

## Resent Reject Regret

Chapter 281 She's Going to Die

Brendan kept quiet for a long time before he answered, "This is the last time, I promise."

Madam Brighthall refused to believe his promise. She left, slamming the door, ready to rush over to the police station.

Brendan and Sam were left in the room.

It was apparent that Sam had not expected that the situation would progress to this extent. He asked in an exploratory manner, "So what should we do now, Mr. Brighthall?"

"Head to the police station and figure out a way for me to speak with Deirdre."

Sam nodded. He turned around to head out when Brendan called out to him. "Also, please help me look into Ophelia's incident one year ago. Find out what happened after her house was taken back."

"Sure."

Charlene had just arrived at the police station with the lawyer when Madam Brighthall followed her. At the same time, Deirdre was brought in.

There was no telling if it was due to the three tormenting days in the holding cell or because she had not met her in a long time, but her appearance had changed.

One could definitely describe her body as skin and bones, and an ordinary piece of clothing would fit her body very loosely and look empty, just like her still eyes contained no emotion.

Madam Brighthall felt her heart wrench in a tinge of pain at the sight of Deirdre. She could not figure out why she would feel this way, as she knew that she loathed the woman.

She loathed Deirdre for almost killing her son and hated her for turning her initially perfect family into a chaotic mess.

"Madam Brighthall, take a seat and have a cup of coffee. Don't worry, we're only going to ask a few simple questions. If Ms. McKinney is innocent, we will put an end to this today."

Madam Brighthall knew that Brendan would handle the matter concisely and efficiently, so she waited aside patiently. The lawyer interacted with the police officer, and during the conversation, Deirdre suddenly lost her temper and said, "What do you mean there's no evidence? I'm not Charlene McKinney, but she is. Isn't that evidence?"

The lawyer was unbothered. "One can change their name, and a name doesn't mean anything. Besides, Ms. McKinney has an alibi. She wasn't in Neve on the day of the

accident, so how was she involved in the hit-and-run? On the other hand, do you know that defamation and false information are also crimes?" –

"What are you talking about?" Deirdre was already in a frantic state after waiting for two days, only to receive this outcome. In addition, her mind was unstable, so she charged toward the lawyer.

She had only taken a few steps before she was pinned against the table.

She was skinny, and the people restraining her were strong. The intense pain of the restraints made her convulse and gag constantly.

Madam Brighthall could not bear to watch anymore. She was about to speak when Charlene blocked her view. "Mother, I'm sorry for making you worry. Fortunately, the lawyer is very experienced, so I can leave now. As for Ms. McKinnon, she tried to drag everyone down with her apart from attempting to kill Brendan. She has gone too far, and we shouldn't feel any pity for her."

"You're right. A woman like her deserves to be punished so she can learn to behave herself." Madam

Brighthall was still frowning deeply despite her remark. She felt very uneasy in her heart but she convinced herself not to feel pity as soon as she remembered the things that Deirdre had done.

"Let's go."

Both of them left, and Sam rushed into the police station soon. He hastily ran over to shove away the people pinning Deirdre against the table when he saw Deirdre pinned on the table on her belly. "What are you doing? She's going to die if you use so much strength on her!"

Sam was furious. Those people immediately loosened their grip, looking displeased. "She isn't

emotionally stable. If we hadn't pinned her down properly, she would have gone ahead and beaten up the lawyer. Then, she would have been charged with one more crime."

The person speaking was right. However, Sam felt his heart wrench in pain and he was worried sick at the sight of Deirdre's ghastly face and the way she was suffocating from the pain.

## Chapter 282 Die on This Hill

Deirdre managed to regain some semblance of composure, but her bloodshot eyes were still as bellicose as a pair of daggers pointing in the direction of the lawyer and the police. "Why... did... you people... lie?! Why did you lie?! You told me you'd help me build a case!!!"

Her accusation pushed the captain's buttons. "You don't build a case without solid evidence, ma'am. And you've got none of that! Did you really think you could decide if a year-old case was murder just because you said so? Gimme a break!"

"Enough, please..." Sam exhaled, his hands still pinning her shoulders. This could not continue-he just knew it. Gritting his teeth, he said forcefully, "You have to end this right now, Miss McKinnon! You have to drop all your charges against Mr. Brighthall and just... leave the rest to him, okay? That way, you will leave this station in one piece by the end of the day!"

