

Returning from the Dead: His Secret Lover Chapter 1431

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Chapter 1431 Advice And Persuasion

In the end, Ichika obediently followed Solomon back.

Solomon didn't think much about it, assuming that she was overwhelmed for the time being when such a matter happened and would be fine after some time.

Hence, besides accompanying her in the hospital room in the following two days, he spent the rest of the time dealing with his company affairs.

Two days later, Sasha and the others had to leave since Christmas was just around the corner.

"Solomon, stay and take care of Ichika here for a few days. Bring her back with you before Christmas, and we'll have dinner together," Rufus urged.

That was a remark that induced much jubilation and anticipation.

"Sure," Solomon agreed right away.

Ah, I've never spent Christmas with so many people in all my years!

Subsequently, Sabrina said that she would be holding the fort at the company until he returned.

The only aberration was with Sasha and Sebastian. When the former saw such a buoyant atmosphere, she couldn't resist asking the man beside her, "Sebby, shouldn't we apprise him about the matter?"

Sebastian, however, was much more sensible.

"And what would we say? Tell him that Ichika is hiding something from him? That's unnecessary. At times, some things have to be handled by the people involved. It's just like us back then. If my father hadn't interfered, would we have wasted so much time with endless detours?"

He brought up their past all of a sudden.

Hearing that, Sasha was immediately frozen to the spot.

He's right. Back then, it was a misunderstanding that could've been easily resolved, but because of Frederick's presumptuous meddling in our affairs, we were tortured and were apart for five whole years.

She ended up dismissing the idea of poking her nose into their business, but she still went to see Ichika before she left.

"Ichika?"

The hospital room was exceedingly quiet, more so than ever since everyone was busy bidding Solomon farewell.

Sitting on the hospital bed and spacing out while gazing out the window, Ichika instantly turned around when she heard the voice. "Sha? Why are you here?"

She was rather surprised, and at the same time, a tad panicked.

Why would she be so panicked for no reason?

Upon seeing that, Sasha was all the more convinced about her husband's analysis of the matter.

"Well, I'm here to visit you. We're going back since it's going to be Christmas soon. Ichika, we'll all be waiting for you in Avenport, so get well quickly and come back with Solomon, okay?" she urged gently, sitting on the edge of her bed and grasping both her hands.

Ichika's head snapped up at once.

"Sha, d-do you all not hate me?"

"Hate?" A trace of bemusement showed on Sasha's face. "Why would we hate you? Why would you say that?"

"I-I..."

Ichika's eyes abruptly turned red, and she swiftly hung her head. She struggled for a long time before she finally forced the words out from between her teeth like a kid who had done something wrong.

"I-I was going to kill my sister. Do you all not hate me and feel that I'm repulsive?"

"Of course not!" Sasha promptly denied. "I even think that you did a great job! That sister of yours is vicious and heartless. Have you forgotten that it was me who set her up with the janitor at the hot spring?"

In a mere second, Ichika jerked her head up. She stared at her cousin, who proclaimed that proudly, at a loss for words.

"A-Are you serious?"

"Yeah, why? Didn't you know that? Oh, I thought you knew. Anyway, the entire Hayes family is aware of that. As that sister of yours set my brother up back then, I was furious and set her up as well."

Sasha explained everything in detail.

Naturally, she didn't sound as though she had anything to hide. Instead, she was so nonchalant that it was as though she was only upholding justice by meting out the punishment.

But in reality, that was indeed what someone like Himari deserved.

Only then was there some reaction on Ichika's part. For the first time, a glimmer of life shone in her eyes after she had strangled her sister with her own hands.

It was as though one had been teetering on the edge of the cliff for a long time and had finally grasped a ray of light.

"Then... did Sebastian not say anything about you doing all that?"

"What did he say?" Sasha pondered for a moment. "Oh yes, he said I should have covered my eyes when I watched. He also said that I was too depraved and to leave such a thing to him in the future."

She proceeded to tell Ichika all about her husband's reaction that day.

Ichika's round, black eyes widened, and her jaw that had dropped open remained gaping for several seconds.

That was something she had never heard because she never imagined that a man would indulge his wife so much that he wouldn't get irate even if she did such a thing and even told her to leave it to him in the future.

In that case, is there actually no need for me to bear such a heavy psychological burden after having strangled my own sister? And perhaps Solomon will likewise not think that I'm a heinous woman?

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Chapter 1432 Kick Up A Fuss

No, that's still different. The reason I made a move against her wasn't that Himari was evil. Instead, it was because she had dirt on me, and I didn't want Solomon to learn about it. That was why I wanted to silence her. Therefore, I'm still wicked.

"Ichika?"

"Go back, Sha. I got it. Thank you."

Sitting on the hospital bed with her head lowered, the girl whose eyes had dimmed again didn't say anything else after saying that in a muffled voice.

At the sight of Ichika's crestfallen state, Sasha was rendered speechless.

It looks like this isn't the worry she's hiding.

Having no other recourse, she could only sigh before getting to her feet.

"By the way, Ichika, do you know the state Solomon was in when you were in the operating theater?" she glanced back over her shoulder and asked, suddenly recalling that when she had already reached the door.

Ichika lifted her eyes once more.

Sasha then continued, "He was trembling all over. Unbelievable, right? I've known him for so many years, but it was my first time seeing him so terrified."

Nevertheless, Ichika didn't respond to that.

"Therefore, Ichika, don't push him away. You've finally pulled him out of the abyss after much difficulty, so don't shove him back into it. Promise me that, will you?" Sasha urged.

She stood at the hospital room door with eyes brimming with hope and imploration that would tug on the heartstrings of anyone who beheld her at that moment.

