

Returning from the Dead: His Secret Lover Chapter 901

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“What do you intend to do about it then?” Devin suddenly found himself scoffing. “Let me get this straight, Shanae. One, we’re not engaged; it’s solely your grandfather’s own desire to have you married to me. Two, you’re the one who struck her first, which prompted her to retaliate in kind. Wasn’t that to be expected?”

There was no sentimentality in his eyes. His behavior was a complete turnaround from the moment he helped her up and checked on her.

Gone was his gentleness, and in its place was a kind of frostiness that chilled her to the bone.

Shanae was no longer able to muster up the strength to vent.

“W-What did you just say?”

“Did I not make it obvious enough for you? I’m giving you a way to bow out in grace on account of my mother. After all, she still has to return to the Woods residence from time to time.”

Shanae took it in silently while he spoke.

“Also, what did you call her just now? May I remind you to take a good look at yourself the next time you decide to insult someone!”

Devin did not mince his words and even purposefully pointed toward what was left of the birthday party at the bar’s dance floor.

Shanae grew pale when she arched her head over.

There, Finn, the wealthy scion who had thrown the party today in her honor, continued to await foolishly with a huge bouquet of roses in one hand and a velvety sapphire blue box in the other.

Who was the real shameless one?

Who was the least deserving of all?

Everyone else knew better.

“So, who is she, really?”

“What do you think?” Devin sneered derisively as he countered with a question of his own.

Shanae spoke no more. She had already guessed the answer from the moment Sasha made her appearance. The woman that even the wife of the Hayes Corporation president regards in such a sisterly manner...

And then there's her overt brashness and proclivity for violence...

Shanae's face went pallid again. This time, it was because she figured out who Sabrina was. When she recalled the absurdity of her own conduct here at the bar, her nails nearly dug their way into her own palms.

Devin ignored her. He walked toward the main entrance of the bar.

“Do you think it's possible for you to be with her, Devin? So what if she's the young lady of the Hayes family? Do you think your family will approve of your relationship?”

Shanae abruptly raised a sharp question which made Devin freeze in his tracks.

Shanae's expression grew increasingly sardonic. “I bet you don't even have the answer to that yourself. Otherwise, why would you have helped me up just now?”

Devin kept his back to her. A crisp cracking sound was heard from his clenched knuckles.

At this moment, the mood of this otherwise characteristically amiable man took a frightening downturn...

Sasha was finally able to settle down for a meal together with Sabrina.

She had no idea what happened inside the bar before her own appearance, but she did notice that Sabrina had left her food mostly untouched.

That already suggested the seriousness of the situation.

“Sab..”

“You can have the bar. I don't want it anymore.”

While the disconsolate Sabrina looked at the scene outside the window, she spoke up so suddenly that it nearly made Sasha spit out her coffee.

We're barely a couple of days into operation. What's gotten into her again?

Sasha placed her cup down. "Your reason being?"

A disinterested Sabrina replied, "Why do I need to have a reason for anything? This isn't your first day knowing me; I've always done things on a whim. I just don't feel like doing it anymore. It's fine if you don't want to take over, though, cause I can always look to someone else."

Sasha quietly studied Sabrina. After a few seconds, the former still could not figure out how best to respond to the latter's remark.

The two parted ways after the meal. When Sasha went back to the Oceanic Estate, she picked up her phone and texted the man who had yet to return from military service.

Sasha: Darling, would you be able to return earlier?

Darling: Why? What's up?

That man, as Sasha discovered, no longer made her wait too long when she texted him recently. Typically, he would get back to her within a few minutes.

Sasha: Today, that Shanae went to Sab's bar. Devin came by later as well, and they got into some sort of argument with Sab when they met. I'm not sure what happened but now Sab says she doesn't want to stay here anymore.

It took a while longer but Sebastian eventually texted back.

Darling: She shouldn't have come here in the first place.

Sasha: Huh?

That took Sasha by surprise and left her staring at those words for some time.

Why would he say that?

Isn't he yet to recover? If so, why is he so decisive and firm with regards to this matter concerning his own sister?

Sasha took a considerable pause before she sent out another message.

Sasha: Do you feel that there will be no happy ending for Devin and her?

Darling: What do you expect? Do you think the Jadesons would deem the Hayes good enough for them? Or do you think Jonathan Jadeson is like Frederick Hayes who needn't consider his own son's opinion when seeking a daughter-in-law?

