

The Love that Never Really Dies

Chapter No 31

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Chapter 31 Keeping An Eye On Her, The Love that Never Really Dies

The housemaid brought Ian away with her. He couldn't be sure of the reason behind the odd feelings deep down, but he could feel an intimate gaze right behind him. Out of the blue, the familiar sensation he felt reminded him of their time on the yacht.

Previously, when she was imprisoned in the cabin, she had begged him similarly to get him to go to her so she could look at his fingers. Suddenly, Ian turned around and looked at the weeping woman. "Bring it over to me!" Sasha returned to her sprightly self and rushed over with the box of brownies in her hand.

"Ian... I'm not sure if you're going to like it, but I assure you I made the brownies in a hygienic environment! I hope you'll like it!" She crouched in front of her son. Despite her teary eyes, she couldn't suppress her joy. Ian responded with a nod and headed upstairs with the box of brownies. Truth be told, he had never had a brownie in his life because he was a member of the Hayes. Everything he had was of top-notch and premium qualities.

He took a peek at the pile of gooey-looking food and was surprised to smell a hint of honey. After she handed it over to her son, Sasha departed with a bright grin of satisfaction. The housemaid, who had gotten in her way and stopped her by all means, returned to her bedroom and called someone.

"Ms. Green, the woman you told me about had dropped by in the evening!" "Are you serious? Why was she there?" The housemaid nodded and repeated the things that had occurred. "She had dropped by with the excuse of checking on Mr. Hayes. Indeed, he fell asleep after the acupuncture session. She even handed Ian a box of homemade brownies.

I couldn't believe my eyes, but Ian actually it! Ms. Green, who on earth is this woman? Why didn't Mr. Hayes and Ian chase her away?" The woman on the other end went dead silent. The housemaid could feel the wrath of Xandra through the phone because there was nothing apart from the heavy panting. *Sasha, I guess I have underestimated you.*

I can't believe you possess the capability to make your way back and get your ex-spouse and child to open up to you! What exactly are you up to? Do you want to be Mrs. Hayes again? I will never allow that to happen! In the pitch-black room on the other end of the phone, Xandra's eyes looked murderous. "Ms. Green?" "Oh!

It's nothing! She's a doctor Mr. Hayes has invited from abroad. Berta, you don't have to be worried. Just take good care of Mr. Hayes and Ian."

Xandra assured Berta that everything would be fine, winning the housemaid's loyalty with her sincerity. "I don't get it! I wonder what's wrong with Mr. Hayes? Ms. Green, you're such a great woman! Why doesn't he allow you to drop by Frontier Bay anymore? While you were here, you did a great job managing the entire villa, making sure there's food whenever Ian is back. Life is perfect with you around! No man in his right mind would chase you away!"

"Let's not talk about it anymore, Berta. It was my fault anyway. Let's stop blaming him." "What do you mean, it's your fault? Ian is the naughty one! It's not wrong to teach him a lesson when misbehaves! Don't worry, Ms. Green! Once the opportunity arises, I'll definitely try to persuade Mr. Hayes and get him to bring you back!"

At the end of the conversation, Berta assured Xandra she would try her best to persuade Sebastian. After they hung up the call, a vicious and chilling smile appeared on Xandra's face in the pitch-black room. ... After Sasha returned to the rental apartment, Lucy had left. There was a serving of dinner on the table for her.

The children had long tucked themselves into bed. *Sweeties, I'm so sorry for everything.* Sasha felt a sense of guilt as she changed into a pair of indoor sandals and crept into her children's room. "Sweeties, are you guys asleep yet?" She opened the door and whispered. "Mommy? What time is it? What took you so long?"

Matteo was still awake. Sasha cradled her son in her arms. "Matt, I'm so sorry. It's my fault for not being here for you. I promise I'll bring you and Vivi back to Moranta once I'm done dealing with the things on my plate, okay?"

"Okay, Mommy! You don't have to worry about us! I'll take good care of her!" Sasha felt even more awful because of her son's matured demeanor. She held him firmly in her arms and repeated her promise, warning herself to stop neglecting them. After Sasha tucked her son in, she walked out of their room.

The moment she closed the door, the little boy in the room jolted up from the bed with his eyes gleaming in the dark. "I'm sure the meanie has bullied Mommy again! Otherwise, she wouldn't get so sentimental for no reason! Meanie, if you're really my daddy, you shouldn't pick on her like this!" Matteo clenched his fist in the dark.

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Chapter 32 The Irritating Woman, The Love that Never Really Dies

Sasha got up early in the morning to make her children their favorite breakfast before they head to the new preschool. "Vivi, it's time to get up. It's your first day at the new preschool." "Mm... N-No... I-I haven't had enough sleep..." Girls had always enjoyed sleeping in. The little girl burrowed deeper into her blanket, refusing to get out of bed.

She coiled her body like a baby sloth that spent most of its day sleeping on the tree. Sasha found her daughter hilarious, but she didn't remove the blanket against her daughter's will. Instead, she ran her fingers across the little girl's neck, tickling her to get her out of bed. Seconds after she started tickling Vivian, the little girl's giggling sound could be heard from beneath the blanket. Matteo, on the other hand, was wide awake. He retrieved his set of clothes and started changing.