When Ichika jolted back to her senses, and the person at the door had also left, she clutched her chest and threw herself onto the bed. The pain was so harrowing that she couldn't quite breathe, and tears escaped her eyes.

I don't want to do that either! I never want to push him back into the abyss when I love him so much. But will he forgive me? If he were to learn that the eight-year-old girl back then was me, would he still forgive me? When the psychologist put him under hypnosis in Jadeborough, he found that there were three traumatic incidents that brought about his illness. One was the abandonment of his mother, Yancy, when he was a child. Then, it was the time he was bitten by a dog when his mother forced him to beg on the streets. And lastly, it was the humiliation he suffered when he first came to Jetroina when he was eighteen years old.

The doctor also said that if the incidents during his childhood were the seeds sown, then his life experience after he was eighteen years old was the true beginning of when hatred took root. Enduring the humiliation, he took over Sinch Enterprise before launching frenetic revenge against Hayes Corporation and Frederick Hayes. Actually, it was all because of that incident. So, was I the culprit who caused him to harbor that hatred back then?

She wept in the hospital room for a long, long time.

When Solomon returned after seeing the Hayeses off, he instantly panicked upon noticing her condition.

“What happened? Why are your eyes swollen? Did you cry?”

He hastened over to scrutinize her, but Ichika abruptly shied away.

She turned her head away, her expression rather detached.

“I’m fine. It’s just that my mother visited just now,” she fibbed.

Sure enough, an intelligent person could lie flawlessly the second she opened her mouth.

Solomon truly didn’t suspect anything. He merely frowned. “Why did she visit again? In that case, how about we just have you discharged? We’ll stay at my house here. Then, your mother can’t visit anymore.”

After seeing that she cried, he even detested his own mother-in-law then.

Ichika was dumbfounded.

In that instance, it felt as though she had been stabbed in the heart since he had never pampered her that much in the past.

Why is this happening? He has finally recovered from his illness and accepted me! Yet, why did things come to this?

She clenched her fists so tightly that her nails dug deep into her palms.

“No, thanks. I’m going to the temple after I’m discharged.”

“What did you just say?”

At once, Solomon’s gaze snapped to her. Because he was hearing that for a second time, a trace of displeasure finally manifested on his handsome face.

“I don’t want to hear that anymore. Be good, okay? I’ll go and settle the discharge procedures for you now, and we’ll leave right away.” After saying that, the man spun around to go out and get the discharge procedures done.

As soon as Ichika heard that, she panicked.

“Did you not understand me, Akiyama? I said I wanted to get a divorce! We can’t be together anymore!”

At that moment, the man’s expression turned as dark as night.

A divorce? Is she baiting me to teach her a lesson before she’d stop spouting nonsense? But well, that makes sense. She’s just twenty years old, so it’s only normal that she likes to kick up a fuss!

Solomon then whirled around again.

Glimpsing the expression on his face, Ichika promptly froze on the hospital bed. She had no idea what he wanted to do and merely stared at him blankly until the terrifying man stopped in front of her.

“W-What do you want from me?”

“What do you think?” he gritted out.

Without giving her an opportunity to gather her wits about her, he reached out and scooped her up from the bed, cradling her in his arms.

“Darling!”

Shrieking in fright, Ichika frantically wrapped her arms around the man’s neck and reflexively blurted that familiar endearment in her panic.

When Solomon heard that, he finally smiled a little.

Sure enough, she needed to be taught a lesson!

That afternoon itself, he forcefully brought her to a villa he had there. As for her going to a temple, that’s certainly impossible!

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Chapter 1433 Truly Gone Cuckoo

When Aoi saw no sign of her daughter upon arriving at the hospital, she gave Solomon a call.

“Mr. Akiyama, where did you take Ichika?”

“Don’t worry. She’s safe and sound.”

Solomon was still rather well-mannered, for he answered his mother-in-law amicably.

However, anxiety swamped Aoi after hearing that.

“She’s emotionally unstable right now, so you can’t simply take her away, Mr. Akiyama. Please hurry up and tell me where she is. I’ll go over to visit her,” she implored that son-in-law of hers.

Alas, Solomon didn’t grasp the meaning of that remark.

More accurately speaking, he had no inkling that Ichika lied to him. In truth, her mother hadn’t visited her, much less reprimanded her. Not knowing that, he sternly declined her visit.

Everything was normal until that particular day when he returned home after a trip to the supermarket to buy necessities. To his eternal shock, the moment he stepped into the house, he discovered that the girl whom he had confined in the house had shaved off her headful of lustrous, black hair.

Ichika had her back to him as she sat there cross-legged with a bald head. She seemed so unfamiliar that he almost couldn’t recognize her.

“What on earth are you doing, Ichika Minamoto?”

Walking over, he gaped at the hair scattered all over the floor and the nun’s habit on her that she had gotten from somewhere or other. For a moment, a storm of emotions brewed in his eyes behind his glasses.

“Have you lost your mind?”

“No, I haven’t. Akiyama, I’ve long since said that I made an unforgivable mistake. I need to stay in the temple to obtain forgiveness.”

Ichika regarded him quietly, her unfamiliar and indifferent expression one he had never seen.

Solomon couldn’t even utter a single word.

Oh my God, she has gone mad! She has truly gone cuckoo!

He threw everything he was holding in his hands to the floor without saying anything. In a fit of rage, he yanked the girl up from the floor and dragged her into the room.

Meanwhile, Ichika was wholly stumped.

“What are you doing? Let go of me!”

Subsequently, all sound ceased.

Right that moment, Soloman, who had finally gone ballistic, showed his bloodthirsty side to her for the first time. That side of him hadn't made an appearance in a very long time.

“Stop...”