Those last words made Sasha's eyes pop.

What does he mean by that? Is he talking about us?

Does this mean... he has recovered?

Sasha's blood ran cold. Her ear buzzed and her heart thumped against her chest to the point that she felt it close to bursting.

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Sasha: Are you starting to remember things, Darling?

Darling: Such as?

Sasha: That is... You mentioned our marriage. Have you recalled how we ended up being together?

Sasha clasped onto her phone with bated breath and was so nervous that her palms got clammy.

For whatever reason, he suddenly ceased correspondence after she sent this out. Meanwhile, there she was, all jittery as she waited in her room.

Still, the phone stayed silent.

Damn this man...

She considered making a voice call but that was when she heard footsteps approaching from outside.

"Are you up there, Sasha?"

"Who is it?"

Sasha could only put down her phone and come out.

"Aunt Janice? What brought you here today?" She was quite surprised to see the middle-aged woman who had shown up out of the blue.

This woman was Janice Durant, who had not made an appearance since the day of the feast.

Perhaps it was owing to what happened at that event that Janice now appeared particularly self-conscious before Sasha.

"Yeah. Your grandfather wanted me to share with you how to manage a household. Have you done this before, Sasha?" Janice gently explained.

Sasha was dumbfounded.

Manage a household?

What does that mean? Why's that old man doing this all of a sudden?

Amidst her trepidation, Sasha asked, "What does he mean? Does he intend to... have me manage Oceanic Estate?"

"Yes. Haven't you noticed that there hasn't been a female figurehead at Oceanic Estate for quite a while now? Since he did not take another wife after so many years and Stephen and the others moved out after they got married, everything had been left to Tony all this time. Now that you're here, shouldn't it be time for you to take charge of these matters?"

Janice smiled and nodded as though it was only the natural course of things. Sasha, however, was completely flabbergasted.

She had never thought about running things here because this was the one-and-only Oceanic Estate, the confluence point of the members of this most powerful family. What claim did she have as a granddaughter-in-law to start calling the shots around here?

Besides, she had not even managed anything at the Hayeses. How was she able to run this place?

Sasha tried to turn it down. "You're teasing me, Aunt Janice. How would I know how to do this?"

That made Janice quite anxious. "I'm being serious here, really. Your grandfather's waiting downstairs right now, so you can go verify this with him for yourself."

Following that, she straight up half-dragged the speechless and stupefied Sasha out of the room.

Why would he want me to take charge of things when the Jadesons are not shorn of talented people? Discounting those who are too far away, would it not make sense to have his own eldest daughter-in-law, Jasmine, helm Oceanic Estate?

After all, both Stephen and Jasmine had always been managing the family business. And with Jasmine herself often professing her desire to run things at home time and again, it was just incomprehensible why the old man would not just go to her.

In a mixture of confoundment and sheer disbelief, Sasha was brought downstairs where she quickly spotted the old man seated in the hall. Apart from him, she saw that Devin's father, Stephen, was present as well.

"Dad, do you mean to tell me... that you also intend to let Sebastian manage the tempered glass factory?"

"Is there a problem?"

Jonathan glared at his own son with eyes widened and shot him down with a stern look of disapproval the moment he sensed the latter's unwillingness to comply.

That caused Stephen to shrink and immediately change his own tone. "No... It isn't like that. I just wanted to ask which portion it is specifically that you wanted me to hand over."

"I was obviously referring to the glassworks and the smelting plant, as well the stocks held in several major state-owned enterprises." Once again, Jonathan reiterated his point impatiently.

After Jonathan's voice trailed off, Stephen looked even more perturbed as he stood rooted to the spot.

What Jonathan mentioned, in actuality, formed the most significant portion of the assets held by the Jadesons. The tempered glass and smelting plant factories were direct suppliers of the military, thanks to the relationship the family had established with the military.

Needless to say, the same was true of the stocks Jonathan mentioned. The businesses and the shareholding together had been the primary source of income for the family over many years.

What would be left for me if such an important portfolio is to be surrendered to Sebastian now? Those few restaurants and that handful of supermarkets? What's the use of these? I'm practically being reduced to a mere figurehead!

Stephen had never felt this disheartened before.

Sasha arrived downstairs. "You asked for me, Grandpa?"

Jonathan nodded and gestured toward the chair in front of him for Sasha to settle herself into. "Ah, yes. Have Janice and Tony accompany you to The Ataraxy tomorrow and introduce yourself to the people there. Also, make a trip down to Gossamer Creek and let Janice be your guide."