"Drop the charges?" Deirdre's hollow eyes were somehow made alive by the grotesque force of hate and resentment in them. "So it doesn't f\*cking matter if I was incarcerated on completely false evidence! It doesn't f\*cking matter if he caused my mother's death! All of these things can just... be forgotten and buried away in your opinion! No wonder Brendan pats your head like a cur, Sam! No. You pass my message to him: He can shove his proposal up his \*ss! I'd rather be incarcerated again if it means I can accuse him in court for the rest of my life!"

A sharp pang erupted from his chest. It felt as if his heart was breaking. "Miss McKinnon-"

"Take me away," she coldly told the cop next to her. Her footsteps bounced off the hall, sounding heavy and determined.

Since the moment she had admitted to homicide, Deirdre had long abandoned any hope of leaving the station unscathed. If she could not destroy Brendan, then by God, she would do whatever it took to at least liberate herself from his control.

"W-What the hell?!"

Brendan's vision went black for a second. His chest undulated, his fury heaving in and out of him while his injury protested in pain. "She refused my help?! She wants to keep fighting?!"

"Correct." Sam lowered his eyelids. He was standing outside the station, his body shivering at the mercy of the nipping gale. Their relationship had been improving and stabilizing up to this point-until, suddenly, everything had gone to hell. "Miss McKinnon refused to talk to me and would rather get the cop to take her away. I couldn't even ask her to agree to a talk between the two of you."

Brendan closed his eyes, feeling weary. Fatigue was etched onto his very features. He balled his fists. Deirdre... had basically smashed the negotiating table to pieces to avoid giving him a chance. That maddening woman had decided to die on this hill!

His eyes opened. A flash of conflict flitted past them as he exhaled. "Understood."

He needed to see her. To... talk to her..

It was such a deceptively simple desire. So many things were going against him, and his injury was so severe that he had been banned from moving around at all, let alone driving to the station to talk to her. He pressed his hand against his chest. He had never in his life wished he could recover immediately. Being confined to the infirmary was a kind of

torment he had never experienced before, and to his dismay, not even his company's influence could secure even the smallest of leeways for him.

Brendan lost count of the days it took for his injury to finally heal up well enough, but he instantly made his way to the police station when it did. His injury punished him for his eagerness, as it felt as though he had cut a new gash on his old wound with a knife whenever he moved. His bandage was drenched in wet blood.

All color had left his face, but the only thing on his mind was the woman detained there.

She had suffered too. She was ridiculously emaciated, and her uniform, while tailored for the average woman, almost seemed to billow at even the slightest breeze. Her face was sallow and frail, her hair was disheveled and uncared for, and her eyes were surrounded by harrowing dark rings. As she sat across from him, Brendan was aghast by the way he barely recognized Deirdre.

It took his superhuman will to fight the urge to break the window and ferry her away.

"Deirdre, are you out of your damn mind?! Do you even know what this means?!" Brendan snarled. His teeth clenched as the wound he desperately tried to hide behind his hand began to bleed anew. "By admitting to manslaughter, you've doomed yourself to imprisonment even if I don't want to pursue any charges against you!"

#### Chapter 285 The Thought of Being With Him Makes Me Retch

Brendan was strapped for choices. This was the only one he had left. "You're the one who kept her company for the longest time. She would at least grant you the chance to talk to her, I just know it. So please tell her... That if she keeps this up, none of us will be able to save her from imprisonment."

One more day of Deirdre staying in that cell was one more day of him losing sleep. He could not bear it.

It was as Brendan had predicted. She allowed Sam to meet her.

She was a blind woman who had discarded any care for personal grooming. By the time Sam saw her, her disheveled hair and dirty clothes painted the picture of a mad woman abandoned in an asylum. Sam's chest hurt.

He picked up the phone, took a deep breath, and began to speak. "Miss McKinnon? Please... Let's stop this, alright? Of all people, you should know fully well how this might end if you hold on like this. The only result you'll get is incarceration. And for what?"

Deirdre stared through the window nonchalantly. "If you came here just to talk me into backing down, then goodbye."

She rose.

With a pang, Sam suddenly blurted out, "I'm sorry!"

She stiffened.

