contagious for him.

Later, Willow sat with them for a while and found an excuse to leave because she didn't want to disturb the couples when they were together. Once she returned to her room and looked at the time, she beckoned to her assistant, "Mary, come over and help me with my makeup!"

Chapter 2055

Mary was Willow's all-around assistant. She could do everything, including Willow's makeup and everything else in her life. "Sure, Miss Presgrave. I'll ensure you'll look stunning tonight."

"Gosh, no! Just do as you would normally. Don't overdo it and make me look horrifying."

"How could I? You're born with beautiful looks that could charm all the boys, even with the lightest makeup." While doing Willow's makeup, Mary asked, "Miss Presgrave, are you looking forward to meeting your Prince Charming tonight?"

Willow denied, "No, I'm not. I'm only twenty-three this year. I'm not in a rush for marriage." Laughing, Mary rebuked, "When fate comes knocking, you can't stop it."

After Willow's makeup, she changed into a black evening dress, and as soon as she put on her fox mask, an air of mystery and elegance enveloped her.

The masquerade ball was the most anticipated event for all young cruise ship passengers because many were excited to meet someone new. Similarly, Willow was one of them because who would not look forward to a mysterious ball full of surprises?

In the meantime, Ethan and Josephine were ready for the event. Inside the large ballroom consisting of three floors, a romantic atmosphere filled the space as men and women with all sorts of delicate masks entered the venue. Those mutually attracted to one another would group together, and the added mystery of the mask evoked a sense of excitement in the guests.

When she entered the ballroom, he immediately locked his gaze on her because he feared his woman would get hit on by other men. He refused to let others lay their hands on her.

Since it was her first time attending such a ball, she could not hold back her excitement. Amidst the music, attendants were shifting through the crowd on the dance floor with red wines, offering them to

customers beside them. Instantly, the fragrance of wine wafted through the ballroom, causing tension and chemistry within those youngsters.

Soon, Josephine's sexy figure attracted a man's attention. Perhaps he was so entranced by her beauty that he missed the towering figure behind her. As such, he mustered up his courage to approach her by halting her. "Miss, would you be so kind as to accompany me for a dance?"

She politely waved her hand and rejected him. "I'm sorry, but I already have a partner."

"Miss, you're so beautiful tonight. It's perfectly normal for a beautiful woman like yourself to have several dancing partners, right?" The man refused to give up.

Just as she was about to reject his offer again, she felt a domineering hand wrap around her waist, followed by Ethan's voice, warning the man, "She's mine, so leave her alone."

When the man saw the terrifying glint inside his eyes, he thought Ethan, albeit young, was not someone he could offend. Therefore, he flashed them an embarrassed smile and left. Josephine turned around to comfort her fiancé.

"Alright, relax. We're here to have fun, so this is normal!" Feeling resigned, Ethan argued, "I shouldn't have brought you here. You're too eye-catching."

That cracked her up. "I'm not! I'm just an ordinary woman!" He immediately held her waist and whispered, "The woman Ethan Quarles takes a fancy to is no ordinary one."

Josephine enjoyed hearing that and could not help but smile.

"Where should we look for her?"

Smiling, he assured her, "Don't worry. She's the Ceuta OY Rresgiave family, she's short of protection."

She thought that sounded reasonable. Moreover, she had seen how heavily guarded Willow was during the impetuous wedding, so she knew Willow must have bodyguards with her. More importantly, it was best not to disturb her fun tonight!

Chapter 2056

Willow did enter the dance hall, but not with the intention of dancing. She was there merely to witness the fun. Her preference lay in finding a spot to observe people and seek entertainment. However, what she did not know was her incredibly captivating aura- mysterious, noble, like a fairy. Even with a mask on, her big watery eyes and beautiful plump red lips were enticing.

At that moment, Josephine saw two familiar figures standing beside her. Although they were wearing masks, she recognized them right away. Aren't they my bodyguards?

"You... How did you two manage to get in here?" She could not help but burst into laughter. Her two bodyguards were known for their serious demeanor, yet they joined in on the fun. "We're here to protect Miss Presgrave. She can't be out of our sight."

