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Adie stroked his chin and furrowed his brows as he seriously contemplated the matter for a while, looking just like a tiny grown-up.

When he was done thinking, he tiptoed and held out a hand for Mr. Q to shake, solemnly telling him, 'Since you're repentant of your mistakes, then we can be friends. A pleasure to meet you. Your guidance will be much appreciated."

The man's frozen lips arched up ever so slightly without him noticing it. He even bent down his body involuntarily so that he could get closer to the kid.

"Pleasure to meet you too," he replied in a deep voice. "Your guidance will be much appreciated as well."

Adie was outstandingly tall for a four-year-old boy, but standing in front of a man who was well over six feet tall still made him look tiny in comparison, as he was not even as tall as the man's long legs. Yet the sight of them together standing side by side made such a comical contrast that they looked inexplicably cute together.

Everyone around them, including William Jones, was dumbfounded. On one hand, they were amazed by the calmness and courage of Adie, a mere four-year-old kid. On the other hand, they were also astonished by the rare warmth and tender side shown by Mr. Q, who was generally feared by everyone.

So you really could not judge a book by its cover after all! Just as still water could hide unfathomable depths below its surface, their one meeting with the man himself completely eradicated the image of Mr. Q they had in mind after hearing countless rumors about him!

William nursed the sore spot where he got kicked as he was clouded in a dilemma. Was this his golden chance to save his own skin, or should he beg for Mr. Q's mercy so he would let the kid go?

Judging from what he saw, the tall and handsome man seemed to exude an excellent temperament. He looked much more sensible than the one- eyed man, so William thought he might not be a senseless psychopath who would not listen to any reasoning after all.

But before he could open his mouth, it was Adie who walked up to him and told him, "You've successfully brought me to Carmine

Pawn Shop. You've completed your task, so you can go back and tell Mommy that I'm fine now. Tell her that I've made a new friend and I won't be seeing her for a while."

extremely dangerous place and this friend of yours is not a good person! We should instead be begging him so he'd let go of you, that way you'd be able to go home and meet up with your mother soon, so she won't get worried about you!"

"Ki-Kid!" William was completely caught offguard. Bewildered, he replied," Do you have any idea what you're talking about?! This is an

"Don't worry," Adie assured him. "This isn't the first time I went missing. Mommy's pretty strong and calm about it now. Just tell her that I'll surely go home once I'm done playing with my new friend, okay? Bye bye!"

Adie waved William goodbye and walked away, but returned again after a few steps to tell him, "By the way, you shouldn't be friends with Briar Desrosiers anymore. She's a really naughty person, and there's no hope of her ever turning nice. You're pretty naughty too, but there's still hope for you if you'd improve yourself. Anyway, thanks for being my driver and bringing me here today! Goodbye!"

The little man then went over to Mr. Q, raised his chin to look up at him and bluntly told him, "It's done. You can take me away now."

The off-road vehicle was very tall, but Adie stretched out his sprightly arms and legs to climb up like a heart-achingly adorable little monkey.

No one had ever dared to speak that way to Mr. Q except for those with death wishes, yet Adie seemed to have acquired a special immunity against this man's frightening aura. Not only was he completely unafraid of him, but he was also even giving Mr. Q orders!

But what was even more puzzling was Mr. Q's reaction. Not once did he show a sign of anger or impatience with this boy. Not only that, he even tenderly and thoughtfully put on Adie's seatbelt, which was an incredible sight to behold! He could not be any more gentle and kind to the boy if he had been his biological father!

"Sit tight," the man reminded Adie in a deep voice as the boy sat in the passenger seat next to him.

Adie leaned back against the seat lackadaisically, his round, chubby face completely untroubled and at ease as he told the man, "Don't bother trying to drive so fast, because no matter how fast you are, you'll never beat Mommy's speed. You guys are nothing but losers compared to her!

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The car soon arrived at the infamous Carmine Pawnshop. The place was rumored to be a treasure house, filled with displays of rare treasures, curious cultural antiques, exotic animals, and other peculiar paraphernalia from all over the world.

Nevertheless, the actual pawnshop did not occupy a large area at all. In fact, it was just a simple building. It did not even have that many guards surrounding it, so it looked no different from the other buildings in the area.

The car drove into the pawnshop's private garage. Mr. Q parked the car and turned to Adie, and asked him in a leisurely tone, "Are you sure you want to go inside? You do know that anyone who's stepped into Carmine Pawnshop gives up the control of their own fate, don't you?"

"I'm just a kid," Adie replied chirpily, blinking his big bright eyes innocently," so anything I say doesn't count. As for you being in control of my fate, you'll have to ask for Mommy's permission before you can do that."