Having no strength to resist, Ichika was roughly dragged into the bathroom. When the man tossed her under the showerhead after stripping her bare, she screamed so loudly that the entire villa could hear her.

Alas, it was all in vain.

This time, Solomon was truly incandescent.

After dragging her to beneath the showerhead, he turned on the faucet. Water poured down her in a torrent.

It wasn't until he had rinsed her clean and chucked her so-called nun's habit into the trash can did he snag a bath towel and wrapped it around her roughly.

Carrying her out, he then tossed her onto the bed.

“Akiyama!”

“You want to be a nun, huh? Okay, I'll grant you your wish!”

Soloman's solid body came down on her. In no time, the entire bedroom was filled with the man's heavy breathing as well as the girl's shrieks and struggles.

But when the two people joined together in the end, the screams faded.

All that remained was passion and wild frenzy.

Not only was the man in the throes of passion, but when the woman was brought to her limits, she trembled as she tried her best to keep her moans to herself.

It wasn't until the very end when her eyes glazed over that she again called out, “Darling...”

Hah! She really needed to be taught a lesson before she'd behave!

The next morning, there was no longer anyone next to Solomon when he woke up.

His eyes swiftly shot open.

“Ichi...”

He wanted to call out to her, but as soon as he sat up, a wave of dizziness assailed him. He then fell back heavily.

“You’re finally awake, Mr. Akiyama?”

Someone heard his voice and immediately hurried in.

Lying on the bed, Solomon turned his head and glanced over. A moment later, his expression changed once more.

“Why are you here? Where is Ichika?”

“I’m sorry, Mr. Akiyama. We only rushed over after being notified of this. When we arrived, Mrs. Akiyama was already gone.”

When his subordinate heard that question, he instantly dropped to a knee before the bed with a guilty expression on his face.

Words eluded Solomon.

An inferno of fury blazed within him, and he propped himself out of bed despite his spinning head.

Argh! How dare she? I’m going to kill her when I catch her later! She now dares to go against me, huh?

He quickly set out with his subordinates.

The initial plan was to go straight to the temple.

Unexpectedly, he caught sight of a white car waiting there no sooner had he exited the villa community.

When the person in the car saw that he had finally come out, the car door swung open. A kindly middle-aged woman in a royal blue woolen coat and a string of precious jewelry around her neck climbed out of the car.

“Mr. Akiyama, are you on your way to look for Ichika? Let’s have a chat first.”

It was none other than his mother-in-law, Aoi.

Solomon’s eyes narrowed a fraction.

Twenty minutes later, Solomon chose a window seat and sat right across from his mother-in-law in a leisurely cafe in the city's central square.

"What would you like to drink?"

"Anything will do."

Aoi flashed him a gentle smile.

She was both well-mannered and even-tempered. Despite the many things that had transpired in the Minamoto family recently, she had always been looking at the bigger picture.

And it was for that precise reason that Solomon still held some respect for her.

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Chapter 1434 The Truth

The wine was soon served. After pouring Aoi a glass, Solomon waited for her to speak.

"I know Ichika did some extreme stuff at your house yesterday and even ran away last night. That's mainly what I want to talk to you about today."

"Go ahead," said Solomon. He took a sip of wine and nodded at her.

Aoi began to speak. "I'm wondering, Mr. Akiyama, if you remember the time when you first came to Jetroina?"

"Huh?" Solomon looked up at her abruptly, surprised by the question.

A gloomy look came into his eyes, revealing his reluctance in discussing the subject.

"What about it?"

"I'm sorry for bringing this up, but I was hoping you would recall the time when you'd just entered your adoptive father's house. Do you remember a little girl who made you do certain things? That little girl was, in fact, Ichika."

For her daughter's sake, the woman no longer wanted to be tormented by the secret and decided to spit the truth.

As she expected, the moment she finished speaking, the man immediately jerked up his head, staring at her with his face frozen in shock.

Aoi's heart sank when she saw his reaction.

"Yes, that's the truth. Throughout these years, Ichika's always kept a close eye on you and feels sorry for what she'd done to you back then. That was why, back when your adoptive father came to our house with the marriage proposal, my eldest daughter said no when she saw that he was representing you, but Ichika stood out for you."

She had decided to spill the whole truth now, sparing no details, including this one.

She really hoped to plead on her daughter's behalf. After all, the girl was only eight back then. How could such a little girl have known any better?

Back then, Ichika was brought there by her parents. Hidden behind the curtains, she became impatient after a long time waiting and could not wait to go home.

When she realized the banquet was not ending simply because the guests could not stop fussing over the teenage boy, she was struck with the thought of how she usually dismissed the servants at home. Thus, she scolded the teenage boy and made him wash her feet while kneeling before her, just like a servant.

After that, she was brought home. Only after her parents reprimanded her did she understand what a grave mistake she had made.

Aoi's eyes were slightly reddened. "I know how insulting that incident was to you at the time, and I know I have no right to plead for forgiveness on Ichika's behalf. But if you could forgive her, I-I would be very grateful!"

With that, she bowed her head apologetically.

However, Solomon remained motionless.

He was, at that moment, utterly stunned by the truth that Aoi had just revealed to him. He could not quite wrap his head around the fact that the little girl hidden behind those curtains back then and the woman he had married was one and the same.

In fact, he was a little furious.

He remembered when Yancy had just relocated him to Jetroina against his will. Back then, he had never wanted to become Yamada's adoptive son at all.

After enjoying ten blissful years with the Wands, the last thing he wanted was to go back to the days where he had to be subservient to others at all times.

Despite that, he was still forced to kneel for ages at the Tsurka residence that day. Toward the end of the day, he even had to wash a child's feet and bow to the child as well.