Half an hour later, the trio got everything they needed and left. "Mommy, when are you going to pick us up? Please be on time, okay?" Matteo finished his sentence with an aggrieved look. He felt indignant that his mother couldn't wait to drop him and his sister off at the preschool. "I'll definitely pick both of you up from the preschool on time! It's a promise." After the cunning little boy heard his mother's reply, he exchanged glances with his sister and smiled.

They would have enough time to execute their plan since Sasha would only pick them up after school. Matteo, who was seated at the back of the car, decided to drop by Sebastian's office for a visit. ... Sasha had something to tend to on her schedule—she would soon figure out the outcome of her agreement with Luke. If Sebastian woke up feeling great, she would get to drop by the villa and continue with the treatment plan she had for his sleeping disorder.

She needed to reach Frontier Bay as soon as possible after she dropped her children off at the preschool. However, she would have to first make a detour to a traditional drugstore. While she was there, she received a text from Luke.

Madam, Mr. Hayes has woken up! Please hurry over at once! After the shop attendant packed the herbs Sasha needed, she rushed out of the store with all her might. On the other hand, Sebastian, who was at Frontier Bay, had a splendid night's sleep after so many years. He couldn't recall the last time he had slept like a log. It put him in an exceptionally good mood. "I want you to get everyone ready within half an hour!

Make sure they show up in the conference room in time for the meeting!" Standing upright in the room, he held his chest high while staring at himself in the mirror. He noticed it had been a long while since he looked so afresh in the morning. The navy blue shirt that was neatly ironed and the black suit pants he had put on perfectly complimented his slender figure, enhancing the majestic

presence he had been blessed with. "Yes, Mr. Hayes!" Luke unlocked his phone and delivered the message via WhatsApp. A few minutes later, after Sebastian put on his watch, he was ready to leave.

"M-Mr. Hayes... M-Ms. Wand is currently on her way here. Don't you think it's better for you to wait for her to check on you?" "Luke, it seems like you're pretty free lately, huh?" Sebastian, who was marching down the stairs, cast a stern gaze at his assistant. The rhetorical question caused Luke to shudder.

He decided to stop poking his nose into Sebastian's business for his own sake. He had done everything he could. The rest was up to Sasha. She would have to grab the opportunity should she wish to patch things up with Ian. Luke was trailing behind Sebastian as they walked out of the villa. Just then, a slim figure catapulted in their direction and whizzed her way through the spacious garden.

She almost bumped into Sebastian because her mind was elsewhere. Luke's eyes widened in disbelief, and he knew he had to leave the duo alone before he got himself involved in another full-blown fight. He fled, leaving Sasha and Sebastian behind. Meanwhile, Sasha, who almost bumped into Sebastian, retreated in shock as she greeted, "G-Good morning, Mr. Hayes! A-Are you heading to work?" While raising her hand to greet the indifferent man in a courteous manner, she had an odd grin on her face.

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Sebastian's face glowered as he drilled his icy glare through Sasha. "You again? You've got some guts, don't you?" "Come on, Mr. Hayes. I'm just doing my job. You had a good night's sleep yesterday because I gave you an injection. But just a few jabs aren't enough to solve your problem. I even got you some medicine," Sasha replied, jiggling a packet of medicine in her hands in front of the angry man. Sebastian's expression turned grimmer looking at all the medicinal herbs and his frown intensified. "I don't need any of those." "What's the matter? I'm the doctor and you're the patient, so you'll have to listen to me." Sasha wasn't letting him off the hook. Without waiting for a reply, she grabbed his hand and took his pulse before he could even object.

Sebastian almost pushed her away instinctively. The veins on his forehead bulged in agitation. However, when his piercing gaze fell on her face, he finally relented. Her coming almond eyes were darting around attentively under a curly fringe of lashes as she held on to his wrist. He knew she was trying her best as a doctor to give her patient an accurate diagnosis. Before long, Sasha nodded lightly and let go of his hand. "As expected, your condition is still quite bad. But don't worry, you just need to take your medicine as instructed for the next week. You'll see tremendous improvement after that." Sebastian retracted his hand as his gaze swept across the bag of medication. "Give them to the housemaid," he said curtly. "Well... I'm not sure if the maid knows how to handle them. These are medicinal herbs that helps with your sleep, and you need to boil them," Sasha told him reluctantly.

“Sasha Wand, do you actually think I’m stupid? I know the plan you’re concocting in that brain of yours. Also, the housemaid has been with the family for over ten years. She knows what she’s doing.” Now that Sebastian called her out so unreservedly, Sasha’s face turned pale, and she was at a loss for words. She knew she could not hide anything from him. It did not matter what method she used—he was just too smart for all her tricks. “Fine. I’m doing this so I can see Ian. What’s wrong with wanting to see my own son? I’m his mother! It’s not against the law. Even if a couple divorces, each parent still has the right to visit the child. Besides, I’m really tending you as my patient. Why can’t you just let me see him?” Bitter tears burned in Sasha’s bright eyes and blurred her vision as she took a step closer to Sebastian in frustration.