"Don't worry. I can take care of myself," Willow reassured. She did not want to rely on constant protection, as it would only make her feel vulnerable and weak.

"Miss Presgrave, you can have fun freely. We won't disturb you," the bodyguard replied. She nodded and added, "Well, you guys can enjoy yourselves too! I won't tell my dad. Go get your dance partners!"

"No. Our duty is to protect you," the bodyguard stated earnestly. At that, Willow could only let them be. Of course, she was clueless that danger was around her.

In actuality, a group of kidnapers had targeted her. They were aware that capturing her would enable them to demand a substantial ransom from the Presgrave family, ensuring a lifetime of financial security for themselves. It just so happened that Willow boarded this cruise ship, and they had to kidnap her before the next port arrived.

Tonight's masquerade ball presented the perfect opportunity for them to strike. With a vast and diverse crowd, even with her bodyguards in tow, it would be challenging for them to provide constant attention and protection. Meanwhile, four men standing in the corner were also staring at Willow. One asked, "Boss, can we make a move now?"

“The next port won't arrive for another two days. We have to act tonight and demand money from the Presgraves. We need to be quick, ruthless, and ensure not to harm Miss Presgrave.”

“What if we accidentally do?”

“Even if we get the money, we won't live long enough to spend it.” These kidnappers were well aware of the potential consequences if they were to harm Willow, so their sole objective was to obtain a ransom and not cause her any physical harm.

The ball was reaching its climax as guests poured into the dance hall, causing it to become increasingly crowded. Ethan had already left with Josephine because he could not bear seeing her jostled in such a chaotic environment. He believed it would be better to take her back to their room to rest.

However, Willow was different. She had come to the ball to enjoy herself, sitting in her seat, sipping on red wine, listening to the music, and immersing herself in the exhilarating atmosphere. Moreover, she was eagerly anticipating the upcoming disco dance, which was always a highlight for young people.

Finally, a group of renowned DJs stood on stage before the lights dimmed. Spotlights began to dance seductively. She could not help but rise from her seat and sway her hips to the music and adrenaline.

The youngsters on the dance floor had already started to let loose and show off their vibrant dance moves. In the meantime, the DJ's became increasingly challenging as they kept a watchful eye on Willow amidst the flashing lights. It became trickier for them to maintain a constant visual on her due to the disorienting effects of the lights.

During a moment of darkness caused by the lights, a hand suddenly grabbed Willow's arm. She turned to see a man with a menacing expression. “Hey! Who are you? Let go of me!” she exclaimed angrily. How can someone be so rude?

They forcefully dragged her toward the center of the dance floor. However, she soon realized that something was not right. She was not just being tugged on; another man swiftly approached and joined in, holding her firmly. It became evident that these two men intended to abduct her.

Chapter 2057

The music blared, drowning out her cries for help. At last, she was dragged out through the back door. Filled with fury, Willow fought back. She delivered a strong kick that caught one of the kidnappers off guard.

“Ah!” The kidnapper did not react in time and received a fierce kick. At the same time, she landed a punch on another kidnapper who was not expecting it, delivering a blow to his face. Breaking free from their grasp, she sprinted forward, with the kidnappers giving chase and yelling. “Stop right there!”

As Willow ran through the employee corridor, she noticed it was empty, with no one around to ask for help. The sound of her footsteps rang through the reverberating hallway. Behind her, four kidnappers relentlessly pursued her, their footsteps closing in. She had to find a way to escape their clutches and find help before it was too late.

“Stop running. Stop!” Behind her came the shouts from the kidnappers. Willow's disbelief was palpable as she realized she had become the target of kidnappers, and what was even more surprising was that they did not appear affiliated with any well-known international organizations. Her father had taught her some self-defense techniques and martial arts since childhood, providing her with valuable skills to handle encounters with ordinary men. Still, they might not be sufficient against highly skilled adversaries.

Since her bodyguards were out of reach, she found herself relying solely on her abilities in this critical moment. It was nighttime, and she was running through an employee corridor. Amid the chaos, she felt like a bewildered cat, desperately searching for any nook or cranny to offer her temporary refuge.