Adie had always been an expert in using his status as a child to his own advantage. He was clearly much smarter than many adults!

"Your mommy again, huh?"

The man drummed the steering wheel with his long slender fingers. The feather mask could not fully conceal his handsome face, just as it could not conceal the playful smile on his lips as he added, "You've been going on and on about your mommy all the

way here. Is she really that great? Do you love her very much?"

'Of course I do!" Adie's eyes were pure and innocent as he answered the question. His voice was firm, and he was filled with pride. "Mommy's the greatest person in the world! She can do anything! No one on this planet is better than her! I love her very, very much!"

But then his bright eyes quickly dimmed, and in a lowered voice Adie added, "But right now, Mommy's facing an opponent, so I must find a way to help her eliminate this opponent. I don't want her to be too tired."

"Oh?" the man could not help but raise his eyebrows.

Adie was completely undaunted even as he was faced with the man's intimidating aura. Instead, he went straight to the point and clearly stated his intentions of seeking this man out.

"You must be curious about the identity of this opponent of hers, aren't you? Well, it's really not that hard to guess. Mommy said this man is a mean villain. Everyone in Beach City wants to defeat him. I guess you want to defeat him too. That's why I came to find you. I hope you can be Mommy's helper, and when Mommy finally wins. I'm sure she'd be very generous in rewarding you..."

rewarding you..."

The man's expressions beneath the mask became even more complicated now. He coldly asked, "Why don't you tell me who

this mean villain is?"

Adie slapped his forehead, looking very disappointed. He had expected Mr. Q to be powerful and intelligent, but he unfortunately turned out to be so stupid. Even Daddy Liam was smarter than him! If he had known this, he would never choose him to be his mother's helper!

"Can't you guess? It's Stefan Hunt, the president of H Group, of course! You're an idiot, aren't you?!"

"That man, huh? Well, he is pretty impressive, I'll give you that. So what does your mommy think of him?"

"Mommy said Stefan Hunt is the most arrogant, cunning, and ruthless person in Beach City. He's also the person she regrets ever knowing the most! And because he's always so cocky he ends up offending many people! The whole of Beach City wants to defeat him! If you add up all of his enemies together, you'd get more people than the water in the sea!"

"Is that so?"

The man suddenly clenched his fingers. The smile on his lips turned cold and stiff, and the expressions underneath his mask were inscrutable. He stared at Adie's little face from behind the mask, regarding the boy's adorable face, healthy red lips, and clean white teeth. He then brusquely asked, "Did your mommy ever tell you who your daddy is?

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'Well, about that..."

Adie's eyes darted around as he contemplated the question. He figured that he could not possibly let this man know that he was the villain Stefan Hunt's own son himself, since that would lessen the chances that he would want to be his mother's helper.

With that in mind, he told the man in a serious tone, "My daddy is Liam Osborne. You do know him, don't you? Mommy told me that he's not too shabby himself. He's the future heir to the Osborne family, which is one of the eight great families of Beach City. Mommy also said that with the combined strengths of the Osborne family and the Everheart family, defeating the Hunt family is only a matter of time!"

"Is that so? Hmph, your mommy is pretty ambitious, isn't she?"

Mr. Q's words sounded especially curt and surly, as if he was upset about something. 'Briar

Desrosiers, you sly woman! How dare you lie to me?!'

'But it's fine,' he thought. 'It doesn't matter whether this kid has the blood of the Hunt family or not. As long as he's Renee Everheart's son, then this deal is definitely worth it!'

Without any emotion on his face, he opened the car door and stepped out, striding into the pawnshop with his long legs.

Adie, utterly unafraid, followed him in bouncing little steps, as if it was just another normal day of going back home for him. He was truly a free spirit.novelxo.com fast update

An attractive young man in a long white coat warmly greeted the man as soon as he got inside. "You're back,

Mr. Q! So... this is the priceless treasure you were talking about?"

The young man was called Chase Cheever. He was the person in charge of the Carmine Pawnshop. Although he was still young, he was gifted with a pair of shrewd piercing eyes that made him the leading figure in the item appraisal circle. Everything in the pawnshop had to go through his appraisal before they were accepted here.

As Chase noticed Adie, he looked the boy up and down, scrutinizing him, before displaying a confused expression.

"What an adorable baby this boy is! He is good-looking, for sure, but I can tell at a glance that he's been brought up like a prince. He won't be able to work much, and he won't be worth that much money either. What need do we have for someone like him?"

He had heard a few days ago that Mr. Q would go out and procure a new ' rare treasure' he had found himself. He had not slept at all after hearing that, as he was just too excited to see what Mr. Q would bring back. But this is just... a useless brat?!