Sasha was stunned.

The Ataraxy? Gossamer Creek? Where are these places?

Sasha did not understand the position she was put in, but the shift in the expressions of Stephen and Janice upon hearing the mention of those two locales was unmistakable.

The Ataraxy was where Jared Jadeson resided.

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Like Jonathan, Jared had not lived alongside his own children since his retirement and preferred a life of solitude in his original place of residence, which was The Ataraxy.

Meanwhile, Gossamer Creek was where members of the branch family of the Jadesons were based.

Therefore, Jonathan's sudden intention to send Sasha to these places was apparent. As a result, Stephen left Oceanic Estate blue in the face.

Jasmine was there waiting when he returned to the Red Pavilion. She immediately came up to him when she saw him. "How did it go, Stephen? What did Dad say?"

"What could he have said? He has always favored him, so what else could he say?"

For a moment, Stephen was concerned about not having an outlet for his pent-up frustrations. His wife's inquiries instantly prompted him to rant unreservedly.

Jasmine's face became white as a sheet.

“What does this mean? Is he really going to have you relinquish everything you have? How are we to survive in the future? How are we to profit when we have nothing left to milk?”

“Profit? Never mind profit; you’ll be counting your lucky stars if you can even go on living!” Once more, Stephen replied with resentment.

Being modest of talent and painfully aware that he had little to contribute toward the family, Stephen had long conducted himself extremely cautiously while with the Jadesons, especially in front of his father.

Hence, he had always given everything he had to whatever task Jonathan assigned him.

Fortunately, he was Jonathan’s only son, so his old man kept looking out for him in the past decades. Because of this, he took up an administrative position in the military and had the opportunity to manage the family business.

Had Sebastian not surfaced, perhaps he might have continued to live out the rest of his life in relative comfort.

However, what caught him off guard was how quickly Sebastian’s appearance robbed Stephen of his own father’s affection. Not only that, but now Stephen was also expected to cough up all the power and prestige he held in his hands.

Like a rooster defeated in a cockfight, he slumped into the couch in the living room, utterly deflated.

“Not just myself. It’s game over even for you as well.”

“Me?” Jasmine quickly sat next to him. “What do you mean by that?”

The smirking Stephen continued, “Haven’t you always dreamt about becoming the lady of the house? Believe me when I tell you to kill that thought. Just now, the old man instructed Janice to bring Sasha to visit Uncle Jared and to make a trip to Gossamer Creek.”

Jasmine was absolutely shocked. She stood there petrified; all she could hear was the humming in her own ears.

What perks were there to becoming the lady of the house of the Jadesons?

First was total control of the family’s wealth.

Be it The Ataraxy or Gossamer Creek in the outskirts of the city, everyone in the family was dependent on the support of the business interests of the Jadesons to sustain their ways of life. The income would first go to Oceanic Estate before it was redistributed to them by the lady of the house who presided over the family's finances.

Second was the right to speak.

With Jonathan taking a hands-off approach to domestic matters and in the absence of a woman in charge, everything that the three branches of the family wanted to do previously had to go through the butler, Tony, before being presented to Jonathan himself.

That was the only way to settle matters.

During that time, Jasmine, by virtue of her marriage to Stephen, enjoyed the indubitable honor of being the only one who could pass the word along to Tony.

Now, even this little bit of privilege was being stripped from her when the old man, within a few days of his arrival, decided to appoint Sasha as the lady of the house.

Jasmine felt that she was going bonkers.

"What right he has to do that? We're his son and daughter-in-law, aren't we? Why does he favor them? What's more, we're senior to them, so why does he treat us so shabbily? Haven't we done enough for him all these years?"

The more she questioned it, the more her outrage grew and she eventually took that all out on the items on the table which she left strewn across the floor.

Stephen wanted to know why that was the case as well.

Their anger, however, was for naught, as there was no way back once the old man had his mind made up.

Consumed by rage, discontent, and hatred, the middle-aged man sat there for a while before he finally stood up. Amidst his wife's continued hysterics, he returned to his study.

Inside the study was an old computer.

Given his rather advanced age, he was not too used to newer technologies. When it was booted up, the computer automatically logged him into a messaging program and a chatbox opened up.

Anon: How about it? Have you thought things through?

Stephen was hesitant.