“Don't escape, stand still!” The kidnappers relentlessly pursued her, showing they were determined to catch her, even if it meant risking their lives for the ransom. She was gasping for breath. After all, a girl's body had its limitations, and she was running out of air.

As Willow reached the deck position in that pivotal moment, a surge of despair threatened to consume her. With nowhere left to hide, she braced herself for the worst. Yet, amidst the dimness, she discerned the silhouette of a man, a figure that provided a glimmer of hope in the darkness. Though the surroundings obscured his features, she instinctively knew she was not alone.

She ran toward the man but did not clearly see what he was doing. She only saw that he had a gun, pointing it at a man kneeling before him.

“Please spare me! I was forced to do it. Selling those files was not my plan,” the man pleaded, raising his hands before the tall, shadowy figure. His expression was filled with fear, as if he were standing before the king of hell, someone who could damn him with a single thought.

Just then, he saw a slender figure sprinting toward them. In a desperate attempt to save himself, he immediately had a cunning thought and purposely shouted, “Spare me! Mr. Wyatt, I won’t do it again. I’ll do anything you want, so just spare my life.”

The man deliberately disturbed the sound of the girl’s footsteps as she ran toward them. In that crucial moment, the man standing before him, driven by his sharp instincts, felt a presence behind him. He turned his head and saw a woman appearing from the dimness of the deck, charging toward him.

“Help! Save me!” Willow exclaimed as she rushed forward, her movements slightly unsteady. In a moment of instability, she unintentionally leaned forward and embraced the man in front of her.

“Ah!” It was not her intention, but her running speed was too fast, creating momentum that forced her to embrace the man’s waist.

Her slender arms instinctively tightened around his muscular waist as she held on to him. At that moment, a piercing gunshot echoed through the air, capturing her attention. A man rushed toward the man she was holding, trying to grab his gun.

As Willow was startled, a powerful force pushed her away, causing her to lose her balance and fall clumsily to the ground. Meanwhile, the man who tried to seize the gun vaulted over the railing and jumped into the sea. As for her savior...

He stood by the railing, his gaze fixed on the sea’s dark depths for a few seconds, and his expression turned inscrutable. Then, with a deliberate turn, his attention shifted toward Willow. The gun in his hand was now pointed directly at her.

Agasp escaped her lips, a mixture of shock and realization. This man not only openly carried a gun but also seemed intent on killing her. Only then did she realize she might have ruined something for him. “I... I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to,” she stammered in fear.

“Who are you?” The man’s icy voice filled with anger. only to find that the kidnappers chasing her had vanished. She blinked, confident that the gunshot had scared off those kidnappers. Now, she was left alone here, performing a one-woman show.

... I’m just someone seeking help. | was...” She turned and looked back,

“Ouch! It hurts!” Willow could not bear the force, and her face twisted in pain. This man is way too rough.

“Come with me,” the man commanded. “Why should | go with you?” She felt this man posed an even greater danger than the earlier kidnappers. Whom have | offended?

“You messed up my plan. | have every reason to suspect you're in league with my target.” The man sneered, his eyes emanating a chilling aura. At that, she refused outright and retorted loudly, “I don’t even know the man from earlier. Why should | go with you?”

“If you don’t want to end up dead, come with me.” The man suddenly seized her, forcefully pulling her along, the threat hanging heavily in the air. “Hey, let go of me! | know | messed up your plan. | can make it up to you. Just name your price!’ Desperate to save her life, she contemplated using money as a bargaining chip.

The man ignored her and persisted in dragging her forward; her anxiety grew. “Sir, my name is Willow Presgrave. Feel free to check my background. | have absolutely no connection to your target.” Just then, two men in suits appeared ahead. Before she could say anything else, the man scooped her up and whisked her away.

“Ah!” She had not even comprehended what was happening when she found herself in midair. Suddenly, gunshots echoed from behind, causing her to scream instinctively and shield her head.