"You don't need to know anything about that," replied Mr. Q. "All you need to do is make sure he is well taken care of in the next few days."

Mr. Q put his hands in his pockets and turned around to look at Adie with a somewhat cold attitude, as if trying to maintain a distance from the boy. But then Adie unexpectedly ran up to him and clung onto his leg like a koala bear before declaring in a pure childlike voice, "I knew you're a good person, Little Q!"

Mr. Q's whole body stiffened. He neither pushed the boy away nor embraced him.

Adie raised his soft and chubby face and smiled as brightly as a flower in full bloom. Then, in a voice that sounded as adult-like as he could muster, he said, "Congratulations. You passed my test. I can introduce you to Mommy without any worries now. If you work hard as her helper from now on, your future will be bright!"

Both Mr. Q and Chase were rendered speechless.

Chase began to understand why his boss wanted this little brat now. His audacity and courage alone were beyond the reach of some adults. He was indeed a precious gem, and if they continued to polish him, the power he might attain in the future could be immeasurable!

He assumed that the brat's antics would lead Mr. Q to erupt in rage. After all, rumors had it that he despised being physically close to anyone.

Surprisingly, not only did he not lose his temper, he even gently caressed the boy's head and gently reminded him, "Don't get cheeky."

Could... Could it be that this little brat was actually Mr. Q's illegitimate son?!

The next day, Leia gingerly unlocked the door to Renee's bedroom and cautiously leaned half of her body into the room, and looked around.

All she saw was everything in the room in impeccable order just as it had always been. There was not a trace in there to suggest that anything " passionate' had happened last night as she expected.

Her best friend Renee was lying on the bed with her back turned towards the door. She was sleeping very soundly, wrapped up in a thick beige blanket

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Meanwhile, her useless brother was indolently lying on the couch, sound asleep. His clothes were still in perfect order. Not even his hair was the slightest bit ruffled up!

There was no need to guess. There was definitely nothing "interesting" going on last night at all!

Leia sighed. These two had been dragging it out for close to ten years now, yet they were still stuck in this ambiguous "friend zone" after all this time. She was almost irked to death thinking about it!

"Ahem!" Leia dragged her feet into the room and yanked the curtain open, flooding the room with bright sunlight. "Wake up, both of you! Time to get up!"

Liam woke up with a grimace and promptly got up to his feet and grabbed his sister from the back by the collar of her shirt. "You little

sh*thead!" he hissed. 'So you finally opened the door, huh?

brother's gone crazy! He's really going to kill me!"

as if she had been replaced by a mannequin.

You're getting too bold for your own good if you have the audacity to play this kind of stupid prank! If you didn't think that I'd teach you a sore lesson today, then you're about to get a big reality check on how frightening your brother can be!"

'Ah!" Leia screamed and struggled in resistance, but against her brother, she was nothing but a helpless little bird, and had no chance of escaping his grip. 'Let me go, you idiot! I only did it to help you guys! What a shame! All my good intentions and painstaking efforts were

totally wasted on you!'
"He's going to kill me!" Leia continued to make a loud commotion, now turning to Renee for support. "You've got to help me, Renee! My

Despite the huge commotion between Liam and Leia, Renee surprisingly still lay quietly in bed in the same position the whole time, just

"That's strange," Leia noticed after fighting with her brother for a while.' Why do I feel like there's something wrong with Renee?" "Didn't I

tell you to comfort her last night?" she asked her brother. "How did she end up this way? Did someone hurt her?"

"Do you think anyone could hurt someone like Renee?" replied Liam, putting his hands in his pockets. He looked at Renee, whose back was turned towards them, and softly added, "If I'm not mistaken, I think she's just in a self-healing mode."

"Self-healing mode?" Leia asked, puzzled. But judging by how calm her brother seemed, perhaps Renee was in no big trouble after all?

Liam slowly added, "When a person gets hit by a huge psychological blow and becomes seriously traumatized, they'll get into a self-healing mode like some animals do. Some would bawl their eyes out, some would make a huge commotion, some would overeat or turn to alcohol to help them cope, and some would even turn to sex and become promiscuous. My guess is that our boss here probably chose to sleep in order to heal her trauma."

"No way," argued Leia. "The Renee that I know has full confidence in Adie's ability to survive. She can't be so worried about her son that she became traumatized, can she?"

"Who told you it has anything to do with Adie?" replied Liam. He heaved a long sigh. He had no desire to keep the truth of the matter a secret

anymore, so he explained, "Stefan Hunt is dead. In fact, he died trying to save Renee. The doctors couldn't save his life. Perhaps Renee just can't accept the reality of his death at the moment, so she..."