For a long time after that, those scenes had remained in his heart like an untouchable thorn, festering and breeding hatred.

Aoi waited for his response with her head bowed, but he gave her none.

For almost five minutes, he merely sat there with a terrifying expression on his face, completely silent and still.

Suddenly, Aoi's eyes dulled as she finally understood what his reaction meant.

Not wanting to disturb him any further, she got up and politely excused herself.

Resigned to the fact that the situation was simply beyond salvation, she returned to the temple.

Just as she expected, Ichika, who had proclaimed she would devote herself to prayer, had been anxiously waiting for her return the whole time.

She turned toward Aoi eagerly. However, upon seeing her returning alone, she immediately caught on.

Lowering her gaze in disappointment, she turned away from her mother just as a single teardrop fell from her eyes and trickled down her cheek.

"Ichika..." Aoi's heart ached at the sight of her.

Sitting down beside her, Aoi could only try to comfort the girl as best as she could. "Perhaps he has a hard time accepting the truth right now. Give him some time. I'm sure he'll come in another two days."

"It's all right, Mom," replied Ichika, forcing a smile through her tears. "I did something wrong. It's only right that I stay here and repent. You can go home now."

With that said, she picked up the scripture in front of her and began reading it.

Aoi watched her speechlessly, full of sadness and regret at the way things had turned out.

However, since there was nothing else she could do, she eventually left and headed home.

For the following two days, just like Ichika predicted, only silence ensued in the temple. No one came to visit her, nor did she receive a single phone call or text.

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Chapter 1435 He Appeared Like A God

It was indeed as if the man she was waiting for had disappeared from the face of the Earth. Or perhaps he had gone back to his home country.

On her fourth day at the temple, Ichika carried two big wooden buckets and headed off to the river to fetch water. Snow had fallen earlier, and the land outside the temple was a vast expanse of white.

Having been pampered since little, this was no easy feat for her. With arduous effort, she had finally managed to lift the buckets of water off the ground when she suddenly lost her footing.

Thunk!

The girl tumbled to the ground, and the buckets immediately slipped off her fingers, which were by then red and numb from the cold.

At that, she finally burst into tears and wailed uncontrollably, especially at the sight of her hands that were bleeding from being cut by the sharp ice on the ground.

She was, after all, just a twenty-year-old young woman.

Suddenly, the sound of footsteps crunching on snow and ice sounded, and a moment later, a pair of black handmade men's leather boots appeared in front of her.

"Huh?" Teary-eyed, she blinked and then lifted her head.

"So, are you enjoying your new life of silence at solitude at the temple?"

The man who had just appeared before her glimmered under the dazzling sunlight like a god that had just descended from heaven. The sight was so surreal Ichika thought she must have been dreaming.

"H-Hubby?"

"Who's your hubby? You're a nun now. Where would you get a husband?"

Gazing down at her loftily, the man wore a cool expression on his handsome face. Even his eyes were chilly as he gazed at her unwaveringly.

Ichika fell silent.

Her face paled a little as she averted her gaze and struggled to get off the ground.

He's right. I don't have a husband anymore. I guess I am really dreaming.

Once she got back on her feet, she picked up the two cracked buckets and began staggering in the direction of the temple.

"Think carefully before you take another step, Ichika. If you choose to go back to that place now, I am going to leave and never come back again. I'm not as selfless as you imagine. I'm only an ordinary man, vulnerable to hate and resentment like everyone else. I only came here today to give myself a chance, as should you!" Solomon's voice rang out from behind her.

He did not attempt to coax her.

From his bloodshot eyes, it was evident that he had endured the past few days in a torturous state.

Thus, the words he just uttered were not altogether pleasant to the ears either. Instead, they went straight to the point and conveyed his attitude plainly.

Besides, he had just recovered from his illness. The fact that he had even managed to do this was already beyond himself.

If it were the past, he would have returned to his home country by now, and Ichika would indeed have become a stranger to him.

Ichika jerked to a halt and froze as if she had just turned into a statue.

Then, as though an invisible hammer was pounding in her chest, all the hurt, pain, and hopes that she had held inside instantly broke free and rose to the surface of her heart.

Tears sprang into her eyes once again.

"Y-You don't blame me anymore?" She turned toward him, tears streaming down her face.

Gazing at her, Solomon did not answer but asked instead, "Well, did you do those things on purpose back then?"

"Of course not!" Ichika shook her head, unable to stop weeping. "I didn't mean any of it..."

"All right, then. That's all that matters. I no longer want to think about the past anymore. You saw how I came out of that dark abyss with your own eyes, too. Let's give ourselves one more chance, Ichika."

His gaze and tone softened, and he was beginning to sound like the kind man she used to know.

Hearing that, Ichika felt a burst of ecstasy spread through her heart.

Dropping the two buckets in her hands, she launched herself into his arms.

"Hubby!" she called out to him with the familiar nickname.

Diving into his embrace, she wrapped her arms around him tightly like a lost child who had finally found a home and bawled her eyes out.

It was as if he was her salvation.

Previously, she had been his, but now their roles had switched.

Aoi, who had been watching the entire scene from afar, shed tears of joy in the car.

"Mrs. Minamoto..."

"Let's go home. Mr. Minamoto will be glad to hear about such good news," said Aoi, wiping her tears. With that, they left the temple and headed home.

Two hours later, in a first-class shopping mall in Terrandya, Ichika had resumed her usual lively character, eyes shining brightly.

"Does this look good on me, Hubby?" she asked, indicating the new wig and clothes she was clad in.

"Mm-hmm," came Solomon's reply.

He watched her silently.

By now, he had mostly understood what his heart really wanted.