In that instant, a muffled thud reverberated through the air as a bullet struck its mark before Willow was swiftly placed back on the ground. Whoosh! Another bullet whizzed past her face and hit a nearby metal plate, jolting her and leaving her in utter shock.

“Where is your room?” the man asked hoarsely. She turned around and was

shocked covering her mouth. His gray shirt was stained crimson, forming a pool of blood on his chest. Good heavens! He's been shot!

“I live on the sixth floor. Are you okay?” “Take me to your room for cover,” the man said with a wheezing voice. His hand pressed against his chest, blood still trickling.

“The elevator is this way.” Willow reached out and supported him, thinking that since he had saved her life earlier, it was only fair to return the favor and save him.

As she briskly guided him forward, they stumbled upon a serendipitous sight—an ascending elevator. Seizing the moment, she opened the door. A glimpse of the two relentless pursuers from before, hot on their heels with firearms in hand. A bullet collided with the closing elevator doors, unleashing a thunderous blast that jolted her into an involuntary cry of terror.

At that very moment, the elevator illuminated, and she found herself face-to-face with the man, his features revealed in startling clarity. She could not fathom how young he appeared, utterly defying her earlier impression based on his voice, which had led her to believe he was of middle age.

“Who are those people? Why are they chasing you?” she asked. The man narrowed his eyes and glanced at her. “It does you no good to know.”

She was taken aback and said, “Alright, by saving your life now, we're even.”

Chapter 2058

As soon as Willow returned to her room, she immediately dialed the bodyguard's number, urging them to bring a doctor quickly. Upon hearing that gunfire was involved, the bodyguards dashed to her room. It turned out that she was unharmed, but she had come across a man covered in blood.

“Miss Presgrave, we don't know his identity. It's not safe for him to stay in the same room as you. Let us take him away,” the bodyguard said. They could not take the risk of leaving her alone with a stranger.

“No. He saved my life just now. | want to repay his kindness. | don’t want to owe him anything. Take him for treatment first!” Willow insisted as the man on the couch had already passed out from blood loss.

The bodyguards promptly escorted the man to the medical room for immediate treatment while she stood outside, clutching her arm. She also informed them about the earlier attempted kidnapping. “It seems that you’ve been targeted. Don’t worry. We will provide you with round-the-clock protection,” the bodyguard reassured her.

She had great trust in them. They were not ordinary bodyguards, for they were skilled and loyal to the Presgrave family. The Presgraves had strict standards when hiring bodyguards, and loyalty was their top priority.

At that moment, the door of the treatment room swung open, revealing a doctor with a solemn expression. “The bullet has been successfully extracted from the patient's body. Thankfully, no vital organs were impacted. Considering his exceptional physical condition, he should regain consciousness shortly,” the doctor informed, then shifted attention toward Willow. “Miss Presgrave, this is a grave situation. We must report it and conduct a thorough investigation into anyone aboard who possesses dangerous weapons.”

“Okay. Please handle this matter.” She nodded. She never expected someone to bring a gun on board, and she had thrown the man’s gun into the sea.

In the hospital room, Willow idly rested her chin on her hand and gazed at the man who remained unconscious. Upon closer inspection, she noticed that he possessed an attractive appearance.

To her, she regarded her father and brother as handsome individuals. Yet, she could not resist contemplating that this man also possessed a pleasing countenance. His features carried a timeless allure, complemented by a touch of enigmatic complexity, akin to a character from a thrilling and mysterious film.

What does he do? Why was he apprehending people on the ship? And why was someone chasing after him? Thinking about how close she came to getting shot while with him, she could not help but shiver. She was still so young and had not enjoyed life to the fullest. So, she did not want to die.

Just then, Willow noticed a slight bloodstain on his arm. She picked up a tissue and approached him, intending to help clean it. However, as soon as she touched his arm, the sleeping man's eyes shot open before his large hand aggressively grabbed her arm.

"Ouch... It's me." She sighed. She could not believe how defensive he was, waking up with such aggression. How sensitive is he?

Once the man recognized her, he released his grip on her arm. He lowered his head, looking at the bandaged wound, and spoke hoarsely, "You saved me?"