"What did you say?!" Leia's eyeballs almost fell out of their sockets. "Stefan Hunt is dead?! This is earth-shattering news! Never mind her, I don't even think I can believe that's true! I've heard of rumors about his death, but no one actually believed it! This is Stefan Hunt we're talking about after all! How could Beach City's most powerful man just die so easily like that...?'

'It's not just a rumor," said Liam, "because I saw his corpse on a stretcher wheeled out of the operation room with my own eyes. His body was lying stiff under a white cloth."

Liam was filled with conflicted emotions. To him, Stefan Hunt had always been an opponent both in business and in love. He had been anticipating the day Stefan was finally eliminated, yet now that he had actually died, he felt inexplicably lost.

The man that he had always aimed to surpass was now gone forever before he had the chance to actually surpass him.

Because of that, Stefan Hunt had become a forever insurmountable godlike figure. How could he not feel disheartened by it then?

The whole room was now filled with a dull and somber air. Just then,

Renee's phone on the nightstand suddenly rang..

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Liam and Leia exchanged looks. They thought that Renee was still sleeping soundly, so they decided to take the call for her. But before they could reach for her phone, Renee suddenly got up without a noise and calmly answered the phone.

"Hello, Officer. Yes, I'm Renee Everheart. Aiden Everheart is my son. Is there any news of his whereabouts?"

The conversation went on for a little longer, then she finally nodded and said, "Okay. I'll be there right away."

Renee's lovely face was calm and serene. There was not a trace of perturbations at all and she showed no emotion throughout the whole phone call. Instead, it was the twins who were excited and agitated to no end by the latest development.

"Was that the police, Renee?" Leia asked with gleaming eyes. "Have they finally found Adie?"

"The officer only told me that they've caught the person who kidnapped Adie," Renee answered calmly. "As for the rest of the details, well have to go there to find out."

After speaking, she then nonchalantly stretched her body and walked into her closet like nothing extraordinary happened and began to choose the clothes she was going to change into.

Her reactions were simply too calm and cool-headed that it made Leia and Liam even more worried.

Liam studied Renee with a severe expression and cautiously asked her," Are you okay, Boss?"

Renee's slender fingers were leafing through her numerous beautiful dresses, but she suddenly paused when she heard Liam's question.

"Don't worry," she shrugged and smiled. "I'm not as fragile as both of you think I am. I'm not turning to sleep to cope and I'm not in any kind of self- healing mode. I'm just exhausted and I needed some rest, plain and simple. Now that I'm well-rested, I feel as good as new."

But this did not convince Leia at all. Still concerned, she walked up to Renee and put her arms around her shoulder. She was choked up and her eyes were reddening when she told Renee, "I know this must be hard for you, Renee. There's no denying that Stefan Hunt was a douchebag, but he was still the man you used to love with all your heart. I know for a fact that you can't be completely indifferent after he died trying to save you. You need to vent your emotions, Renee. You can cry, you can scream, you can even eat or drink if you like. Just let it all out. Don't keep it all pent up inside, otherwise it's going to explode one day and hurt you!"

"I won't deny that I do feel sad, but I'm really not that sad at all. I just feel a little lost, that's all."

Renee let out a long sigh and turned her head towards Leia, assuring her," Don't worry about me. I know what I'm doing. It doesn't matter whether that man is dead or alive. Well still keep on with our old plan... I believe that soon enough, the Everheart family and the Osborne family will replace the Hunt family in becoming the most powerful families out of the eight great families of Beach City!"

Leia wanted to say something more, but Liam gave her a look to stop her.

At the moment, anything they said would only fall on deaf ears. Ultimately, Renee just had to realize it herself.

After a little rest, the three of them then drove to the police station as fast as they could. As the parent of the missing child, Renee was called into the interrogation room alone by the officer handling the case after having filled out some forms. Leia and Liam, on the other hand, were asked to stay outside in the waiting room.

The officer handling the case was a man in his early thirties. After opening the door to the interrogation room, he pointed at a chair where Renee was expected to sit before taking a seat across from her and then beginning the questioning.

"Good morning, Ms. Everheart. Last night we received a call from your son, Aiden Everheart. He informed us that he was a

victim of child trafficking and even provided the exact time the crime took place, the name and address of the trafficker, and the evidence of the trafficking taking place. We would like to know, has your son really gone missing?"

"Yes," Renee nodded, "my son has indeed gone missing. My friends and family have been looking for him everywhere, and because he had gone missing a few times before in the past, we decided it wasn't yet time to report it to the police.