For the past few days, shut in his villa, he had had the impulse of immediately leaving the city and returning to his homeland countless times, but throughout none of those times had that decision made him feel half as good as he did right now.

Perhaps a hint of bitterness still lingered in his heart, but he was certain, at that moment, that he could not possibly feel more contented.

They went back once they were done shopping. Seeing as Christmas was merely four days away, Solomon began preparing to return to his home country with Ichika in tow.

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Chapter 1436 Are You Pregnant

However, just as they were about to depart for the airport, Giichi suddenly turned up at their doorstep and immediately pulled Solomon aside.

“Are you sure you’re bringing her back, Akiyama? You’d better think twice. Once she leaves with you, her name will be removed from our family forever, which means if you change your mind someday, she’ll not be able to return to the Minamoto family anymore!” stated Giichi grimly.

Naturally, he would have to do that.

Considering how Himari was in a comatose state, if he wanted to conceal the true reason Ichika struck out at her, then that was the only thing he could do. Otherwise, the only fate that awaited Ichika would only be the utter destruction of her reputation anyway.

Thus, by doing so, he was protecting his daughter, although it was also a gamble at the same time.

If the man standing before him did not treat his daughter well, then there would indeed be no hope left for that girl.

Aoi was gazing at Solomon anxiously, too.

“I remember mentioning this to you before, but Ichika’s last name is now Hayes. I could even show you the Hayeses’ family record if you want.”

“The Hayes’ family record? Are you saying that Ichika’s name is included in your family record?”

Giichi was utterly dumbfounded, as women in Jetroina were never bestowed such an honor.

Solomon responded with a nonchalant attitude.

“Of course she is. Not only that, but I also plan to hold a shareholders’ meeting at Hayes Corporation after Christmas and redistribute the company’s shares. As my

wife, your daughter may share half of the equity under my name, which will be inherited by our future offspring as well. Is there anything else you'd like to ask me, Father?"

The word he ended his speech with completely stunned Giichi.

He knew how, throughout those years, Solomon seldom even addressed Yamada as his father.

Thus, he knew what an honor it was to be called that by Solomon.

In the end, both Giichi and Aoi happily sent their daughter off at the airport.

"Ichika, remember to be a good girl and listen to Akiyama when you get there, will you?" Aoi reminded her.

"I know that, Mom."

"Tell her to bear a son for the Hayeses as soon as possible and inform you once she gets pregnant. I'll let you go over to take care of her till she gives birth to the child," Giichi added.

"Huh?" Aoi was rendered speechless by his statement.

A blush immediately crept up to Ichika's face.

In fact, her cheeks remained flushed even after they boarded the plane.

After putting their luggage away, Solomon went to join her and noticed she was sitting with her head lowered the whole time, her ears beet red.

"What did your mother say to you before we boarded?"

"N-Nothing?"

She seemed even more abashed than before, bowing her head so much she was practically burying her face in her knees.

Seeing that, Solomon refrained from asking any further.

The age gap between them often made him feel like they were generations apart.

He suddenly recalled the time when she decorated his home in pink and with lace too.

This gap in between us really isn't a small one!

He opened his newspaper and was beginning to read it when suddenly, Ichika leaned toward him timidly, asking, "H-Hubby, d-do you want to have children?"

"What?!" A single utterance burst from Solomon's lips, and heads immediately swiveled in their direction throughout the first-class cabin.

Seeing that, Ichika hurriedly cupped her hand over his mouth to silence him.

"Not so loud, Hubby!" Her face had turned a deep shade of scarlet from the embarrassment.

Solomon realized then that he had indeed lost his composure.

However, it was only because he was overly shocked, so much so that his heart had nearly jumped out of his chest.

Children?

He had never thought about it before.

Shooting a quick glance around, he tried to suppress the overwhelming emotions in his heart.

After what seemed like an eternity, he was finally calm enough to whisper, "D-Do you mean you're pregnant?"

Again, a blush spread across Ichika's face.

"N-No, of course not. It's too soon for that. I was only asking what you think about it. M-My mother was rushing me to bear your child soon, but I think I'm still young. I'm just twenty, and there are still other things I want to do first. I-Is that okay with you, Hubby?"

She blinked at him pleadingly.

Solomon stared back at her, saying nothing.

For a second, he felt his heart, which had just shot to the heavens like a rocket, plunge back into the earth in disappointment.

"But what if you do get pregnant?" he inquired.

"Huh?" Ichika was stumped.

What if I do get pregnant?

Her face fell. "Well, if that happens, I will give birth to the child. He would be our child, Hubby. I'm going to raise him well."

After a second's consideration, the girl had taken on a totally different attitude.

Solomon did not quite know how to respond to that sudden change. However, the gloominess that had filled his heart a moment ago seemed to have lifted, replaced by a light and pleasant feeling.

"All right. That's what we'll do, then. If you're not pregnant now, then we shall wait till you get a little older. But if you are, then we'll bring the child into the world."

"Okay, Hubby. In that case, should we buy that thing after we get off this plane?"

"What thing?"

"I mean, that thing..."

Ichika suddenly pointed to an advertisement printed on the newspapers he was holding.

Solomon glanced at it, a frown immediately forming on his forehead.

Durex condoms? And ultrathin, too?!

Returning from the Dead: His Secret Lover Chapter 1437

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Chapter 1437 Christmas

The couple arrived in Frontier Bay three days before Christmas.

"How are we spending Christmas, then? Stay here till the eve, then leave for Jadeborough?" asked Sabrina.

Having no idea herself, Sasha glanced at Sebastian, who was having his meal at the dining table.

Of course, they hoped to spend the holidays at Frontier Bay if it were up to them. However, they could not neglect the Jadesons either, as both Devin and Sebastian came from that family.