With his outstretched fingers hovering over the keyboard, the apprehensive man had to overcome a bit of a struggle internally before he started to tap away steadily on the keys.

Stephen: Are you certain that he will not be harmed?

Anon: Positively. We are mercenaries, Lieutenant Colonel Jadeson. If all that the client wants is for him to go mad, we'll make it that way. No reason at all for us to do anything to make ourselves a target of law enforcement, wouldn't you agree?

Stephen took a deep drawl as that seemed to ease his own emotional burden.

A moment later, he finally typed: Okay.

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He agreed to the arrangement and followed up by sending over a string of codes as well as the map of a military zone.

Anon was duly satisfied when he received them.

Anon: Excellent, Lieutenant Colonel Jadeson. Many thanks.

Stephen: You're not to threaten his life. See that you do as you've promised.

He seemed to still be conflicted as he did not neglect to remind his counterpart toward the end.

The response which came back, though, was ambiguously expressed.

Anon: Rest assured, Lieutenant Colonel, that we'll do as you asked since you do not wish to see him die at this present time. Trust me when I say that I'm much more competent than anyone you've approached before.

The middle-aged man seated in front of the computer abruptly hunched over with his face contorted for a moment as though he had been hit in the gut. Then he slammed his hand on the keyboard and turned off the computer.

That was his psychological wound that could not be healed.

Back at Oceanic Estate.

Through Janice's explanation, Sasha slowly came to understand Jonathan's plans for her. That hit her like another curveball.

Did this old man experience some kind of trauma that led him to make such an ill-advised impromptu decision?

Sasha did not feel up to shouldering such a heavy responsibility and decided that she would bring this up with Sebastian when she went to him the next day. Since he would be due to return the day after, someone from Oceanic Estate had to go send him some clothes anyway.

After Sasha settled on doing just this, she went on to tuck the children in and slept soundly herself through the night.

The next morning, she was up early as she needed to help prepare the children for school.

"Mommy, the teacher told us to tell you about this Friday's parent-teacher conference."

After she crawled out from underneath the sheets and got dressed by her mother, the groggy Vivian snuggled into her mother's arms and told her about the conference with her kiddish voice.

A parent-teacher conference?

Sasha's eyes brightened up spontaneously. "Really? What's it about?"

She had never attended such an event as they had been in a constant state of flux ever since the children started attending elementary school. She was so busy that she was only able to send the children to school herself recently.

“There’s nothing much to it, Mommy. Just a routine meeting to discuss the student’s academic performance and stuff.”

When Vivian brought this up, Matteo was worried that his mother would find out that it was meant to address the matter of him and his brother turning the school upside-down.

The school was surely unaware that the mass exodus of students was motivated by the fear of being caught in the middle of a cross-fire between the Whites and the Jadesons.

At this point, the administrators might be still under the impression that it was systematic issues or the quality of the teaching that led to the mass exodus, hence the school wanted to gather the parents quickly to address their concerns and at the same time reassure them of the school’s quality.

Sasha did not suspect too much while she listened. “I see. Sure. Friday is the day after, and your Daddy will also be around. Shall I have him come along?”

“Really?”

The children were profoundly excited by this prospect; their dainty faces dimpled as they clustered around Sasha. Even the usually less expressive Ian hugged his mother’s arm with a sparkle in his eyes.

Sasha reached out to pat their heads.

“Of course! You’re all our sweeties and we both want to be there for you. Should Daddy refuse when the time comes, I’ll drag him along even if I have to.”

Sasha rounded things off with a promise.

Now fully reassured, the three children went on to brush their teeth and for the first time, picked up their backpacks on their own accord and happily ran downstairs to where Mark was waiting.

After she saw them off, Sasha put on a one-piece dress and did a little tidying up before she came downstairs.

“Morning, Tony. Will you be sending some clothes over to Mr. Sebastian today?”

Tony quickly set aside whatever he was doing and made himself available when he noticed Sasha speaking to him. “Good morning, Madam. That’s

right. He'll be back tomorrow so I'm going to bring him a change of clothes later. I believe Old Mr. Jadeson will be taking him out for a meal."

Sasha quickly followed up. "Do allow me to go in your stead. It's not like I have too much to do in the morning anyway."

Tony was apprehensive and thought to himself whether he ought to tell her that the military base was not a place where anyone could conveniently walk into.

However, he agreed in the end after he saw how earnest she was.

"Very well. In that case, I shall go inform Old Mr. Jadeson of this change so that he may inform his contacts over there. As for Mr. Sebastian's clothing..."