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The police officer in charge of recording the interview could not help looking up at Renee. He frowned and reproached, "Your son has been missing for so long, and you still wouldn't report it to the police? Don't you think you're being too reckless as the parents? Thank god the child was clever enough to report it to the police himself! Although we still haven't figured out where he is, we've caught the suspected kidnapper, so the situation might not end up so serious after all."

But in her head, she silently thought, 'I wonder which unlucky guys had to deal with Adie this time. They should count their blessings if they didn't end up getting sold into a human trafficking ring by him!'

Renee nodded repeatedly, "You're right, Officer. We, as adults, have certainly been too neglectful."

Adie had run away on his own many times before, so it was inevitable that he would encounter bad guys with sinister motives against him, but each time it always ended with the kidnappers calling the police for help themselves after realizing that they could not deal with the true menace that was Aiden Everheart!

"The suspect has confessed to the crime," said the officer in charge, "but she refused to reveal the child's whereabouts. Instead, she asserted that she intended to harm your child because she has a personal grudge against you. She has made a request to talk to you alone."

"Personal grudge?" Renee suddenly tensed up and seemed slightly more concerned now.

She had indeed made quite a few enemies by that point, and she knew that those who would hold grudges against her were certainly no saints. If it was true that Adie had fallen into their hands, then perhaps her son was in much more of a bind than she thought.

Renee clenched her hands and promptly asked, "Where is she? Let her come and talk to me!' "Okay,"

replied the police officer. He then spoke into the intercom, "Bring her in."

Soon, the door to the interrogation room opened, and in came a woman whose hands were bound by handcuffs that glinted under the light. It was Briar Desrosiers. Her face was stony and lifeless, but as soon as she saw Renee, it was as if she was splashed with a bucket of ice-cold water. She seemed to be reanimated in an instant. With a cruel smirk on her face, she said, "Why did you have to hurry over here so quickly, Renee Everheart? You should've just wait a little longer. Someone would've gone to you and told you what became of your poor Adie!"

Renee tried her best to restrain herself from killing Briar right then and there. She coldly said, "You should've come straight to me if you hold any grudges against me. Why did you have to lay your filthy hands on an innocent child? Aren't you afraid of divine retribution?"

"So now you're talking about going straight to you instead of an innocent child, huh? Why didn't you think of that when you killed my baby and caused me to lose the chance to ever be a mother again?!"

Briar was now so agitated that she acted like a rabid dog, lunging toward Renee and screeched, "You're the reason why my baby died! Because of that, I'll never give your son a chance to live a good life. God is so kind to you, isn't he? He's given you such an adorable son! I do like the boy myself, but it's too bad that he has your dirty blood in his veins. For that, I'll do anything to make sure he suffers a fate worse than death!"

"Soon enough, you'll find out what happened to your poor child. By then, I wish that you'll live the rest of your life plagued by guilt and shame, because you're the reason he had to suffer!"

The police officer quickly subdued her and sternly warned her, "That's enough! Don't force our hands or we'll have to use a tougher measure to contain you!"

"Go ahead!" Briar sneered sinisterly even as her head was pinned onto the table till her face was smooshed out of shape, putting her in a humiliating position. "I'm not scared! Just do whatever tough measure you want on me! I don't care anymore because I've got what I wanted. That boy is ruined now! You will suffer for the rest of your life, Renee Everheart! Even if I die now, I'll die happy and in peace!"

Carmine Pawnshop was an infamous place in the underground market where anyone who stepped through its doors would have no chance of turning back. Their boss, Mr. Q, was known to be Stefan Hunt's deadliest enemy. It was not hard to guess at all what kind of painful fate would befall Adie, with him being Stefan's son.

After all, if Briar was going to attack Renee, she had better attack her where it would hurt the most, and what would hurt a mother more than seeing her own child suffer?

Renee was so enraged that she trembled, but she still managed to keep herself under control. With a perfectly calm demeanor, she asked the police officer, "Could you please leave this room for a while? I'd like to talk to her alone.

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After considering Renee's request, the police officers agreed to leave the room. Only Renee and Briar were left in the interrogation room, even though in truth, their every word and their every move were monitored by the police.

Although she was handcuffed, Briar still appeared proud and arrogant. She chuckled menacingly and asked, "Did you think that I'd tell you where your son is just because you chased them away?"

She chuckled. "You're too naive! The only reason why I attacked your son is that I wanted to take revenge on you. Now that I see how much you suffer, there's no way that I'd back down!"