Besides, Jonathan was looking forward to meeting his great-grandchildren as well.

"You should go back with Devin first." Sebastian eventually compromised and decided Sabrina should return to Jadeborough for Christmas with Jaena in tow.

Sabrina's face immediately fell.

She wasn't thrilled about it, but she did not want to oppose her brother's idea either.

Thus, after Solomon and Ichika came back, they all had a reunion dinner two days before Christmas. Then Sabrina and Devin left for Jadeborough, bringing Jaena with them.

As for Sebastian and Sasha, they planned to return to Jadeborough on Christmas day itself.

Ichika was incredibly excited when she learned about this arrangement, not to mention it was also her first time spending Christmas in this country. After hearing that they would be having lunch in Frontier Bay on Christmas eve and then visiting the Hayes Residence in the evening, she woke up early on Christmas eve.

"I'm going to Sha's, Hubby. Lots of people are going to her house for lunch later, and she probably needs an extra hand to prepare everything."

Solomon had gotten up as well and was feeding the two goldfish in the fish tank.

"But didn't you say you were going shopping?" he asked, turning back to look at her.

Only then did she realize she had completely forgotten about that.

She quickly returned to their bedroom to retrieve the shopping list, which she had gotten from Wendy earlier.

The items listed were things she needed to prepare for Christmas to create a festive mood and holiday atmosphere for their home.

She read through it carefully.

"Where can I get all this stuff, Hubby?" she asked, pointing at the list.

Taking it over, Solomon took a good look at it—Christmas lights, stockings, wreaths, candles, and more.

It was a very complete list indeed.

Solomon clutched the piece of paper tightly, an unfathomable feeling surging in his heart.

He was suddenly overcome by an inexplicable urge to buy those things himself, just like a child tempted by his favorite shirt in the supermarket.

He had not felt that way for a long time.

“Why don’t we go and buy these things together?”

“Huh?” Ichika looked up at him. Then a smile spread across her face as she agreed, “Okay, then! Let’s shop for these together!”

Thus, Ichika, who had promised to help out at Sasha’s, happily went Christmas shopping with Solomon instead.

Meanwhile, at Frontier Bay, Sasha and Wendy were bustling about in the kitchen, waiting for her to arrive.

“Madam, look at the time now. I don’t think Ms. Minamoto is coming after all. Everyone will be here for lunch at noon, and there’s still a ton of stuff we haven’t bought yet.”

“Ah!” Sasha’s hands were already full.

Left with no choice, she went out, looking for Sebastian, who was decorating the house with the three children.

“Ichika’s still not here yet. Can you help me get some stuff from the supermarket?”

“Sure. What sort of stuff?”

Sebastian hopped off the stool after hanging up the Christmas garlands.

Sasha went over to pass him the shopping list. “Pastry flour, rum, and some condiments. But are you sure you know what these are, Darling?”

Whenever she addressed him as her darling, it meant she needed him to treat the matter at hand with utmost seriousness.

Sebastian frowned at her. “Duh! What do you think?”

Snatching the list over, he went toward Vivian, who was setting up the Christmas lights outside the villa.

“Come on, Vivi. Let’s go to the supermarket together.”

“All right!”

The cute little girl dropped the Christmas lights at once, leaving the work to her brothers, and ran to catch up with her father.

Thus, Sebastian went to the supermarket with Vivian in tow.

The moment they got there, he took out the wrinkled piece of paper from his pocket. Seeing the first item on the list, the man, who grew up pampered and had never lifted a finger to do any housework, came to the flour section and instantly became boggled by the variety available in that section.

Vivian was just as dazed by the sight.

Blinking at him innocently, she asked, "Why don't I ask that lady there to help us with this? There are too many types of flour here. What if we end up buying the wrong one?"

Sebastian clenched his fists a little.

If he were to follow the usual manner he did things, he would simply have asked an employee to help him pack one bag of each type of those flour and load them into his car.

However, he knew he would only return home to be seen as a joke if he did that. Thus, he heeded his daughter's advice and asked one of the salesgirls for help.

"Pastry flour? Here it is," she said, packing him a bag with ease.

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Chapter 1438 Past Grudges

Vivian was delighted and immediately pushed the shopping list into the lady's hand.

"Here are more items. My daddy doesn't know them either. Could you help us gather them, please?"

"Hahaha!" A burst of laughter suddenly rang out from not far away, giving them a fright.

A scowl came upon Sebastian's face at once.

Turning over, he saw that the man roaring with laughter and pointing at him at the same time was clad in the most eccentric clothes. Even his head was dressed up like a peacock.

"Go on and laugh again," Sebastian threatened with his gaze darkening.

The man's laughter stopped abruptly.

Vivian stared at him blankly for a long while before she finally recognized who he was.

“Uncle Brandon, it’s you!”

“Yes, it’s me. Look at how much you’ve grown, Vivi! And what a beauty you’ve turned into! Would you like to join the entertainment industry, Vivi? With such a pretty face, you’ll easily become the top superstar in show business!”

Brandon was dazzled by his niece’s stunning looks and could not stop marveling at her beauty.

In fact, it was true that Vivian had indeed turned into a great beauty.

Her eyes resembled her father’s, while her facial features were almost identical to Sasha’s when the latter was little. Seeing as she had inherited all of the most attractive features her parents possessed, it was no surprise that she looked so charming.

However, the moment Brandon finished his words, Sebastian swiftly swung a kick at his abdomen. “Do you have a death wish?”

“No, I don’t...” Brandon quickly wiped the playful smile off his face.

Sebastian considered it a rare coincidence indeed to bump into Brandon during Christmas after so many years. Thus, once Brandon stopped fooling around, he did not immediately attempt to shoo him away either.