He balled his hands into fists, his heart tortured by guilt. "I knew she was fake too, and yet I said nothing.. There were so many times-so many chances to tell you the truth, and I said nothing! I betrayed your trust ...and I'm so sorry!"

"But I've never blamed you for any of this, Sam," Deirdre replied evenly. She was so placid, one might wonder if she was just an animated corpse. "You were just carrying out orders, weren't you? You had no reason to go against Brendan for my sake. You shouldn't have done that. So, no. You don't have to apologize. I'm not an unreasonable woman."

Her answer only made Sam suffocate.

The police officer on duty told her the time was up. Deirdre turned to the phone and finished her thought." Brendan sent you to talk me into standing down, didn't he? Then pass my message to him: I know nothing will come out of this fight. I know it is a hopeless, fruitless cause. But I'd rather die in prison than die in his prison. He disgusts me. Breathing the same air with him makes me retch. I'd rather be in jail."

She spun on her heel and walked away.

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Sam returned to Brendan and relayed all of her messages but the last part. He looked down, looking clearly perturbed. Sharp-eyed as ever, Brendan demanded, "What? Are you hiding something from me?" Sam obliged and, with marked difficulty, repeated Deirdre's words.

Brendan covered his eyes with the back of his hand. His lips were trembling. "So that's what she said, huh? She'd rather go to prison than be with me. She'd rather suffer than see me again?"

Sam said nothing.

Brendan clenched his fists tightly. God, his heart was wringing in pain. It felt worse than the pain of the knife sinking into his abdomen.

How could this be? Deirdre did not use to be like this!

She had loved him. Unconditionally, sacrificially. She would have thrown away her dignity for him. He used to leave her as soon as he was done screwing her, and she used to fight back tears and

disappointment just so she could smile and bid him goodbye.

Once, he had been particularly inebriated. It had brought out the worst in him. He had known he was venting on Deirdre and yet he had kept shouting Charlene's name like a man possessed.

And what had she done?

She had forced her tears back. Her lips had been quivering as she'd said, "I know you think I'm a fool, Brendan. But I really, really wanna be with you. Forever."

That was what she had said back then. But now?

She hated him; he disgusted her. She would rather go to prison if it meant she could keep him away!

Brendan was hyperventilating. It would have hurt less if someone had yanked out his heart right there and then. Something was missing from him now-something important.

It was her smile.

It was her helpless, downcast eyes.

It was her.

And no part of her was ever going to reappear in his life, was it?

Chapter 283 Let's Pretend None of This Happened, Okay?

Deirdre remained still as a statue until his yell stirred her. She raised her head and stared at him with what had once been lively, blithe eyes but were now soulless and dilapidated, like two broken mirrors found buried in a casket. Her surface calmness belied intense hate.

"I don't care." Her voice cracked and croaked, as her throat had fallen into disuse since she had stopped talking. Her words vaguely resembled a vitriolic jab. "Do you really think I give a damn, Brendan? It's just incarceration. It's not even my first rodeo, can you believe that? Been there, done that, I'm used to it. I can live in prison again, but you.... You're not getting away with this. I won't let you!"

A deluge of hate broke out of her eyes like a dagger going through Brendan's chest.

"How could you destroy yourself like this, Deirdre?! Because of revenge? What about your dreams? Your future?"

"My future is already in ruins!" She howled, eyes forward, tears pouring out. "And you caused it!"

Did his cheeks not burn in shame when he brought up her dreams and future? She was talented. Musically gifted! Even if playing for a large crowd in grand halls was beyond her, she could have been good enough to work as a music tutor at an academy. She could have lived with her mother just like that, happy and

content.

But he had taken everything from her. Her eyes, and then her mother, the only family she had! And now, the same bastard who had ruined her life had the audacity to wax poetic about her future?!

"C-Calm down, D-Deirdre..." Brendan pressed his palm against his abdomen hard and took a deep breath. He flattened his lips in effort until they turned pale. "C-Calm down and t-think. You don't have hard evidence to prove your accusations. You don't have the wealth to fight the Brighthall family. There are only two ways out of this r-right now, and

that's incarceration... or working with me. We can settle this in private. It'll be like... I-like nothing ever happened."

"Like nothing ever happened?!" Deirdre's eyes turned blood-red. Tears were welling up in them. "My mom is dead, Brendan. And you're asking me to pretend that didn't happen?!"