'Suffer?" Renee nonchalantly leaned back against the chair with a cool and carefree sneer on her face. "What makes you think that I'm suffering? I

know how smart my son can be, and I'm confident that he'll find his way out of trouble in no time. As for you... as soon as I insist on bringing on the charges against you, there's no other outcome for you but to spend the rest of your life rotting in jail. I do feel sorry for you, you know."

'I'll admit that your son did seem a little clever, but if you think that he'll be able to outsmart the guy that now possesses him, then you're nothing but an idiot! I think you'd better just wake up from your daydream and face reality!"

Briar noticed how Renee's face was turning pale from anger and she felt as proud and satiated as a bloodthirsty demon who was finally able to get a taste of fresh and delicious blood.

She was fully aware that the interrogation room was monitored, so she walked up to Renee and whispered in her ear, "I suggest that you go home early and stop wasting your time here with me. You won't get anything from me, so why don't you use the time that you have to order a child's coffin instead? You want to send him off properly, don't you?"

'Shut up!"

Those heinous words proved too much for Renee. She was utterly incensed. She shot up to her feet and reached out her long arms before enclosing her fingers around the Briar's neck. Her beautiful eyes were gleaming with a chilling light.

"If you want to die so badly, then I'll grant your wish right now!"

Briar could not breathe. Her face was flushed red, but even so, she cackled maniacally and egged Renee on, "Go ahead! Do it! This is exactly what I want! If you kill me now, then your life will be ruined too. Stefan will never forgive you, and he will never let you go unpunished for this. Then I will live on in his heart forever! Perfect!"

Renee's frozen eyes suddenly betrayed some slight perturbations.

they saw Renee walking out of the door, and they collectively sighed in relief.

"Stefan Hunt?" she brusquely replied. "He's nothing but a dead man now. There's no use in bringing him up now. You're just making a fool of yourself! ■

"W-What did you say?"

Briar, who had seemed arrogant the whole time, seemed to be hit by a bolt from the blue at the moment. She was staggering on her feet, hardly able to keep herself from falling.

"You heard me right," Renee snapped back in a biting voice. She could tell that Briar probably had no idea about Stefan's death yet. She focused her icy gaze on the woman and added, "The man you've always depended on is now gone forever! There'll be no one else to rescue you now! If you agree to cough up Adie's real whereabouts right now, I might consider not going further with the charges against you and I'll pretend that none of this ever happened."

with the charges against you and I'll pretend that none of this ever happened."

"Impossible!" Briar had a complete breakdown. With tears streaming down the corners of her eyes, she yelled, "You're lying to me! Stefan is invincible! He's the most powerful man in Beach City! How could he just die? Did you think that you could

intimidate me into telling you where your son is by lying to me like that? You should've made up something more believable!

Save your breath! I don't believe you!"

"I don't care if you believe me or not," said Renee, releasing the fingers that had been pressing on the veins on Briar's neck. She

don't regret it later."

The police officers had been guarding the door and were ready to charge into the interrogation room at any moment. But then

had lost all patience with Briar, and could now only bother to coldly tell her, "I gave you a chance, but you just tossed it away, so

"How did it go?" an officer asked. "Did you get any useful clues from her?"

Renee smiled faintly at the police officers, but no one could tell what kind of emotions were on that lovely face of hers.

"I just had a heart-to-heart chat with Ms. Desrosiers just now, and found out that this is all just a misunderstanding. If there's nothing else going on, please release her as soon as possible."

The police officers quickly exchanged looks in confusion when they heard her.

"Ms. Everheart, was that a joke? The suspect kidnapped your son and you're asking us to release her?"

Renee raised her brows, and her smile broadened. In an apologetic voice, she replied, "My son has been a really naughty boy. He knew that Ms.

Desrosiers and I don't get along, so he decided to call the police on her, hoping that the police officers would take away the person that had been mean to me. I've found out where he is now, so I must deeply apologize for all the trouble we've caused you. I will make a 150,000-dollar donation to the construction funds for this police station as compensation. Please forgive us for this mistake."

"But..."

The police officers there were all dumbfounded

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"Thank you for all your hard work. I'll excuse myself now."

Renee then nodded slightly at the police officers, turned around, and left.

Meanwhile, Liam and Leia had been anxiously waiting for Renee in the waiting area. As soon as they saw her coming out, they rushed toward her in excitement.

"You're finally out, Boss! So what's the situation? Do we know Adie's whereabouts now?"

Renee had no desire to say too much, so she simply told them, "If you see Briar Desrosiers coming out later, capture her immediately. She knows where Adie is."

"Briar Desrosiers?" Leia lost her temper as soon as she heard the woman's name. "That nasty b*tch! Why does it have to be her again? Don't tell me that she's the one who kidnapped Adie?"

