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Chapter 166

Renee was stunned.

She hadn't expected Stefan to be willing to turn his back on his own family. If she remembered correctly, he had been very protective of Briar before this, despite the obvious fact of her being a two-faced bitch. He treated her like a fragile flower. touching it gingerly in fear of damaging it instead of holding it tight.

Had he gotten tired of Briar so quickly?

'Tsk. The attention span of a man really is worse than a child's! It was the right decision to divorce him!' Renee thought as she quietly celebrated her correct choice.

When the two policemen saw Stefan's stance, they stopped hesitating and slapped the handcuffs on Briar's hands.

"Let go of me! Don't touch me!" Briar cried emotionally as she begged. "Stefan. I'm innocent! Believe me! Tell them to release me! The baby will be terrified! You can ignore me, but don't ignore the baby!"

Stefan furrowed his brows, his cold face not twitching the slightest as he said, "Take her away!"

"Don't worry, Mr. Hunt. It's a routine taking of statements. We won't make things difficult for Ms. Desrosiers."

Having said that, the two policemen escorted Briar to the police cruiser.

Though the car had long driven off. Briar's ghostly cries could still be heard.

Renee watched the cruiser fade into the distance and let out a long sigh. She never expected things to turn out this way. She

had only wanted to retrieve her quilt and not send Briar to the police station.

After all, Briar was still a pregnant woman. If anything happened to her, wouldn't the blame fall on Renee?

"What's wrong with you, Stefan? Couldn't you tell that I was simply exaggerating? Why did you actually let the police take her away?" Renee groaned as she rubbed her forehead to stave off the oncoming headache.

With a troubled look, she continued gravely, "Even if you really do have a secret crush on me, you don't have to make such sacrifices. Briar is pregnant with your child, and if anything happens to her, don't come looking for me!"

Stefan was speechless in the face of Renee's words and actions. Why hadn't he ever known how shameless and foolish this

woman was?

In his memory. Renee had been a budding white flower. A timid, soft-spoken woman, she'd surely blush whenever she

looked at him.

She now carried herself proudly like a queen, displaying an image that was hard for him to comprehend.

He suddenly thought of a saying: the first response of falling in love was to feel inferior.

Did that mean... that Renee really no longer loved him?

Because she didn't love him anymore, was that why she felt free to be herself?

With that conclusion swimming in his mind, Stefan's heart clenched, and he felt awfully uncomfortable.

Renee glanced around for a moment, and when she couldn't find what she was looking for, started to complain, "Ugh. I couldn't find my stuff in the first place, and you had to send away the one person who knew where it was. It'll be even harder to find

now.'

Stefan came out of his thoughts and coldly asked, "What are you looking for?"

"I'm looking for my suitcase. There's something very important inside," Renee replied, then let out a long sigh.

It seemed like she would have to look for it herself.

The entire villa spanned an area of hundreds of square feet, and finding a small box would certainly be almost impossible.

Stefan crossed his arms and watched the woman go about looking for it. He didn't say a word and simply shook his head as she shuffled around.

What a damn stubborn woman! What exactly was in the box? Was it worth the trouble she was going through?

Thus, unable to stand the sight of Renee trundling around like a headless chicken, he summoned all the staff in the villa to

help her look for it

With the abundant manpower at their disposal, they scoured all four floors of the villa, its surrounding gardens, and even under the carpets, but they couldn't find anything.

"Did Briar dump it somewhere outside?" Renee wondered out loud as she rubbed her chin, thinking about this possibility.

Suddenly, a young maid came up, gasping for breath as she huffed, "I I-I found it...! It... It's just that it scared me a little!"

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Renee, overjoyed, hurriedly asked, "Well, where is it? Hurry up and bring it to me!"

The young maid looked fearful and stammered, "M-ma'am, your suitcase was in the basement. It's... well, it's best if you see for yourself!"

"What? In the basement?" Renee parroted, caught between laughter and tears at the revelation.

They had exerted so much effort to search the entire villa, yet they overlooked where it would most likely be. How

absurd was that?

However, judging from the maid's expression, Renee didn't think things were that simple. Heading downstairs, she went to the basement.

Stefan frowned, and he followed the woman silently.

The Hunt villa basement was two floors below the ground floor, led by long, winding spiral stairs. Having mainly served as a refuge during the catastrophe of the Great War, the airflow could have been better, and the place was dark. Usually, no one would come down here.

When he reached the basement door, he noted it was slightly open. A dark, red light emanated inside, giving off an eerie feeling. "I-it's

inside...!" the young maid stuttered as she stood outside, not daring to go in.