"I-I was just as surprised to hear about her death! She was already unstable back then. It didn't matter how much I tried to prevent it! I didn't expect her to jump from the third floor!"

"So you chose to deceive me and get some f\*cking stranger to impersonate her!!!" Deirdre shrieked in hysterical rage. She sobbed, her sickly frame quivering with spasms. "Why would she even kill herself if you hadn't forced me to go to jail back then, Brendan?! You don't understand-you'll never understand. Because you're a privileged piece of sh\*t living in luxury and wealth since you were f\*cking born! You'll never understand the anguish of realizing you've been deceived all along, that your only family died in agony while you were blissfully duped! You should f\*cking go to hell!"

Brendan closed his eyes as a wave of vertigo assaulted him. He opened them again. "You love me, do you?"

Deirdre froze. Tears seemed to have crystallized on her cheeks.

"If you can forgive me... If you can be with me again, then it will mean I still mean a lot to you. I know that Ophelia's death was a hard blow to your life, but you can't b-bring back the dead, Deirdre. All we can do is look ahead and soldier on... And I'll be good to you, I promise. You can be Mrs. Brighthall forever.

"Just... Let us pretend none of this happened, okay?"

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Deirdre's eyes widened.

She could not believe the crap entering her ears.

What. The. F-

It was like a bomb had detonated inside her head. Her chest felt mangled, and the pain was unbearable. She clenched her teeth.

She grabbed the chair next to her.

She then swung it forward, where Brendan would have been.

He jerked back, and the chair crashed onto the window between them. A crack formed.

He stared at its jagged scar, his eyes quivering. He would have been in big trouble if this glass had not existed.

A sharp, hot jolt of pain screamed from his abdomen, He looked down and realized his own blood had stained his palm vermilion. Apparently, his knee-jerk reaction to Deirdre's sudden burst of violence had torn his wound asunder.

The cops watching them came next. They barged into the cell and pinned Deirdre to the table.

#### Chapter 284 You're A Cutthroat

Deirdre was writhing despite their hold as she whimpered unintelligibly. Brendan realized what was going on with her and picked up the phone, his pain forgotten as he yelled, "Stop! You're hurting her!"

The cops met his eyes and loosened their grip, causing Deirdre to fall forward on the floor. Her eyes were unfocused, as though the sheer magnitude of her sorrow had made it impossible to pay any attention." You're a cutthroat, Brendan. You're so good at it, aren't you?" she croaked tearfully.

He had treated her love for him as an invitation to use and abuse her. Then, even after all the sins he had committed, he had squawked about pretending none of this had happened. It was all... for nothing.

He had always been openly disdainful of her love back then. As it turned out, he was still spitting on it right now.

No one abused others quite like Brendan. No one.

Deirdre's heart had turned cold. No, it was broken-shattered and trampled by the b\*stard yelling into the phone behind the window. Her face had turned expressionless.

She ignored what sounded like Brendan's incessant shouts on the phone and felt along the wall. Then, trembling, she made her way out of the cell.

Brendan sank into his chair, his face as white as a sheet. It was the cop beside him who noticed his state and called an ambulance.

By the time Madame Brighthall heard the news, Brendan had just gotten a blood transfusion. She trained a shaking finger on the sickly man, bellowing, "Have you lost your mind?! That vixen plotted to imprison you-she wants you dead! But what did you do after you finally recovered from your injury slightly? You went to see her again! Do you have a death wish, huh? What kind of son did I even bring into this world?!" Brendan shut his eyes. His lips were pale.

Charlene watched him from the side with her hands clenched into fists. She had never imagined Brendan would care so much about that b\*tch one day that he would willingly endure agony or the possibility of death to see her!

Before she could chime in, Madame Brighthall erupted again. "While you mulishly insist on making this whole incident go away, that vixen insists on destroying you and Lena! That's it! I forbid you to get involved in this entire ordeal! We have lawyers for this sort of drama, and Lord knows she's definitely getting incarcerated for the res-"



"No!" Brendan suddenly yelled, becoming active again. His voice came out as a whisper more than a shout, but his eyes revealed an almost monkish conviction. "She's not going to be incarcerated-not on my watch!"

Madame Brighthall was incredulous. "You idiot! You're still trying to protect her?!"