"I know. I'll go pick them out."

A jubilant Sasha hurriedly took this task upon herself and immediately turned around to sprint upstairs.

This was something she was well equipped to handle, for she was the one who did all his shopping and organized his wardrobe on his behalf. How could she not know his preferences?

Very quickly, she put together two sets of clothes, complete with ties and shoes, and had them bundled up before heading downstairs with them. With Jonathan's tacit permission, she drove to the military base.

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Tony asked, "Old Mr. Jadeson, are you sure you want to make her the person in charge of the Jadesons? She's still so young. Is she even capable of taking on this role?"

Jonathan replied, "Why don't you look at this to answer your question?"

After saying that, he tossed a stack of documents to Tony.

Out of curiosity, Tony started flipping through the documents. He gasped upon reading the content. "I didn't know Sasha is this impressive. Not only is she the Chief Financial Officer of Rind Group on Wall Street in Moranta,

but she was also the Leonard family's advisor in Yartran. Isn't she only a doctor? How did she..."

However, Tony couldn't finish his sentence as he was stunned by Sasha's impressive records during her time in the financial industry.

After looking at her achievements, he couldn't find a reason to doubt Sasha's capability to manage the Jadeson family anymore.

Meanwhile, Jonathan sipped his tea calmly, seemingly satisfied with Tony's reaction.

In fact, he was impressed by both Sasha and Sebastian. There was no doubt that Sebastian was ahead of the rest in the business world, but he didn't expect Sasha to be this strong either. They were indeed a match made in heaven as well as a blessing to the Jadesons.

With this thought in mind, Jonathan sipped his tea contentedly.

Meanwhile, Sasha had finally arrived at the military base.

The walls were towering, and poplar trees were planted around the base. There was no one else at the base but sentries with weapons guarding the base.

Sasha gulped at the scene, feeling intimidated as she had never been to a place like this.

"H-Hi there, I'm here for Commander Hamilton. This is my access pass."

She got out of the car, not daring to get any closer to the sentry. Thus, she stood from a distance and showed her access pass that Jonathan gave her.

The sentry finally turned to look at her.

After scrutinizing the access pass and the signature on it, the sentry's expression grew solemn. He pressed the walkie-talkie that was attached to his right shoulder. "Sir, there's a family member of General Jonathan's, and she's here to see Commander Hamilton."

What? I didn't know the old man was ranked this high in the military before he retired.

Sasha secretly gasped.

With the access pass in hand, the tightly shut iron gates were finally opened from inside. Immediately, a young soldier in a camouflage uniform ran over.

“Oh, I thought Tony’s here.”

The soldier was a little puzzled to see that it was a woman waiting outside.

Sasha was smart enough to quickly respond, “Tony’s not with me today. I’m Sasha, Sebastian’s wife. I came to send him some clothes.”

“I see. So you’re Sasha.” The soldier’s eyes lit up upon hearing who she was. He took a good look at her and flashed a bright smile.

Soldiers generally were more straightforward, and the one before her looked around Sebastian’s age. Hence, it made sense that he addressed Sasha casually after knowing Sebastian for three months.

After that, he led Sasha into the base. Naturally, she was curious about everything since it was her first time there.

Logan Hamilton, the soldier who brought her in, was filled with anticipation as he thought about the usually indifferent Sebastian’s reaction. “Sasha, does Seb know you’re here?”

“What?” Sasha withdrew her gaze from their surroundings. “I-I don’t think he knows...”

She stuttered, and her cheeks flushed red.

Wanting to give him a surprise, she didn’t tell him beforehand that she would be coming that day.

Deep down, she was afraid that he would reject her if she told him. Hence, to prevent that from happening, she decided not to inform him.

Upon hearing that, Logan’s smile grew wider, and his eyes were glistening with excitement.

“Argh!”

Right then, a woman’s spirited roar could be heard.

Sasha had just arrived at the training ground when suddenly, a petite figure leaped into the air.

Thump!

Before her opponent could react, the woman had knocked him to the ground with a loud thud.

Sasha was shocked by the scene.

“Sasha, you’re here just in time. Seb is now engaged in combat with Amber, the leader of our special forces. You can take a seat and watch the battle.”

Logan then took a small stool for the sweet and innocent-looking Sasha.

With her gorgeous looks and demure demeanor, Sasha was the exact opposite of the female comrades in the army.