Renee neither confirmed nor denied it. Instead, she turned to Liam and said, "I must rely on you for this. I believe the Osborne family is vastly experienced in this sort of matter."

The Osborne family started their business by dealing with many underground groups and black markets. They made their name by constantly dancing on the knife's edge, so they inevitably picked up a torture method or two along the way. They certainly had more than enough skills to make Briar Desrosiers sing.

Renee had intended to let Briar go once she obliged her and revealed Adie's whereabouts, but it seemed that the gentle method did not work on Briar, so she could not be blamed for resorting to the cruel method instead.

The only reason she asked the police to release Briar just now was to make it more convenient for them to "have a nice talk" with Briar later.

"Don't worry," Liam assured her, his captivating eyes gleaming with a frightening cold light. "I'll make sure she reveals every single detail she knows soon."

In the past, Stefan had always protected Briar, so he had to be careful and not go too far when dealing with her. But now that her protector was gone, he had nothing to worry about anymore!

Briar was startled when she heard the news that she would soon be released, but it also came as a pleasant surprise for her.

"Mr. Hunt demanded you to release me, didn't he? I knew it! Stefan would never abandon me!"

Briar wept with joy and wiped her tears away excitedly.

"You're free now, so just hurry up and go! Don't waste our time here with your nonsense!"

The police officer kept hastening her to leave, and was in no mood to chat with her.

Now that she had regained her freedom, the first thing Briar thought of doing was to pick up her phone and call Stefan.

But no one answered her call.

"This can't be right. Stefan wouldn't ignore me after getting me out of jail. Unless..."

Briar was no fool. She immediately sensed that there was something fishy going on. Now was not the safest time for her to leave the police station.

Just as she was trapped in a dilemma, someone gently patted her on the back...

"Excuse me, are you Ms. Desrosiers?"

Briar turned around. She was somewhat puzzled when she recognized the person in front of her.

"J-Jovan Hunt?"

Jovan smiled affably with his hands in his pockets.

"You're okay, aren't you? Stefan asked me to take you home

The Untouchable Ex Wife by Mizuki Sei

Chapter 489

Liam had been waiting outside the police station for ages, but Briar Desrosiers was still nowhere to be seen. His patience was wearing thin, so he threw caution to the wind and went inside to ask the police officer who handled Briar's case. That was when he found out that Briar had been released a long time ago.

"Damn it!" Liam cursed with a scowl before immediately reporting the development to Renee.

"I'm sorry, Boss. This is all my fault. That cunning woman must've guessed that we were trying to ambush her outside, so she escaped through another exit."

"Never mind. I'll find another way then."

At the time, Renee was sitting in front of the computer in her apartment, her fingers incessantly tapping on the keyboard as she tried to track Briar's movements in the past few days. She found out from the police officer in charge that Briar was arrested in a five-star luxury hotel, so she hacked into the surveillance system of that hotel to sniff out any helpful clues.

She did not find any clues. She simply saw Briar Desrosiers taking care of Adie as if he were her own son. She even took Adie out to shop for everything the boy desired-be it snacks, clothes, or toys!

What infuriated Renee even more was how she saw Adie affectionately holding Briar's hand in the surveillance video, as if he now regarded Briar as his real mother! He was acting all cheerful and bubbly, looking nothing at all like a boy who was kidnapped!

"Oh, my God... My blood pressure is rising..."

Renee massaged her temples. She wished she could climb through the screen and spank the cheeky boy!

"Look at that. My dear eldest child! It's like he's trying to make my blood boil! We've all been so worried about him, yet he'd been

happily following someone else as if he was a puppy on a leash all along! Oh, the betrayal!"

Leia, who was sitting next to Renee, almost burst into laughter as she watched it all play out on the screen.

"Hahahaha, who would've thought that our cool handsome guy would have such a sweet and docile side? I guess the lure of snacks and toys had more influence on him than his own biological mother..."

But just as she was laughing away at Adie's antics, her expression suddenly froze. She clenched her fists.

The cause of this drastic change was in the surveillance video, where she saw William Jones, her boyfriend whom she was madly in love with, was knocking on Briar Desrosiers' door!

Renee noticed this too and she hastily turned off the monitor as quickly as she could. Then, she got up and stretched her body before deliberately changing the topic, saying, "Forget it! I won't bother checking it anymore! If that little rascal was so smart that he could hand Briar Desrosiers to the police himself, then he's probably fine. He'll come home once he's had enough fun."

Leia's throat felt tight, and her eyes began to sting. She tried her best to keep calm as she looked up at Renee and asked her, "D-Did you see that just now?"