He continued picking and packing stuff, asking casually, “Back for Christmas?”

Brandon nodded. “Yeah. My mother’s fallen ill, so I decided to come back this year.”

His mother? Matilda?

Sebastian did not have a good impression of that woman at all, as he could still remember how she used to manipulate and sabotage him.

However, Brandon said next, “Sebastian, since you’re all here for Christmas, would it be possible for you to pay a visit to my house within the next few weeks? To see my mother?”

“Huh? To see your mother?”

“Yeah. Her health’s been in bad condition this past year. The doctors said she might not have much time left. I understand she’d done some terrible things to you in the past, but could you just come, for your uncle’s sake? Maybe you could treat it as if you were representing the Hayeses, I guess.”

The man who had always been known as a cynic was suddenly sounding as though he was on the verge of tears.

Sebastian fell silent.

Representing the Hayeses?

He lowered his gaze as memories of the past flashed through his mind.

Matilda was, simply put, a competitive woman who only cared about getting her hands on the things she wanted. A huge reason was that her father had handed the entire family over to her younger brother, Frederick Hayes, instead of her.

Thus, she was obsessed with getting back her portion.

Subsequently, she made a series of mistakes, and in the end, almost risked the entire Emmanuel family getting destroyed by Sebastian.

The fact that she was hoping to meet the Hayeses again must have been an indicator that she was indeed coming to the end of her life and was beginning to recognize her errors.

After much thought, Sebastian finally agreed to his request.

"All right, then. We initially planned to return to Jadeborough on Christmas day, but since this is the case, we'll make a visit to your house then."

"Really? That's wonderful! I'm going to tell her that as soon as I return. By the way, are you also bringing the kids and Sasha along? My mother loves to be surrounded by people nowadays. It'd be great if they could come with you," Brandon added with a hopeful look in his eyes.

Seeing that her father did not respond, Vivian chimed in, "Uncle Brandon, may I bring my Aunt Ichika along, too?"

"Your Aunt Ichika?" Brandon was unable to wrap his head around the name for a moment.

Sebastian swept a dull gaze across him, explaining bluntly, "Yes, she's speaking about Ichika Minamoto, which reminds me, those two should probably come along as well. After all, Solomon's your mother's true nephew."

It was Brandon's turn to fall silent.

He had totally forgotten the fact that Solomon was a true Hayes by blood, although he sometimes doubted what that word even meant at all.

In his eyes, the man standing before him was as true a Hayes as any other. They had even grown up together.

While Brandon hurried home, Sebastian left the supermarket as well after the salesperson finished helping him pick the items he needed.

He told Sasha about his encounter with Brandon upon returning home.

“Pay a visit to the Emmanuels?” As expected, Sasha was rather stunned when she heard about it.

Sebastian nodded. However, sensing her reluctance, he immediately added, “You don’t have to go if you don’t want to. I can go alone.”

To his surprise, Sasha’s frown instantly turned into a smile.

Unpacking and sorting out the goods he had just brought home, she said coyly, “Do I really seem like such a petty person to you? Those things happened in the past, and the past is already gone. Let’s visit her together since she’s unwell.”

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Chapter 1439 An Otherworldly Being

“All right.” Sebastian’s lips curved into a smile.

It was about eleven o’clock when everyone arrived, including Solomon and Ichika.

“Sha, guess what. I just went shopping at your local market with my hubby just now. There were tons and tons of goods sold there!”

Ichika seemed to have forgotten all about the fact that she had stood Sasha up that morning when she told the latter about the exciting trip she had just made to the market.

Solomon was utterly speechless.

Wendy jumped in. “So that’s where you were, Ms. Minamoto! You’re right; that place is a thrill to visit. You’re a bit late, though. Madam and I already went three or four days ago.”

“Really?” Ichika was even more excited upon hearing that.

Wendy smiled. “Of course. Look at all those Christmas lights in the yard, as well as these garlands. We got all these from the market, too. What did you get just now, Ms. Minamoto?”

Seeing how everyone was kind and tolerant toward Ichika and treated her the same way they would pamper a child, Solomon immediately breathed a sigh of relief.

Looking around, he saw a man in a black windbreaker not far off, fumbling with the Christmas lights on the trees.

Thus, he placed his mug down and went to him. "You got this as well?"

"Yeah." Sebastian did not even bother looking at him as he tried to figure out the lights in his hands.

However, it was evident that the man who was an expert in areas such as the military, finance, and politics was completely clueless when it came to little things like Christmas lights.

He looked like an otherworldly being who did not even know the basics of living as an ordinary human being. It amused Solomon a little.

"Let me," he said, taking the lights from him.

They were indeed men from different worlds. The lives they led were completely unlike each other's as well.

"I heard you're all leaving for Jadeborough tomorrow?" Solomon asked.

"No. We had a change of plans. We're visiting the Emmanuels instead. You should come along as well," stated Sebastian in a casual tone.

The Emmanuels?

Solomon immediately stopped what he was doing, gazing up at him with a stunned expression.

"W-What made you suddenly think of doing that?"

Sebastian raised his eyebrows. "I bumped into Brandon earlier. He said his mother is dying soon and requested for us to pay her a visit."

Solomon stared at him speechlessly, thinking that Matilda's anger might actually kill her if she heard them saying that she was dying soon.

"You guys go ahead, then. I'll pass. I'm meeting a few friends tomorrow."

"Friends? What friends would force you to spend Christmas with them instead of with your family?" snapped Sebastian.

A blush immediately spread across Solomon's cheeks all the way to his ears. He had not expected him to expose his lie just like that.

"I-I..." He struggled to find the right words, but none came to him.