She had dejection written all over her delicate face. For a slight moment, he lost himself in her compelling gaze. Snippets of how she hurt herself to get him to save Ian flashed before his mind. Despite everything that she had done, Sebastian could not deny the fact that she loved Ian dearly. He evaded her sharp glare and stood still for a while before leaving without a word. Standing not far away, secluded from their view, Luke held up his approving thumb. *Well done, madam!* When Sasha finally came around after Sebastian’s abrupt departure, she darted towards the kitchen and boiled the medicine before rushing upstairs. “Little Ian!” she cried out as she dashed to his room. “Shush! Ian is still sleeping!

Didn’t Mr. Hayes asks you to decoct the herbal medicine? Just do what you’re told and don’t disturb Ian!” Before Sasha could go any further, Berta reprimanded her crudely when she heard her shouting. Regardless, Sasha ignored her and went ahead into the room. With Sebastian giving her the green light to see Ian, she had nothing to fear—what more a nobody like a housemaid? When Sasha saw Ian was still asleep, she tiptoed out of the room and went back down to prepare breakfast. Not long after, she went upstairs again and knocked on the bedroom door. “Little Ian, are you up already?

Ms. Nancy’s here. Do you want some breakfast? I made pancakes. There is toast and jam too if you like.” She pressed her ear against the door to listen, but there was complete silence. Sasha knocked a few more times and called his name softly. To her disappointment, there was no reply. She could not hear a single thing coming from Ian’s room. *Is he still asleep?* Just as she was opening the door to go in, a small figure appeared beside her on the right and a brittle voice rang down the corridor. “What do you think you’re doing? Why are you here?” Sasha jumped and quickly turned around. It turned out that Ian was already awake and was not in his room anymore.

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Sasha's hand froze on the door handle as she saw the boy. "Little Ian! You're up! Why didn't you go downstairs for breakfast? You're not hungry? Why aren't you wearing your jacket?" Ian looked at her speechlessly and turned to leave. Sasha was taken aback. She hastened her steps behind the boy, wondering what he was up to early in the morning. She followed behind him closely as he went towards a hanging garden. *Wow! I can't believe he has the entire playground in the garden to himself. I guess this is how rich people live.* Sasha brought breakfast over to the garden and put it on the marble garden table as she watched Ian play on his own. "Little Ian, why don't we have breakfast first? You can continue playing after you have eaten."

"No!" Ian shouted. *Gosh, this boy is really giving me a hard time. It's either he doesn't talk, or he's defiant when he does. I hope he's like his younger brother. Matteo is way more obedient. He takes his meal like a good boy at least.* Sasha went over and squatted down beside Ian, thinking how she should get him to eat. "Little Ian, I'm sure you want to meet Daddy after breakfast? I promise I'll bring you to him after you eat." "Promise?" The boy turned his head immediately and asked. A smile broke on her face when she finally elicited a response from him. *I knew it. Autistic kids might be cold and uncommunicative,*

but they are usually extremely attached to one person. From his reaction, I'm sure he's very fond of Sebastian. I bet he can't even live without his dad. Sasha pouted her lips in jealousy as she thought of Sebastian. *Hmph, just you wait, Sebastian Hayes, I will replace you in Ian's heart one day!* As expected, Ian went over to the garden table and finished the food Sasha made. When Berta came over to clean up, she was surprised to see all the empty plates. "Ian, did you really finish everything?" she asked, looking around at the ground. "Yeah, he ate everything. What's the matter?" Sasha answered on Ian's behalf as she looked at the maid, confused. *Did I make too much food? That's just a normal portion for kids. Or is Ian a small eater?* Indeed,

Ian had a small appetite. He would not eat a lot unless Sebastian cooked. After clearing the table and washing the dishes in the kitchen, Berta pulled out her phone and called Xandra. "Ms. Green, you have no idea what I just saw. That woman got Ian to finish all the food she made!" "Really?" A high-pitched voice rang from the other side of the phone. *Snip!* A stalk of flowers fell to the ground as Xandra clenched the scissors in her hand in full force when she heard the news from Berta. "I swear I saw it with my own eyes. I lied to Mr. Hayes saying there's still some food left on the table from yesterday so he could go to work without having to worry about Ian. After he went out, I cooked something simple for Ian. As expected, he refused to eat it. I was thinking it would be a good chance to ask you to come over and make some food for him, but the woman came again and spoiled my plan." From Berta's tone, it was obvious that she hated Sasha to the bone and could not wait to get her out of the house. On the other end, Xandra continued cutting the flowers quietly as she thought about what she should do. She maneuvered the whetted scissors in her hands agilely, snipping off one flower after another mercilessly until the whole plant was bare. "Ms. Green?" Berta called out after a prolonged silence.

"I got it. Don't mind that woman. I'm fine as long as Ian is eating," Xandra said, putting down her scissors before she softened her tone and asked how about the

maid's well-being. "Ms. Green, it's very kind of you to care so much for Ian. If I were you, I wouldn't be so nice to her. But it's okay, we still have a lot of chances. I'm sure things will turn out well." "Thanks. I'll see you around." Xandra hung up and threw her phone aside. *What's her name again? Nancy?*

Whoever you are, I will make sure you are out of this game as soon as possible. After Ian finished his breakfast, Sasha did as she promised and brought him to Sebastian. After all, she needed to bring the herbal decoction over too. But she totally did not expect her younger son to go over to the company that day. "Be careful if you bump into the meanie again, Matt. Remember to teach him a lesson on my behalf. I don't want him to keep bullying Mommy," Vivian whispered in Matteo's ears when he was leaving the preschool. Matteo patted his chest confidently and assured his sister before getting in the car.