Renee did not have the heart to upset Leia, so she acted dumb, albeit poorly, and replied, "What are you talking about? I didn't see anything!"

"I beg you. Please play that video again."

"I'm afraid I can't do that. The permission has expired so we can't watch it anymore."

But Leia was not so easily fooled. She grabbed Renee's arms and repeatedly pleaded, "You've got to help me hack into that surveillance video again, Renee! I need to know if I was just imagining what I saw!"

"You don't need to see it again. You weren't imagining it."

Renee sighed helplessly and decided to come clean with everything that she knew.

"William Jones does indeed know Briar Desrosiers. In fact, they used to be in a relationship with each other."

Leia was aghast. Not only was she heartbroken, she suddenly felt as if she was the biggest dumbass in the world and could not stop herself from slapping herself across her face.

"I'm such a moron! How could I just let him trick me and use me all this time... No wonder why he's been asking about you all the time! He approached me with an ulterior motive all along!" "Stupid, stupid me! It's all my fault that Adie went missing! I'm so sorry, Renee! I've caused you trouble again! You have to beat me up. Otherwise I'll never be able to forgive myself!

The Untouchable Ex Wife by Mizuki Sei

Chapter 490

Leia felt that she had committed a heinous crime against her best friend. Tears poured down like rain on her face as she took Renee's hands and slapped them on her own body, wishing that she could make amends to Renee by dying.

"Nonsense! How can I ever blame you? The only person at fault is that bastard William Jones."

Renee gently wiped away Leia's tears and patiently explained to her as if she was Leia's mother, "Now you've learned your lesson, right? Men are completely unreliable, so from now on, you must always be on guard. Don't just listen to your heart; use your brain as well, otherwise someone could be playing you like a fiddle and you won't even notice it!"

Leia nodded repeatedly. She clenched her fists and angrily vowed, "I'll never forget it! Being with men only leads to a lifetime of misfortune, and trusting in men only leads to three whole lifetimes of misfortune! Once I'm done killing that b*stard William Jones, I'll become a nun and live in a monastery for the rest of my life!"

Renee could not help but laugh at Leia's sweet silliness.

"You probably shouldn't kill him yet," she told Leia, "because now that Briar Desrosiers is missing, William Jones is the only one who must know where Adie is, since he is Briar's minion."

She must hurry up and drag that ungrateful son of hers home as soon as possible, otherwise the little rascal might totally forget his real mother and only regard a complete stranger as his mother!

Coincidentally, just as Leia was about to call William Jones to confront him, she received a call from the man himself.

"Well!" Leia answered the phone as she gritted her teeth, bristling with rage. "Good evening, Dr. Jones! I can't believe you've still got the gall to contact me!"

"It sounds like you've found out the truth. Are you free? Can we meet up? I'll confess everything."

"Okay, then! At least you've still got some honor left!"

They then agreed on the place where they would meet. Leia hung up the phone and began to furiously ransack the place.

"What are you looking for?" Renee asked.

"I'm looking for my gun. My brother gave it to me so I can protect myself. I've always treated it as a toy and never expected that there'd be a day when I would have a reason to use it!"

Eventually, she found the short-barreled lady's pistol on one of the shelves in the study. She wiped the muzzle of the gun and scoffed, "Once he hands Adie over to us, I'll kill that *sshole in one shot! He should've known better than to deceive an Osborne woman!"

Renee stood aside watching her best friend, and could not help but shake her head. She knew Leia very well, and she was certain that Leia would never have the heart to actually do it. Leia was just like her—their hearts were too soft. No matter how much someone might hurt them, they still could not completely hate that person, much less wish them dead.

Stefan's death was the perfect example. Instead of filling her with joy and satisfaction, his death only made her feel a sense of loss. The kind of loss you got when a certain corner of your heart that had been aching for a long time was suddenly cut off and removed. The pain was not relieved because of the removal at all, but instead was merely replaced by a sense of emptiness.

Renee paused and had to wilfully stop herself from thinking about that man, because the thought of him always brought a pang of uncontrollable pain in her heart!

William Jones had told Leia to meet him at a hip restaurant near South Bay Beach. It was the place where he and Leia had their first date. William sat alone at a table, watching the waves hit the shore and retreat back into the sea. He bitterly gulped down glass after glass of drinks.

Once Leia parked her supercar, she stormed into the restaurant and spotted William with a mere glance.

"William Jones, you son of a b*tch! I'll make sure you die a horrible death!"

She rushed straight towards the man and slapped him on both sides of his face right away. She then grabbed his hair and demanded, "Tell me where Adie is right now!