"Who else but me?" she replied, gazing at him. The man's gaze locked onto her before he stood up, intending to leave. She quickly asked, "Where are you going? You just had surgery; don't wander around."

"I can't drag you into this," the man uttered. Lightly, his eyes fixed on leaving the room. Willow felt an inexplicable determination to make him obediently listen to the doctor and not strain his wound. She suddenly reached out, pushing his shoulder, and pressed herself against him, effectively putting him back onto the bed.

The man's eyes narrowed slightly as he stared at her with a complex expression. "No running around, Singe. I paved, you must listen to me," she stated. Her intentions were purely rooted in seeking his well-being.

The man gave up resisting and lay still as he replayed the plan for tonight's mission reegee

rep'tyerthis Gd an disturbing me atthe most critical moment, I would've been able to eliminate the organization's traitor and complete the mission smoothly.

Although the person he was supposed to his death.

Chapter 2059

"What's your name?" asked Willow. The man ostensibly did not want to tell her and simply replied, "Last name, Wyatt."

“Fine, Mr. Wyatt. If you’re unwilling to share, then keep it to yourself. Once tonight is over, we’ll revert to being strangers, and I won’t disclose my name either,” she declared. “I don’t wish to know,” the man said curtly.

Willow pursed her lips. She had never encountered someone so indifferent, as if he did not belong to this world. “Alright, then! I’ll take care of you for now. Once you’ve recovered, we’ll have no debts between us. Okay?”

The man closed his eyes to rest. Soon after, Ethan arrived with Josephine. Upon hearing about the shooting incident on the ship involving Willow, he hurried over to check on her.

“Willow, are you okay?” Josephine quickly held and examined her. “I’m fine. He saved me,” Willow said as she pointed to the man on the bed.

“That’s good.” Ethan sighed in relief as well. He then looked at the injured man on the bed, his gaze carrying a touch of seriousness. It was a connection shared by two strong individuals as a gaze exchanged between them.

Ethan could tell at a glance that the injured man on the bed was no ordinary person. He turned to Willow and said, “I’ll assign someone to protect and care for him. Willow, it’s late now. Go back to your room and rest.”

She considered briefly and replied, “I’ll stay with him until morning. He saved my life, so I can’t just leave him alone.”

Ethan and Josephine exchanged a glance and decided not to push her. She said, “I’ll have Ethan increase the number of security personnel here. You also need to take care of your safety.”

“Don’t worry! I’ll take care of myself,” Willow said, feeling touched by their concern. It was a heartwarming and joyful feeling to be cared for by others.

After they left, Willow sat back by the bedside. She had nothing else to do but watch the man. His face had a three-dimensional and profound beauty, like a work of art. The man disliked being scrutinized like that. He furrowed his brows and glanced at her. "What are you looking at?"

She smiled and said openly, "I'm just looking at you!"

"What's there to look at?" The man averted his gaze. "Why did you point the gun at someone earlier? Did he commit a serious crime?" She leaned in and asked softly, her voice barely audible.

The man ignored her question, prompting her to bite her lip awkwardly. This man seems difficult to get along with.

The bodyguards outside occasionally peeked in to check on them. Willow was too tired; it was already 2.30AM, and she had been through a scare. She drifted off into a doze, and her body swayed a little. Her cute little face looked innocent and childlike.

While she succumbed to fatigue, the man on the bed remained fully awake, observing her as she oscillated between moments of slumber and restlessness. Eventually, she ended up lying on the edge of his bed, her face inadvertently making contact with him. In contrast, his towering and muscular frame, with impeccably sculpted chest muscles, gave him an imposing presence akin to a double-door refrigerator. As she leaned over, a portion of her face was unintentionally pressed against his arm.

The soft touch of her delicate cheek made the man tense up, his brow furrowing, but he did not withdraw his arm. As the bodyguard entered the room, he saw Willow sleeping in such a position and felt a mix of concern and reluctance to disturb her.