After twenty minutes, the car drove into the city center and pulled up by the company. A boy in a blue sweatshirt and a grey vest got out of the car and went towards the underground car park before taking the elevator. Matteo was smart to avoid the front door so he would not attract any attention. He had done his research and knew exactly which floor he should go to. Unfortunately, he was faced with a huge transparent glass door right after he got out of the elevator. *What... This should be the President's office. Why is there a glass door?* Matteo checked out the surroundings but found no other way to get in, so he decided to try other floors instead. Just as he was turning towards the elevator, a robotic voice sounded from behind, "Face recognition completed. Welcome, Ian."

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Ian? That little bore? Matteo's eyes widened as the door sprung open after the face recognition machine blinked a green light. *If I remember correctly, he's that meanie's son. Why do we have the same face? Does this mean that meanie is my dad too?* Matteo's blood boiled in anger as he walked past the door. It did not take him long before he realized this was not the place he was looking for. Judging from the decor, it was a tastefully furnished resting lounge.

Hm... A TV, a couch, a bed... Wait... Is this a house? This is probably a resting area. Else there won't be a glass door outside. Once he confirmed this was not the President's office, Matteo headed back to the door and continued his search. "Face recognition completed. Welcome, Sebastian." Just as he was heading out, the machine rang again. *Sh*t, he's here! What do I do now?* Matteo ran back in and quickly scanned the spacious lounge for a place to hide. He spotted a huge wardrobe and hid in there. It was true that he came looking for Sebastian, but all he wanted was to spy on that meanie and get more information about him in case he bullied Mommy again. Getting caught red-handed was the last thing the boy wanted.

Matteo closed the wardrobe door and tried hard to pace his rapid breathing so Sebastian would not hear him. What he least expected was that after that meanie

got into the room, he came straight to the wardrobe. "Seriously, I can't believe the medicine tastes this bitter!" Sebastian had been complaining ever since he was forced to drink the whole bottle of medicinal drink when he was at his office. He slid the door opened, and to his bewilderment, a small figure stood like a statue before his array of clothes. The man and the boy stared at each other in blank astonishment the moment Sebastian opened the door. *Dang it! Matteo's face turned as pale as a ghost as he looked at Sebastian in the eyes. But instead of being angry with the child, Sebastian looked like he was thrown completely off the balance. "Ian, what are you doing here? I thought you were at the office?"*

Ian again? Is he here too? Matteo soon realized what was happening and went along with the flow. He shot Sebastian a sweet smile. "I just got here, Daddy." The man was utterly shocked. *What's wrong with him? Is he really smiling at me right now? Am I seeing things? How did he even get over here so quickly? I swear I didn't see him earlier. Or did he get here when I was on the phone just now?* Sebastian squinted his eyes and looked hard at the kid. Before he could do anything, his phone rang and a message notification showed on his screen. "Since you're here already, you might as well just rest at the lounge. The woman, I mean, the doctor has already left, so Daddy will bring you home when I'm done with work." "Huh?" Matteo rolled his eyes around trying to make sense of what he just heard. *The doctor? Is he referring to Mommy? Why did Mommy come? And why did she bring that little bore here?*

The boy had many questions on his mind, but since Sebastian asked him to just stay at the lounge, he did as he was told. "Alright, I'll stay here. You don't have to worry," Matteo said with a warm smile. Although this was already the second time his son smiled at him, it still caught Sebastian off guard. *Ian is behaving abnormally. I'm sure the woman must have cast a spell on him or something. I'd better make sure Ian stays away from her.* A gloom settled over Sebastian's face as he walked out of the lounge. Seeing him left, Matteo sneaked out of the place. Since Ian was also here, he figured it would be best if he got out as soon as possible. It would be disastrous if people realized there were two kids who looked the same. He took the elevator all the way to the ground floor, ready to head back to the preschool. When he got out of the building, he saw a cab by the entrance.

Beside the car was a middle-aged lady in her forties or fifties, and she was holding a little girl on her right, and a boy of his own age on her left. *Vivi? Mrs. Grint? What on earth are they doing here? Who is that boy beside them? That little bore?* Matteo felt like he was going crazy. He dashed towards the two dimwits, wanting to tell them that the boy was actually a fake. But before he could do that, a voice called for him from behind. "Ian! What are you doing here? Didn't Mr. Hayes asks you to stay in the lounge? Why did you come down alone? It's dangerous! Come, I'll bring you back up." Luke beckoned him. It so happened that Sebastian's assistant was there, and he came over to drag Matteo back in. Matteo had no other choice but to look at the clueless nanny shoving Ian into the car after his sister got in. As for himself, he was pulled right back into the building against his will. *Gosh, you've gotta be kidding me!*

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Chapter 36 Exactly The Same

"Ian, why didn't you answer my question? Why did you come down when I clearly told you to stay upstairs? You've been getting more disobedient lately!" When Sebastian found out Matteo had sneaked out of the lounge, he cut his meeting short and came right over to give his son a good scolding. Matteo felt wronged in all ways, but he could not say anything. He desperately wanted to say he was not the son Sebastian was looking for. However, there was nothing he could do. He totally did not expect Ian to go down. He sat on the couch and rested his face on his palms, exasperated. "Could you please give me some peace, Daddy? I'm so frustrated right now. I just want to have some freedom! I'm already five.