Charlene could not stop herself any longer. "Bren, wake up! Your injury isn't the issue right now-it's Miss McKinnon! She's the one who's spitting on our goodwill to settle things outside of court! She's the one who insists on dragging us through hell with her! Why is it such a bad idea to send her to prison for a few months? The reality of imprisonment will calm her down, and then we could bail her out again!"

Brendan's expression darkened. Bile rose in his throat, but he suppressed it. His eyes zeroed in on Charlene's face, but there was nothing on his pale face but indifference. "I don't blame Mom for not understanding, but you too, Charlene? What's your excuse? She went to jail back then because of you! She lost her eyes while she was in there! But you... you never showed even a modicum of regret for your part in this. Your conscience is so unharmed that you're okay with sending her to prison again! What else do

you want to ruin her?"

Charlene's face turned white. Madame Brighthall looked troubled too, but she steeled herself and argued, "Don't take your steam out on Lena, Bren! She saved your life!"

"Yes. She saved my life." Brendan clenched his hands into fists, his eyes hopeless and desolated. "And I destroyed Deirdre's."

He remembered how broken Deirdre had been. The murderous intent in her eyes had felt like being stabbed by a twisting knife. He closed his eyes, feeling fatigued, and murmured, "She's not going to jail again. Period. I'll work hard to talk her out of it, so leave this issue alone... both of you."

It was not true. For the rest of the week, Brendan had been denied an audience with Deirdre completely. Knowing he could not force a meeting, he sought Sam's help.

"You go."

## Chapter 286 Uncertain Fate

Fear and regret ravaged his mind. He suddenly felt faint.

Sam was still with him when he finally recovered his composure. He feigned some semblance of calmness and declared, "No, we just have to wait a little longer. I'll talk to her again!"

He would not let her leave him. Never!

Fate had different designs than his, however. Before he had recuperated enough to talk to Deirdre, the police came to him and informed him that she had backed down.

She had finally agreed to settle this privately.

Brendan was elated. The police had come to ask him if she “had shown homicidal intent”, and naturally, Brendan denied it. He expressed no intent to pursue a criminal charge against her either, and so the case was settled.

He could not wait to get out of bed as soon as the police left. Alarmed, Sam rushed to stop him. “Mr. Brighthall, sir, stay back! We can’t let your injury break open again!”

Brendan was just too fitful. His emotions were in chaos. Gripping Sam’s hand tightly, he ordered, “Escort her back from the station!”

Sam froze. Then, he nodded.

Who would have known Deirdre—who seemed to have dug her heels and decided to die on that hill—would finally agree to settle this privately? It did not take Brendan long to begin thinking and wondering if Deirdre had finally come to understand his point of view. Maybe she had finally decided to hear his explanation. She had finally decided to let this go.

If this were true...

God, this would be the best thing that had ever happened to him.

Brendan lay on his back. He was so tired that the world looked purplish and filled with black spots. However, sleep evaded him, so he waited patiently for her return.

Then, he received a call from Sam. “Mr. Brighthall?”

His voice was low. Forebodingly low.

Brendan frowned. “What? Where’s Deirdre? Bring her to the hospital already!”

Sam was quiet for a second. “She’s... gone, sir. After the police freed her, she went into a car and left.” Gone?

Brendan’s breath went down his throat as though he had swallowed a dagger. His blood was boiling out of panic. “But she has no friends or family! She cannot have gone far!” he shouted frantically. “Look for her at once!”

Sam hung up the call to begin his search, leaving Brendan alone with his empty, feckless mind. So Deirdre had gotten a ride and left as soon as she had been freed. So she had not stood down because she had finally understood Brendan’s angle but because that would grant her the opening to leave him once and

for all.

Was that it?!

Brendan shook and breathed hard. The pain in his abdomen worsened, reminding him of the moment when she had stuck a knife into him.

She hated his guts! She loathed him completely! How could she possibly even care to mend the bridges between them?!

Brendan felt the world turn dark. He tumbled from his bed and struggled to get up. He felt the doorknob, twisted it, and bolted out of his sick room. He had to find her. He had to find her. She would not leave him. She would not.

'You hate me, right? You hate me, Deirdre! So come back to me and finish the job! Come back!'