Renee also noticed the weird scene, but she had already lived in this villa for four years, and there was nothing here that she was afraid of. She pushed the door and went in without hesitation.

"Ahh!"

The scene before her was so bizarre that she couldn't help but scream in fear as she stumbled backward, almost tripping and falling on her butt.

"The hell are you yelling for?!"

Stefan had reached out to hold Renee's stick-like waist in a tight grip, and his broad chest against her back gave her a sense of

security.

Renee jerked her head up, and her frightened eyes turned to meet the man's indifference. 'When

did he come up behind me? He was as silent as a ghost!"

She tried to calm herself before pointing to the strange items littered around the basement and asking, "Who made these things?

Don't you think they're scary?!"

Stefan looked around the basement with cold eyes before nodding. "Yes. They are quite scary indeed."

The large basement glowed eerily with the dark red lights surrounding it, and several bizarre–looking rag dolls were lying on the ground. The dolls were all dressed like Renee! Some had missing hands, some had broken legs, and some even had silver

needles sticking out of them!

At the center of the room was a skull wrapped in a piece of cloth as red as blood. The cloth was filled with curses written in dark red, which was creepy.

And this piece of cloth was exactly what Renee had been looking for the entire day! Her precious quilt! "Have I

been... cursed?"

Renee could feel goosebumps all over her body as she took in the scene. Even though she didn't believe in this supernatural stuff, it was still uncomfortable to see little dolls looking like her being stabbed, and curses were written all over them.

"Briar has gone too far! What a vicious serpent!" Renee exclaimed as she held back the urge to throw up. She clenched her fist, so angry that her petite frame trembled.

No wonder the police would rather arrest that woman than tell Renee where her suitcase had been hidden! She knew if this place was discovered, her true nature as a crazy and cruel person would be exposed!

Stefan frowned deeply and asked the maid. "Was Miss Desrosiers responsible for all of this?"

The maid warily lowered her head and replied. "Um... We're not sure. Miss Desrosiers only forbade us from coming down here. She

said if any of us dared to go against her orders, she'd cut off our legs..."

Well, the answer was obvious, wasn't it?!

Renee calmed herself before pushing Stefan away. "Seems like your little mistress has strange ways of hurting others, huh?" she

mocked. "Quite refreshing, really. I'd advise you to check if she's cast some sort of spell on you for you to be so smitten. with

her."

After saying that, Renee gathered her courage and stalked into the room, kicking a few of the dolls away and picking up the quilt

wrapped around the skull.

The skull rolled onto the floor. Now that it wasn't covered with the quilt, it was obviously a human skull, and the maid screamed

when she saw it clearly.

Renee ignored it and quickly checked the pattern on the quilt, but at the same time, her stomach started to hurt...

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Perhaps it was because she had been running around all day that Renee was exhausted and nauseous, likely due to her pregnancy. She endured the discomfort in her abdomen and squeezed the quilt with curses written all over it tightly in her hand, and the fury was obvious on her beautiful face.

Turning her burning eyes on Stefan, she asked coldly. "How are you going to deal with this? Your little mistress has done something so vicious and disgusting!"

Briar had repeatedly challenged her and pushed her to the limits. Before this, Renee had been too lazy to bother about the woman. But this time, she had really crossed the line, and Renee wouldn't stand for it.

If she did, there would be a second time. She wouldn't have the energy to deal with it if that happened!

Stefan straightened up, the indifference on his face not changing as he asked another question instead of answering her. "What do you want me to do about it?"

"Hah!" Renee couldn't stop the sneer from escaping her lips. "Judging by your words, do I dare think you would do anything I asked? Are you willing to turn your back on your darling mistress to get justice for me?"

Stefan tilted his chin upward, adopting a pose that indicated he was superior to Renee, and took in the anger radiating off the petite woman before replying calmly, "Briar has gone too far this time. If your request is reasonable, I'll make sure it happens."

"Are you serious? Do you think 'gone too far' sums up what happened here?"

Stefan's casualness and leniency toward Briar sparked Renee's anger even further. She couldn't understand. Was Stefan that head over heels for that woman, and that's why he would turn a blind eye to everything to protect her?

When she thought about how she had placed this man on a pedestal and how deeply she had loved him for four years, she couldn't help but feel disgusted at her once vulgar taste!

"A reasonable request, you said?" Renee's red lips lifted into a smirk as she sneered, "Get her to apologize to me, on her knees. on international media. If she's sincere, I'll consider forgiving her."