You can't keep me indoors my whole life!" "What did you say?" Sebastian sat up straight when he heard what Matteo said. To him, Ian was a quiet kid. He was never a child that talked much, neither would he tell others about his feelings. Ian had always been a withdrawn child. Even when he was angry, he would just lock himself in his room. Sebastian was befuddled when he heard Ian said he was frustrated from the lack of freedom, and that he wanted to go out and play? A frown carved between the man's brows as he got off the chair and walked over. He knew something was wrong. "Look at me, Ian. Did the doctor say anything to you?" "Huh?" Matteo looked up at him and blinked his eyes innocently at his father. Sebastian's frown intensified. "

I mean the doctor who came in the morning. Did she say anything to you? Why did you suddenly follow her to the company? What happened?" If Matteo had not known Sebastian was talking about his mother, he would well have thought the man was referring to an evil woman from his interrogative tone. There was enmity and hatred written all over his face as if the woman meant harm to his child. *So, this is how you bully Mommy all the time? So much for being a man. You deserted a woman and two children, and now you're talking about her as if she's the bad person here.* Matteo's heartbeat quickened as he leaped off from the couch. He stood right up in front of Sebastian and glared at him. "What do you mean, Daddy? What did she do? She took care of you and brought me here. Did she do anything wrong? Who are you to question her like this?"

Completely dumbfounded, Sebastian never his son could argue! He would always wallow in his own corner when he was angry, and he would not speak to anyone. Since when did he learn to talk back to his father? "I'm not questioning her behavior. I'm simply reminding you to not be over-trusting of other people!" "Other people? You sound like she's an outsider, but she's actually the person who treats me the nicest!" Matteo shouted at the top of his voice. He was fuming with anger right now. He went past Sebastian and shot towards the door. *What a meanie! I don't need a Daddy like him! How dare he speak badly of Mommy in front of me? She's the best person on earth. I'd rather not have this Daddy if it meant I'd*

lose Mommy! Matteo ran towards the door with incipient tears welling up in his eyes. Sebastian was frantic with worry. He was about to run after Matteo when he saw the boy bumped right into Luke, who happened to come in. "What's wrong, Mr. Hayes? Why did you make Ian cry?"

Luke quickly shut the door behind him, preventing Matteo from running out of the room. Sebastian got on his feet and went to Matteo before squatting down in front of him, holding his shoulders awkwardly. "Ian, I'm sorry. It's my fault. I shouldn't badmouth her like that. Will you forgive Daddy?" Matteo was definitely not expecting an apology. As he came to think of it, Sebastian was not entirely mean. After all, he had his own ways of bringing up his child. He was incredibly objective when it came to matters concerning what was right and wrong. The man would apologize if he was at fault, even if he was the father. Sebastian knew he should not be biased towards Sasha. Although that woman had her faults, she was still a responsible doctor. She cared for him, and she genuinely loved the child. He should not have doubted her.

Sebastian picked up the crying child and went back to the couch. Over on the other side, Ian was equally shocked to find himself in a bizarre situation. He was forced into a cab and brought to a preschool. Everything was so unexpected that he did not even know how to react. "We're lucky we got back just in time, Matt. It's almost time for Mommy to pick us up." Vivian held Ian's hand as she talked about how she got her brother back from Hayes Corporation to their preschool with Mrs. Grint's help. She was feeling so proud of herself she did not even notice the expression on Ian's face. He was someone who valued his personal space highly. He did not like people invading his space, neither did he like people touching him. But ever since he got on the cab, the little girl kept touching him with her chubby hands, and she even clung to him and talked to him in his ears. At first, he was petrified, but after some time, he grew numb to all her advances.

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Chapter 37 The Prince And The Pauper

"Why is Mommy coming?" Ian probed. "Cause it's a holiday, Matt! Have you forgotten? It's Wednesday and the preschool is only open for half a day. Our teacher said they need to sanitize the place, so we must go home. That's why I called Mrs. Grint and asked her to get you before time," Vivian replied happily, still feeling proud of herself for saving her brother in time. Matteo had given her Mrs. Grint's phone number beforehand, so Vivian called the nanny and asked for her help to go look for Matteo. She held Ian's hand and skipped lightly into their classroom with him. Their teacher spotted them and waved at them.

"Hey, Vivian, I see you've got your brother. Come on, you two, get your bags and be ready to go home. Your mom's almost here. Let's go." "Yes!" Vivian's crispy voice rang loud and clear beside Ian's ears. He rolled his eyes as the girl went

ahead and grabbed her bag. Despite being exasperated, Ian found his surroundings intriguing. He had never been to a preschool, and all this was totally new to him. Actually, it was not like he did not attend preschool at all. He attended the best preschool in Avenport. The environment there was impeccable; the facilities were top-notch, and the children came from affluent families. His teachers were never down to earth and the kids there were never friendly. To be precise, it was almost impossible to make any friends. Ian let Vivian had her way with him as she put Matteo's bag on his back and they followed their teacher out to the entrance. "

Mommy's here!" Seeing Sasha from afar, Vivian squealed at the top of her voice as she ran towards her mother. Once again, Ian went speechless. His gaze trailed her steps, and he suddenly stopped at the door. *Huh? Isn't this the doctor who came to the house in the morning? I just parted ways with her in front of Daddy's company. What's she doing here? She's their mother?* Ian was confounded as he looked at the two of them hugging each other. "Matt, what are you waiting for? Come to me! We're going home," Sasha cried out to him and waved enthusiastically when she realized Ian was standing still. *What's wrong with Matt today. Why isn't he smiling? Is he angry? Was I late?* Sasha let go of Vivian and came over to check if Matteo was okay. "What's wrong, Matt? Are you angry with me? Is it because I'm late? I'm so sorry Matt. I didn't know y'all are ending early today.