After a brief slumber, she sensed a numbing sensation in her arm, causing her to wake up. As she opened her eyes, she discovered that she had been sleeping precariously close to the edge of the bed. A tinge of embarrassment washed over her as she realized that her arm had been pressed against the man's arm during her sleep.

Her cheeks involuntarily grew warm, but at that moment, the man was also asleep and unaware of it.

Just then, Willow noticed that his face had an unusual redness. She reached out to forehead to find it burning hot. Oh, my goodness! He's running a fever, and it is a high one.

She hurried to the door and told the bodyguards, 'Quickly a high fever.'

Chapter 2060

The doctor immediately came over and started administering IV fluids. The nurse said, "Miss, his body temperature is too high. We need to use physical cooling methods, although he's receiving fluids. Can you help wipe down your boyfriend's body?"

Willow blinked and asked, "Uh? Wipe his body?" "Yes, it will help reduce his temperature quickly. His condition isn't optimistic at the moment. Even though he has a good physical condition, he just underwent surgery."

"But -"

"Alright. I'll bring a basin of warm water here for you. We appreciate your help since it's inconvenient for us to do it ourselves." After speaking, the nurse glanced at the injured person. If Willow were not here, she would be happy to help!

Once the nurse left, Willow felt embarrassed and uttered, "But I'm not his girlfriend." Soon, the nurse returned with a basin of water and a clean towel. "Miss, please quickly wipe his body down and put the cool towel on his forehead."

After the nurse left, Willow had to wring the towel dry and gently apply it to the man's forehead. Then, she soaked the warmed towel in water, wrung it out, and started wiping the

man's neck. She noticed his slender and toned neck, resembling a piece of art. It was her first time caring for someone besides her family in such an intimate way. She gulped a few times since this made her nervous.

Just then, the feverish man woke up while Willow was bent down, wiping his chest. Their eyes met each other..

“Oh!” She quickly stood up and explained, “You have a high fever, so the nurse asked me to help with the physical cooling. I’m not taking advantage of you!”

The man’s eyes were slightly bloodshot as he nodded in acknowledgment. At that moment, the nurse entered the room carrying a tray of medicine. She took out a few packets and placed them on the nearby table, saying, “Miss. Presgrave, these are the medicines for your boyfriend. Remember to feed them to him.”

Her face instantly turned red as she felt regretful for not explaining this to the nurse earlier. Now, being directly pointed out by her was indeed embarrassing.

At that moment, Willow also felt the man’s gaze on her. Once the nurse left, she hurriedly explained to the man on the bed, ‘Please don’t misunderstand. The nurse misunderstood us. Here! Take your medicine!’ After saying that, she got the medicine and handed it to the man with a glass of water.

He sat up and took the medicine and water swiftly. Then, she asked, “Are you still feeling ill?”

“No.” He lay back down, the high fever giving his face a rosy flush under the light. Ironically, he did not appear as cold-hearted as before.

She placed a dampened towel on his forehead and observed his condition.

“I’m Jasper Wyatt,” the man said suddenly. She could not help but smile. “Since you’re willing to tell me your name, I’ll tell you mine too. I’m Willow Presgrave.”

The man glanced at her but remained silent. It was noon, and the man’s fever had subsided, though his temperature was still a little high. Nevertheless, his condition had improved significantly.

The doctor came for rounds and found that his wound was healing well, so the doctor suggested he remain there for two more days. Once the doctor left, Jasper sat up and said, “I have to leave.” “But the doctor said-”

"I can take care of myself." With that, he held his chest and pushed the door open. When he glanced at the bodyguards, Ne'Spoke in a deep voice, "Take good care of Miss Presgrave. Please make sure she leaves the ship safely."

Willow returned to her hotel room, and her assistant, Lexie, walked in and asked, "Miss, should we disembark at the next port?" "Yes! Let's disembark. We need to discuss a cultural relic protection law," she replied.

During dinner, she could not help but worry about Jasper's injury. She decided to call Ethax to Induité about his phone number. However, he informed her that there was no such person registered.

She was bewildered by the news. How could there be no one like Jasper? Surely she realized this man must have boarded the ship using a fake identity.