"You're simply unwilling to go, aren't you? Just do it one last time. You could pretend you're doing it in your father's place if you want. She's asking to meet us only because she's coming to the end of her life and wants to repent her sins. That's all."

Sebastian had his own reasons for doing this.

Of course, he saw through Matilda and knew she only wanted to do it for her own sake. Despite that, he still chose to grant her the wish, mostly because of the man who had raised him, Frederick Hayes.

Back then, Sebastian had misunderstood Frederick till the day the latter died. Only after that did he find out the truth. Nobody knew how terrible that felt and how much pain he had to suffer because of that.

Once, he even spent an entire night before his grave for no other reason other than to repent and atone for his wrongdoings.

However, it was too late. The person who had raised him, cared for him, and whom he had pushed away was dead. He had no chance at atonement anymore.

Thus, now that Frederick's sister wanted such a chance, he was willing to hand it to her—for the sake of his father.

Solomon remained silent.

After a long while, he finally nodded and mumbled something inaudible in response.

Sebastian assumed that as a yes.

By the time they finished fixing the Christmas lights, lunch was about to begin as well. They went to wash their hands before the meal started.

"By the way, since tonight's Christmas eve, we'll be having a prayer session at the Hayes residence. You'd better be prepared," said Sebastian.

"Huh?!" The shock sent a jolt throughout Solomon's body.

A prayer session, and at the Hayes residence, which I'd never stepped foot in before?

Returning from the Dead: His Secret Lover Chapter 1440

/ Returning from the Dead: His Secret Lover
Chapter 1440 Warmth

The Hayeses had their lunch at Frontier Bay in the afternoon before returning to Hayes Residence for the preparation.

It was New Year's Eve, and the Hayes family considered it the most momentous day of the year. Everyone would be thrilled to make the evening banquet incredibly lavish.

Sasha stayed behind as she still had to clean up. She also noticed Ichika eagerly following her as though she wanted to say something.

"Ichika, what's wrong? Is something going on?"

"Sasha, I... I want to invite everyone over to my house for breakfast tomorrow morning. I wonder if it's okay?" Ichika murmured in hesitation.

Breakfast? Why not? That's a great idea!

"Definitely! Look, we had lunch at my home today, and we'll be having dinner at the Hayes residence. So it would be great to have breakfast at your home. Taking turns visiting each family would be a great idea! We are a big family, after all," Sasha agreed without hesitation.

In fact, she looked excited with anticipation about this matter.

Ichika was overjoyed.

In her country, it was taboo to invite people over to the house on the morning of the first day of the new year because they would visit the temples to worship their ancestors, and no one would be thrilled to get an invitation. Therefore, Ichika felt uneasy about inviting everyone over for breakfast.

However, now that she heard what Sasha said, she felt relieved.

"Darling, I asked Sasha just now. She said we can invite them over tomorrow morning. Let's prepare a feast for them, okay?"

She ran over to inform her husband, who was managing the garden outside, about the good news.

Of course, Solomon knew all along that she could invite them over. However, he was afraid that they might be unable to handle the guests with only the two of them.

Also, it was the first day of the new year. He wasn't sure if people would come.

However, seeing Ichika running over happily, Solomon put down the stool in his hand and looked toward the cheerful little girl.

“That’s great! Make a list of what you want to make, and we’ll buy it later. The supermarket might not be open tomorrow morning.”

“Oh, is that so?”

Ichika, who was having her new year for the first time, blinked her big round eyes again upon hearing this.

“Okay! I’ll make a list right now.” Ichika ran back into the house.

They finally finished cleaning up Frontier Bay.

Sasha went back to the bedroom to change before going to the Hayes residence.

“Understood. I’ll be there tomorrow night.”

Surprisingly, she saw a familiar figure talking on the phone after pushing the door open. She didn’t know the contents of the conversation, but she could sense hints of discontent in his tone.

Who pissed him off again?

Sasha tiptoed into the wardrobe to look for her clothes. The person hung up the phone as well.

“Who called?”

“It was Devin. He was asking when we will arrive tomorrow.” Sebastian seemed a little annoyed.

Sasha couldn’t help but find it hilarious.

Was it really Devin?

From the look of things, she was sure that Grandpa was the one who called. He even got so detailed to the point of confirming whether he could make it before dinner.

Sasha closed the curtains and began to undress while talking to Sebastian. “Go earlier if you can. Grandpa will miss us if he didn’t get to see us. He-”

Before she could finish, Sebastian embraced her from behind, and Sasha felt a sensation of warmth gushing behind her ears.

“Early? Darling, aren’t you tired? We haven’t had a good rest for a long time.”

“Hmm?”

Sasha felt a chilling sensation from Sebastian’s passionate actions; she shuddered.

Rest?

What rest?

She had the impression that resting was not what he had in mind.

Because Sebastian’s hands that were around her waist had already made their way into her clothes, caressing her erotic zone.

“What- What are you doing? Stop messing around. We’re going to be late... Ah-”

Her voice was gradually overcome by Sebastian’s frantic and domineering whiffs.

When she returned to her senses, she was already on the bed, aggressively pinned under Sebastian’s warm and intense body.

Suddenly, she heard words that made her blood rush into her head. “Darling, do you miss me?”

Sasha’s charming little face burned up. Even with the curtains obscuring the sunlight, the dimmed room couldn’t hide the fact that her face was turning red.

She turned her head away awkwardly as she didn’t want to give him an answer. However, Sebastian began to convey his message with his actions.

“Mmm...”

“You do miss me. I can feel it, darling.”

Sebastian smiled delightfully. Sasha’s voice trembled from being forcefully penetrated as Sebastian dominated her deep inside her.

It was vigorous and relentless.