I got here right after I got the call. Please don't be angry, okay?" Sasha held out her hand and reached for his head, wanting to pat his head. But Ian shied away instinctively, avoiding her touch. Her hand froze in the air. For a moment, she thought the boy standing in front of her was not Matteo, but the boy she saw in the morning. "Matt?" "I can walk over on my own," Ian told her coldly. He did not take another look at her but walked past her towards Vivian, leaving Sasha behind as she turned around stiffly. "Matt, are you really angry? But I have already apologized. What about I make it up to you? I'll get you ice cream. It's your favorite." Beside Ian, Vivian clapped and jumped about in joy while he looked at her apathetically from the corner of his eyes. "Yay! Mommy, I want a strawberry flavor ice-cream. Oh! Can we also have a hotdog? I miss it so much!"

After getting groceries, Sasha brought the two kids back to their rental apartment. By the time they reached home, Vivian and Ian had already finished their ice-cream and hotdogs. They even had a freshly baked egg tart. "Wasn't that a good treat, Matt?" Vivian looked at her brother with a pleasant smile on her face. Looking at how the girl was caressing her belly and licking her lips, Ian could tell she was a complete foodie. He wondered if this was what the two siblings did every day. Ian looked at the remaining egg tart in his hand, not knowing if he should eat it. He looked at the tasty snack and could not resist it anymore. He opened his mouth wide and munched away, savoring the delicacy with a satisfied nod. He had never tried anything that delicious in his life. His father did not allow him to have any of these because he said they were unhealthy.

That was why all Ian had ever tasted was home-cooked food. He had eaten none of the food sold outside. Sasha looked at the two happy children and decided to let them have some fun on their own while she went into the kitchen to cook. The

telephone rang in the living area when she was busy preparing food. "Matt, can you help me pick up the phone? See who's on the call. I'm cooking!" she shouted from the kitchen. Ian looked at the telephone on the TV shelf and went over reluctantly. "Hello?" he said as he picked up the receiver. "Ian?" the voice from the other end called out. Ian was startled that the person had called him by his name. "Who are you?" he whispered cautiously. "I'm Matt! You're at my house now, right? Mommy and Vivian are calling you 'Matt', aren't they?" Ian could not help but notice the voice from the receiver sounded like his. It was playful and light, just like how those little foxes in the cartoons sounded like. *Matt? So, this is the Matt they have been mistaking me for?* Ian finally understood everything, and gloom set on his face.

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"What's happening? Why am I here? And where are you right now?" Ian questioned impatiently. "I'm at your house, Ian. We look exactly the same, that's why everyone blundered! If I'm correct, I think we're twins," Matteo said solemnly. "Twins?" Ian repeated after him. His two hands gripped the receiver as he tried to make sense of what he just heard. "Yes, we're twins. I went to your dad's office today to look for him because he bullied Mommy. But after I got there, everyone started calling me 'Ian'.

Even your dad got it wrong. That's why I think we're twins." "Are you sure?" Ian asked again. "Yeah! Of course! Think about it. I'm sure Mommy and Vivi thought you were Matteo too, right? That means we really look the same! And only twins look the same, isn't it?" Matteo insisted. Ian fell into silence. *What he said is right.* But Ian still had his doubts. He craned his neck and looked at Sasha cooking in the kitchen, and recalled having a blast with Vivian, eating all the food he had never tried before. His face turned sour before he finally spoke again. "If we're really twins, why did she abandon me? Daddy even said she died." "What?" Matteo blurted out in surprise. *What is he talking about? Is he talking about Mommy?*

Is he blaming Mommy right now? And he even said Mommy's dead! "Hey! Daddy is a liar! Mommy's not dead! Mommy also told us Daddy's dead. But is he?" Once again, Ian was rendered speechless. He puffed his cheeks and sulked as he thought about those two annoying adults who had lied. Meanwhile, Matteo cleared his throat, getting ready to brief Ian about their plan of action. "Things are complicated between the adults, so we should take whatever they say with a pinch of salt. What we need to do right now is find out why they went their ways. We also have to find out why both of us ended up separated." "That's a clever

idea, but how are we gonna do it?" Ian asked. "Hm... Lemme think... What about we meet up first?"

I think it's just a matter of time before Daddy and Mommy realize something's off. We need to go back to our respective homes before they find out." Ian contemplated his suggestion in silence before giving him an answer. *Mommy already knew about my existence, but I doubt Daddy knows about Matteo and Vivian, else he would have demanded that she let him meet them. Matteo's right. We need to keep things the way they are and make sure none of them finds out.* "Alright, let's meet," Ian finally agreed. "Matt, Vivi! Time to eat! I made pork ribs and fried chicken. They are your favorite!" Sasha's called out for the children when she was done cooking. Matteo heard her from the phone and a blissful smile curved on his bright little eyes.