"M-Mr. Brighthall! You can't get out of bed!" An alarmed nurse bolted toward him. "Your wound has finally been patched up a little, Mr. Brighthall, but it won't stay that way if you start straining yourself like this!" "Get out of the way!" he snarled, shoving the nurse's arm away and marching forward. Before he managed to reach the entrance, his phone rang.

He did not need to look at the screen to know it was Sam. "Did you find her?"

The person on the other side of the line sounded strange and unfamiliar. "Mr. Brighthall? We're from the Neve City Police Department. You must have already been notified about Miss McKinnon's release from the station. Since you're both the victim and her legal husband, we're obligated by law to inform you that the car Miss McKinnon boarded shortly after her release has gotten into an accident. It skidded off the road at the Southern Bridge area, broke through the fence, and fell into the sea. Her current fate is

unknown."

Brendan's face turned ashen.

As he reeled in shock, he yelled, eyes bloodshot, "What do you mean?!"

"It means we haven't managed to recover the vehicle yet, Mr. Brighthall. However, given how cold the days have been, even if we manage to rescue her, she might already be-

Chapter 287 He Had Gotten Used to Her

"Shut up!" Brendan bellowed with all his might. His wound vibrated with his growl, making him cry out at the sharp pain in tandem.

His vision blurred. His knees buckled.

Her car had fallen into the sea? She had died?

Impossible! That was insane! She had been so alive yesterday when she had cursed his name, made how much he disgusted her plain, and screamed about avenging her mother! She had been so alive when she'd wished he was dead! And now... her fate was suddenly uncertain?

Brendan's vision turned black and he toppled.

A nurse screamed nearby.

Before his consciousness faded out, he muttered, "Deirdre... Deirdre..."

He had a dream.

In the first few days after Deirdre's incarceration, Brendan had been surprisingly unaccustomed to her absence. As soon as he'd return to the house, he would instinctively call out, "Deirdre, make me some mushroom soup!"

He would then stop himself, and the newly-hired cook would smile nervously. "Wow, Mr. Brighthall. This Deirdre girl must mean a lot to you, huh? But she's been away for a while now, sir, so I'll make you mushroom soup. I'm not half-bad at it either..."

Even after her imprisonment, he had realized her shadow still lingered in his head.

At midnight, after finishing up a particularly heady load of work, his head would hurt. He would go to her room unthinkingly and order, "Deirdre, I need a head massage."

The shadows in her unlit room would glare back at him and his frown.

Brendan had told himself it was just a force of habit. For two years of marriage, Deirdre's presence had littered all over his life. She was just a part of his days, and nobody could be reasonably expected to change their habits at the drop of a hat.

He had simply gotten used to her, he had told himself. Once he got used to her absence, he would forget who Deirdre McKinnon ever was.

And yet, as the days had passed, he had realized he missed her.

He missed how understanding she was. How docile and obedient she was. How perceptive she was. How well she was at reading the room-

At reading him. She was like a telepath tuned only to him. Only she knew what to say or do based on his mood.

Then, when Deirdre had gone missing, he had believed she would come back sooner or later. She'd had his child, after all.

And she loved him. He could always bank on that...

There was a blur. Then, suddenly, a woman's face-crazed and twisted in hysteria-emerged from the fog.

"You disgust me, Brendan! You f\*cking disgust me! I wish I could peel off every part of my flesh that has ever been marked by you! I wish you could just f\*cking die already! Die, die, die!"

She had a knife in her hand, and yet, she threw it away. She turned away from him and dove headfirst into the roaring sea below.

"Deirdre-!"

Brendan catapulted up from his bed, his eyes red. He felt a weight on his chest, suffocating him.

Charlene then burst into the room. "Bren? Bren! Oh God, you're finally up! Damn it-can you stop being so reckless for a sec? Please?"

Her eyes were puffy and red, and yet the only woman Brendan saw was Deirdre in his mind's eye." Where's Deirdre?"

Charlene froze. He ignored her and clutched the edge of his sheet tightly. "And where's Sam?"

More silence. The lack of an answer drove Brendan nuts. He struggled to climb out of bed until Charlene stopped him with all her might. Tears kept rolling down her cheeks as she pleaded with him. "Bren, please calm down! Miss McKinnon is gone now, okay? You have to stop doing this to yourself... Or else... Or else. I don't know what to do anymore!"