Stefan furrowed his brows, and the air in the room suddenly became tense. "Don't go overboard."

"Overboard?" Renee repeated, laughing outright. "Are you saying what she did wasn't overboard? She cursed me to die in such a disgusting way! When one does wrong, shouldn't they apologize?"

"I'll get her to apologize to you, but there's no need to make a scene on the media. It'll become the joke of the day if

the world sees this."

"If she has the guts to do it, then she should have the guts to bear the consequences. What she did was a joke on its own!

Shouldn't the world know what kind of person

she is?" When it came to this. Renee refused to

budge an inch.

"Besides, even if it becomes a joke, that's your family's problem. It doesn't concern me."

Stefan stared at Renee, the emotion in his eyes becoming conflicted and eventually hardening further.

The woman before him was completely different from the kind and dignified individual he remembered. The more he

stared at her, the more he didn't recognize her.

"You weren't like this before," Stefan said. "Briar is pregnant. Does it make sense for you to be this aggressive?"

Renee burst out laughing at his words. "Haha! Aggressive? Are you serious? You consider that aggressive? Since when were

you so magnanimous, Mr. Hunt?"

She took a deep breath, brushed her hair, and said harshly. "You best guard your little lover well, Mr. Hunt. If she falls into my

+15 BONUS

hands, I won't stop at this, and I'll make her pay what she

deserves!" After saying that, Renee left the Hunt villa with

her head held high.

Everything in this villa made her feel dirty and repulsive. If she could, she'd never step foot in this place again!

It was then that the pain in her abdomen suddenly intensified, and Renee gulped harshly. Beads of cold sweat broke

out on her forehead...

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Renee called for a cab and waited at the curb of the villa, her body swaying occasionally.

At some point, Stefan had followed her out, and his hand wrapped around her thin wrist. There was concern in his eyes as he asked, "You don't look well. What's wrong?"

"I'm pissed at your little mistress!" Renee replied instantly.

She wanted to shake the man's hand off, but she felt too weak, and she couldn't muster up the strength to do it. "Are

you okay? Do you need me to send you to the hospital?"

Stefan didn't feel comfortable leaving Renee alone and was fully prepared to get his car.

"I don't need your false sympathy!" Renee shot back. Stefan was a hypocrite, and she didn't give him a second glance and sneered. "If you're really ashamed, then you should advise your lover and get her to apologize to me on her knees, or the consequences will be even direr! Either way, I'll be pursuing this matter to the end. I won't let her off so easily!"

The words were imposing, but because she said it weakly, it sounded more like a rant without any killing intent.

"That's fine, do whatever you want. It's your right. Just let me get you to the hospital first." Stefan said, attempting to coax Renee like

a three-year-old. 1

He held her shaky body and gently started to lead her in the direction of his sports car. L

"I told you it's none of your business! Let go of me!" Renee exclaimed, struggling stubbornly with slight dampness in her eyes.

She felt aggrieved. She had clearly been the victim here, but this man was defending Briar for no proper reason, making her look as though she was aggressive and vicious.

So. Stefan's sudden tenderness had broken down her defenses. Regardless, Stefan seemed to still have some conscience, so he wasn't a complete lost cause.

The two were slowly walking toward his car when his phone suddenly rang. It was one of the two policemen who had taken Briar away.

"Mr. Hunt... Y-you have to come to the station right away! Something happened to Miss Desrosiers, and we don't know what to do!" Stefan's face turned hard, and he asked chillingly, "What happened?"

"Miss Desrosiers said her stomach hurt, so we wanted to send her to the hospital, but she... she refused! She said she wanted to

see you first. It's very urgent. Please hurry!"

The policeman spoke loudly, and Renee could hear the conversation clearly. "I got

it."

Stefan hung up and released Renee's waist. He turned to look at Renee with his dark eyes, and even though not a word was exchanged, his meaning was clear.

Renee silently laughed at herself. What had she been expecting? How naive must she have been to even expect anything from this

man!

She waved her hand dismissively. "What are you waiting for? Your lover is waiting for your rescue!" "Can you

manage on your own?"

Stefan was still obviously concerned, and it showed in his eyes.

"Does it matter? I've been doing it for four years, let alone now." Renee replied coldly with an indifferent look.

Her heart had long since shattered into thousands of pieces, and it was now numb. Whatever choice Stefan made would do little to

move her.

To him, Renee was an existence so insignificant that she could be tossed aside whenever it was convenient! Just

then, the cab she had called arrived, so she got into the vehicle without looking back.