"Alright, off you go, Ian. I think Mommy's calling you. You've never really spent time with her, so enjoy your time at home. She's the best person in the entire world. I'm sure you'll like her!" Ian smacked his lips and glared at the receiver before slamming it back on the switch hook. "Who called, Matt?" Sasha was putting the plates on the table when she realized Ian looked upset. "I don't know. Just some random stranger," he answered gloomily. "Okay..." Sasha was busy setting up the table and decided to just drop the topic. "Come over, Matt. Have some spaghetti. And here are your favorite pork ribs." Beside her, Vivian clung to Sasha's leg and looked at her with watery eyes. "What about me, Mommy? I want my favorite fried chicken too!"

"Of course, sweetie! Come, get a seat. Let's you a big piece of fried chicken." It was such a heartwarming scene—the mother and two children gathered around the table for a meal. The apartment was plain and was not the very least luxurious. It did not have the opulence of Royal Court One at Frontier Bay, but it had the warmth of a family. It was just another usual day where the family got around for a simple meal—yet they found joy in the simple pleasures of life. This was not something Ian had ever experienced in the cold and empty house back at Frontier Bay. Ian lowered his head and looked at the mountain of food on his plate and dug in—his heart was full. Meanwhile, Matteo was also having lunch with his family today. Sebastian cooked, and the two sat quietly at the table as they ate. Halfway through the meal, Berta came over and announced the arrival of a guest. "Mr. Hayes, Ms. Green's here. She brought some honey lemonade for Ian."

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Chapter 39 Two Rivals Under The Same Roof

Ms. Green? Who is that? She made honey lemonade for that little bore? Matteo tilted his head curiously and looked at Berta, and then at his father, who seemed displeased about the unwelcomed guest. "I didn't ask her to come. Send her

back," Sebastian rejected coldly. "But she made the honey lemonade herself, and she brought it all the way here, Mr. Hayes. You know how bad Ian's cough gets in the winter. Only honey lemonade works for him, so why not just let Ms. Green in?" Berta was trying all she could to persuade Sebastian. The hard look on the latter's face softened a little after hearing what she said.

It was true that he had a short temper, but in matters related to Ian's health, he would always be extra careful. He knew his son's seasonal cough had long been a bugging problem, so he finally caved and allowed Berta to let Xandra in. "Hi, Sebastian. Hi, Ian. Y'all having lunch?" Xandra greeted them on her way in. She was wearing an off-white sweater on top of a beige plaid winter skirt. Without any heavy makeup on her face, she looked a little pale and tired. "Are you okay, Ms. Green? You don't look well!" Berta quickly came over and took the bag of honey lemonade from her hands. "I'm fine, Berta. I was down with a little cold two days ago," Xandra assured her, shaking her head as her gaze wandered towards Sebastian. She was hoping he could look at her, but Sebastian remained unmoved and continued eating. He saw Matteo looking at Xandra and knocked his knuckles against the table. "

Eat, Ian." "Okay." Matteo picked up his spoon and resumed his meal. *Who is this woman? She doesn't look like she's poor though. But why is she dressed like this? It's so cold in the winter! I bet she's putting up a front to gain Daddy's sympathy. She's so dramatic!* A subtle smile broke across his lips as Matteo continued eating. Xandra stood on one side with her face downcast when Sebastian ignored her. She drew closer to the dining table and pulled out a pair of wool gloves from her handbag.

"Remember to take the honey lemonade, Ian? I also made you a pair of gloves for the winter. You wanted me to make you a pair, didn't you? Try it on." It was a big deal for someone of Xandra's standing to make a pair of wool gloves for someone else. Berta came over and checked out the gloves. "These are exquisite, Ms. Green! I can't believe you made them yourselves! This is much better than the ones sold in the stores. Check this out, Mr. Hayes, the handiwork is splendid!" The housemaid fondled the gloves and went towards Sebastian, who cocked his head aside and took a cursory glance at the gloves. It went without a doubt that they were beautifully made.

From the design and the details, Sebastian could tell that Xandra spent a lot of time making them. It looked fluffy and comfortable, and the size was just nice. His tense brows relaxed as he retracted his gaze and continued eating. Xandra came over and picked the gloves up before turning towards Matteo. "Ian, why don't I put them on for you?" "Sure," Matteo said with a wide smile as he reached out his hands towards Xandra. *These are not mine anyway. I'll just accept them on Ian's behalf.* But just when Xandra was done putting on the gloves for Matteo, a cry came from outside. Someone had barged in unannounced. "Sebastian Hayes! I heard Little Ian's back? Is he okay?" *Mommy?* Matteo swiftly withdrew his hands when he heard Sasha's voice, while Sebastian and Xandra were caught by surprise. Sebastian rolled his eyes when he realized it was Sasha.