"Gone? Gone?!" Brendan's thoughts were as entangled as a cluster of knots, but his black eyes were as sharp as the edge of a dagger. He frigidly swung Charlene's hand away from him. "Has her body not been found yet? No! How can you be sure that she's gone then? What proof do you have, huh? What if she freed herself from the car and swam to shore on her own?"

Charlene's eyes were sore. She bit her lip. "Sure, they haven't found her body yet! But it's the sea, Bren! It's the freakin' sea in this freakin' weather! How could anyone possibly survive a fall into the sea and then swim all the way to the shore?"

Brendan closed his eyes. His eyelashes were trembling. "I want Sam. Now."

"Sam is... He's still looking for her..."

Sam proved himself to be even more obstinate than Brendan was. He could not gain access to the seal himself, so he took to scavenging the shoreline around the area. He hoped that Deirdre had managed to free herself from the car and swam to the surface before making it safely to the shore.

## Chapter 288 Perhaps She Was Gone

Even though the possibility was slim, Sam kept hoping.

Three days had passed, and Deirdre was yet to be found. Even the police had given up on the search.

The only kin of Deirdre had passed away a year ago, and Brendan was her husband. Hence, the police went to get his signature to verify Deirdre's death.

Brendan dropped the pen on the ground, unwilling to sign. "It's impossible!"

In an extremely firm tone of voice, Brendan stressed, "How can we conclude that Deirdre is dead when her corpse has yet to be found? Perhaps she never boarded that car. It's a mistake made during the investigation!"

The police officer looked at Brendan with sympathy and sighed. "A policeman witnessed it, and it's been recorded by the surveillance camera that Miss McKinnon was indeed in the car."

"What about the journey? Did she not get out of the car?!" Brendan pursed his lip, and his eyes reddened. "I don't believe it. Unless I see her body, I won't sign!"

He not only was unwilling to sign, but he also dragged his tired body and rushed to the Southern Bridge, where Deirdre had had her accident.

There were still traces of a car being knocked out. As a cold gale blew, Brendan turned pale. Step by step, he walked toward the site. But while he was approaching, his legs went weak and he fell to the ground.

So this was how Deirdre had fallen?

He couldn't believe it. Clenching his fists, he rose to his feet again and walked toward the rock lacking a guardrail.

This was the scene Madame Brighthall saw when she rushed over, ignoring her illness. She went over to Brendan and grabbed him. "Enough! Stop being insane! Was it possible for her to even survive when she fell from this place?! If she is dead, she is dead. No one can be resurrected after death! Is it meaningful for you to refuse to accept such a fact?"

"She is not dead." Brendan insisted, gnashing his teeth.

Provided he didn't see her dead body himself, he would never believe that Deirdre had died.

She must be hiding, blaming and hating him. That was why she had used the accident as punishment for his deception.

With determination, Brendan tightened his fists and took a deep breath. "As long as I have not seen her corpse, she is not dead. She's just waiting for me to save her, I'll never give up!"

Nevertheless, even when Brendan was discharged from the hospital, there still wasn't any news of Deirdre. Therefore, he hired professionals to conduct the salvage operation. Unfortunately, the depth of the sea aside, the cold weather obstructed the entire operation.

Everyone advised Brendan to give up. However, for a week, he tried to search for Deirdre alone. He refused to go to the company but spent time searching for her in the cold under the bridge from daybreak to midnight. He would go back freezing cold and spend his night on the sofa before returning to the bridge.

As time went by, Brendan understood that perhaps Deirdre was gone.

It might be a relief for her. After all, she hated him so much that she would rather go to jail than return to

the mansion. Perhaps, the moment her car had been knocked out, she had been at peace.

However, he failed to extricate himself from this agony. Looking at the piano in the living room reminded him of how excited she had been when she had received the gift half a month ago. She had been so excited that she had insisted on treating him to dinner with her first salary, even though he had refused multiple times.

Why? Why was she gone in just the blink of an eye?

Brendan was not good at drinking to numb emotional pain. Hence, he could only keep smoking until he received some news from Sam. It was, however, related to another matter.

“Mr. Brighthall, it’s about your request to investigate what happened before Ophelia’s death... I have a video here.”

Sam handed Brendan the iPad. Brendan played the video and saw Ophelia get beaten up and forced to eat slops.

Brendan was furious. He couldn’t imagine what would happen if Deirdre were to see it.