When the car drove past Stefan, she stared ahead and didn't spare the man another glance.

Stefan watched the car with a sullen face as it shrunk into the distance. It was a long time before he finally averted his eyes.

When Renee arrived at Everheart Residence, located west of the city, it was already late at night. The cab driver had heard rumors that the place was haunted, and he didn't dare drive all the way in, leaving Renee about one kilometer away from the

house

Her abdomen didn't hurt as much as before, but it was still uncomfortable. She slowly lumbered home, feeling as though she would collapse with every step she took.

Margaret had been waiting outside for a long time, keeping an eye out for her. She rushed forward, sick with worry, the moment she saw Renee on the ground at the gates.

"Miss Ren? Miss Ren! What's wrong?!"

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When Renee saw Margaret, who was like a mother to her, tears of resignation filled her eyes.

"Margaret, my stomach hurts!"

Like a child, she threw herself into the older woman's arms and wept uncontrollably.

For four years, from the changes in her family to her grandfather's death and even her divorce from Stefan, not a single tear had been shed, and she remained as sturdy as a mountain.

But it was tiring to be strong all the time. She was only a twenty-year-old woman! She didn't want to be strong anymore!

Margaret was confused. She rarely saw Renee in such a fragile state, and she couldn't help but feel distressed, and tears also filled her eyes. She gently stroked Renee's back in comfort and said, "Shh, it's okay. Miss Ren. I'm here. I'm here with you!"

Like a lost little puppy, Renee soaked in the warmth of Margaret's arms. Having not felt this peaceful in a long while, she seemed relaxed and wasn't as uncomfortable as before.

Margaret was Renee's nanny and had a lot of experience in childbirth and parenting. She looked at Renee's stomach and complexion and could hazard a guess as to what was wrong with the younger woman.

"Miss Ren, are you pregnant?" Margaret asked cautiously.

"I... The thought of telling Margret had never crossed Renee's mind, and denial was on the tip of her tongue.

However, Margeret picked up her hand and felt the pulse on her wrist, adding, "And almost three months along, if I'm not

mistaken?'

"Ah... apparently, I can't hide anything from you," Renee mumbled helplessly.

Margaret's family came from a long line of skilled medical professionals. Renee once heard her mother say that her grandmother had personally hired Margaret to manage all the affairs in their family and care for Renee's mother, who had been pregnant then, and her, who had been born after. That meant Margaret was more experienced than many other doctors in the

field.

Margaret stayed silent and continued feeling Renee's pulse. After a while, she frowned and said. "Miss Ren, you ran into trouble today, didn't you? Your pulse is irregular. You should lie down. I'll prepare some medicine for you. You'll be fine once you take

it."

"Thank you, Margaret."

Renee obeyed Margaret's instruction and returned to her bedroom to lie down.

Margaret prepared a concoction according to the medical skills she had learned from her ancestors. Once it was done, she

brought it up to Renee.

"Come, Miss Ren. Once you drink this, the pain will go away!"

Renee was not the slightest bit wary of the medicine and swallowed it in one gulp.

To her, Margaret was the only person in this world she could trust unconditionally, even more than Liam or Leia.

A gentle sensation washed over her once she drank the medicine, and she felt better almost instantly.

"Margaret, my stomach doesn't hurt much anymore! You're awesome!" Renee gushed, her eyes filled with adoration for the older woman.

"Of course! My great-grandfather was known as the famous Plum Blossom Saint, you know? As his descendent, even if I only inherited a tenth of his mantle and lacked his necromancy skills, keeping an unborn baby safe is easy."

Margaret was clearly proud of her ancestry and lineage.

"Wasn't that the title given to the doctor who was rumored to be able to perform miracles? That's your great–grandfather, Margaret? That's... Wow!"

The admiration in Renee's heart swelled bigger. Even though she knew that Margaret came from a line of ancestors who studied medicine, she didn't know their origins were that great! Her profound heritage completely overshadowed the Everheart

family's reputation!

In that case, hadn't it been a waste for Margaret to be a housekeeper and nanny in this family?

Renee asked curiously, "Margaret, this is the first I've heard that your great-grandfather was the Plum Blossom Saint. I heard he

was the treasure of the medical world and that he could cure people who were terminally ill. If that's the case... why didn't you pursue a medical career and waste your life here instead?"

Margaret smiled. "I was entrusted with this task. Besides, caring for you and your mother wasn't a waste of my life. It was my life's mission."

"Entrusted? By my grandmother?" Renee was even more curious at the older woman's words. "Could you tell me a little about my grandmother, Margaret?"