As for Xandra, her face contorted in hatred at the sound of that woman. *Sasha Wand! Why must you come now?* When Sasha found out from Luke that he almost lost Ian in the morning, she freaked out and hurried over to see if everything was okay. But she went berserk when she saw Xandra in the house. "Why are you here? Sebastian Hayes! Did you let her in?" Sasha's gleaming glare pierced through Xandra the moment she saw that evil woman. She could not believe that after all she had done to make Sebastian promise to keep that woman away from Ian, Xandra was still given permission to come near her son. *What on earth is going on? Why is she here?* Sasha eyed the pair of pink indoor slippers under Xandra's feet, and her frown deepened. *Is she having lunch with them right now? What's that on Ian's hands? Gloves? She's even allowed to touch my son?* The scene put a stake through her heart and Sasha felt like her heart was going to explode with anger.

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Chapter 40 Showing Off To Her

"Sasha Wand, are you mad? Who asked you to come again? This is not your house! How can you come and go as you like?" Clenching his teeth, Sebastian finally unleashed his wrath upon Sasha while glaring at her with burning rage in his eyes. It was as if he had a strong urge to rip her apart. *Daddy is scolding Mommy again!* Matteo was displeased at the sight of Sasha being chided by Sebastian, and he was about to come to her rescue by voicing up for her. Out of everyone's expectation, Xandra said abruptly, "Sebastian, cool down. Ms. Wand is your doctor now. There must be a reason for her to be here. Don't treat her this way." The next moment, she walked toward Sasha with a cheerful smile on her face.

"Ms. Wand, is there something I can help you with? Why don't you join us for lunch? You haven't taken your meal, right? I'll get the housemaid to bring you a plate and a set of cutlery. We can continue to chat while eating." She stood in front of Sasha, giving off the vibe of a dignified and graceful lady from a prestigious family. From the way she instructed the housemaid, it was as if she was the mistress of the villa. Sasha clenched her fist as her expression darkened. "Never mind, I've taken my meal. I'm here because I heard from Luke that Little Ian almost got lost when I brought him to the Hayes today. That's why I wanted to come and check if he's fine." "Ah! So you're here because of that. Don't worry, Ian's fine. He just doesn't like to communicate with people and prefers to keep everything to himself. I guess he must have been looking for his daddy at that time but accidentally walked in the wrong direction. Everything is alright now, Ms. Wand," Xandra comforted Sasha gently. Upon hearing this,

Sasha could not hold back her rage any longer. Her dainty face turned pale in an instant. She could conceal her feelings toward that scum perfectly well in front of

Xandra, yet she could not remain indifferent when the cunning woman sounded as if she genuinely cared about her son. *No way, Ian is my son! He is my flesh and blood!* If anyone were to snatch her role as her son's mother, she would surely go mad! "Alright. Since he's fine, I'll make a move first," Sasha replied coldly, then turned and prepared to leave at once. "Ms. Wand, you don't have to be shy. Since you're already here, just take a seat and join us. It doesn't matter that you've taken your meal. You can still eat some salad since it's not that filling. Don't be intimidated by Sebastian's hot temper." Sasha did not expect that Xandra would insist that she stayed for lunch. However, before she could respond

, Xandra grabbed hold of her hand and led her to the dining table. Sasha was rendered speechless. *What is this b*tch trying to do?* Once seated, she tried her best to suppress the growing discomfort and uneasiness within her. Keeping her head lowered, she tried to avoid having any eye contact with the man seated opposite her. She was worried that a single glance at the scum would trigger her anger, causing her to smash the plate and storm out of the villa in front of her son. She really did not wish for things to end up like that. "Ms. Nancy, are you here to visit me?" "Ah? Y-Yeah!" Sasha stammered. She was stunned, looking at the little boy who suddenly appeared beside her. *Mommy's really dumb! That woman is bullying her, yet she still doesn't know how to retaliate.* Matteo sat down next to his mommy and waved at the housemaid opposite him. "I want to sit here. Bring me my plate." "Huh? You want to sit there?" Everyone was dumbfounded upon hearing his words, including Sebastian who had a puzzled expression on his face. "Why are you sitting there? Go back to your seat at once!

"The surprise in Sebastian became rage almost immediately as he yelled at Matteo. However, Matteo was unwilling to move back to his original seat. *This is my mommy. If I don't protect her when she's being ganged up on, who else would?* Mimicking Ian's facial expression, Matteo glanced at the man seated opposite him with indifference and said resolutely, "I'm not going back there. Since Ms. Nancy is here to visit me today, I want to sit next to her." Next, he turned to look at his mommy and asked politely, "Ms. Nancy, I want to eat that. Can you get some for me?" "Sure, I will take some for you now!" Exhilarated, Sasha's eyes started to well up. She immediately took a huge portion of the dish as requested by him and put it on his plate.

"Ms. Nancy, thank you." "You're welcome. Dig in!" Instantaneously, pin-drop silence ensued in the dining room. Everyone at the table became motionless like statues! All the housemaids were dumbfounded. They had never seen Ian talking coquettishly to anyone before or request anyone to serve him food. After all, he was a clean freak, just like his daddy! He would never want anything that had been touched by someone else. *This is absurd! I can't believe it!* Things were becoming more unbearable for Xandra. Her fingernails were digging into the flesh of her palms, and there was immense hatred in her eyes as she stared at both Sasha and her son. The cheerful smile had totally vanished from her face, replaced by a scowl. On the other hand, Sebastian was also burning with rage. *D*mn! She managed to influence Ian in just one day! What is she really up to? Is she planning to snatch my son away from me? Well, she can dream on!*