

Ex-Wife 1941

Chapter 1941

"Don't hesitate-just go for it. Hurry up and buy me. The sale is only for today-you might lose this chance if you're not fast enough!" Justin urged eagerly.

Renee thought for a while, then looked up at the stars. "Look at the stars-each one is beautiful and unique."

Disappointed, Justin pouted and complained, "Why are you talking about the stars now? You can refuse me, you know." He knew Renee-although she was talking about cost-effectiveness, she still wanted perfection. Justin might not even have the option to be her Plan B. He knew his position well, so he always stayed with her as a best friend who shared her interests. He rarely tried to win her favor and pursue her romantically, because he knew he would fail.

"No, I'm not trying to change the subject." Renee glared at him. "Didn't I just say that each star is unique? I don't have to keep looking at just one."

"What do you mean?" Justin's breath caught, and he didn't dare move. He was afraid that even the slightest noise would ruin the atmosphere. This was the first time that Renee was willing to lean in his direction. Even though it was a bit vague, it was enough to boost his confidence.

"I mean..." After a pause, Renee pointed at the bottle of plum wine beside him. "Are we drinking this wine or not? If not, I'm going back to sleep."

"Yes, we're drinking it!" When Justin opened the bottle of wine, he could smell its unique fragrance. He fished out the glasses that he had prepared and poured a glass for each of them. He handed a glass to Renee and smiled. "I hope I can always be the one who drinks wine and enjoys the night breeze with you under the moonlight."

Renee swirled the wine glass thoughtfully, then clinked her glass with Justin's. "Let's not say anything else, and just enjoy the wine." She knew what Justin meant, but she couldn't promise him anything right now. She had no idea what the future held, and whether things would get better, but she knew she couldn't stay where she was. Everyone else had been moving forward except her, and it was meaningless.

"I want to have a new life!" Renee declared, then gulped down her wine.

Chapter 1942

For the next few days, Renee tried dating Justin. They kept things casual, but both of them intended to develop their relationship as lovers.

Renee received a text from Justin the moment she woke up: [How would you like to enjoy yourself today?] She rubbed her eyes, a sense of warmth and peace blooming in her heart. After a brief thought, she texted him back. [We've watched movies and operas, and even tried a candlelight dinner... but they all seem kind of boring!]

[What do you mean?] Justin read Renee's reply, feeling alarmed. [Are you trying to ask for a refund before the probation is over?]

[Haha! No, I just think we should try something special today.]

[Like what?]

[Like an... escape room?]

[Sounds interesting. Let's go!] Excited, Justin immediately changed into casual clothes and styled his hair with gel. He looked like a handsome college student. [Wait for me. I'll pick you up.]

[Okay!] After texting him, Renee went to wash up and get ready.

*Ren, let's go shopping later!" Leia said with a yawn as she walked into Renee's room from a guest room. She was free since it was the weekend, so she wanted to spend some time with her bestie.

"I'm afraid I can't today." Renee wiped her face in front of a mirror and pinched Leia's chin dotingly. "I'm going on a date. I'll spend time with you tomorrow, okay?"

"You're going on a date again?" Leia's eyes lit up, and she asked Renee eagerly, "Are you madly in love with Justin now? You two go on dates quite often!" She had been staying at Everheart Manor lately, and Renee went out with Justin every one or two days. It was normal for lovey-dovey couples, unlike her and Xavier. It would be hard for them to meet even once a week.

Renee smiled. "I don't know about that, but I'm trying."

"You're trying?" Leia frowned, looking puzzled. "If you both are truly in love, you don't have to try... Are you forcing yourself?" She recalled the time when she started dating Xavier. They clung to each other all the time, and the time they spent together was never enough.

"It isn't that easy for two people to fall in love with each other. It takes time to get to know someone, and maybe some wonderful chemical reaction will help that along," Renee said serenely.

"You're right, but... isn't love at first sight? If you're not attracted to a person, you'll just spend a long time getting used to them. It isn't love..." Leia sighed deeply. "Ren, you're compromising. You're just trying to make do with it."

"No, I'm not." Renee looked at her reflection in the mirror and said, "People like the excitement of love at first sight, and think true love has to be intense and forever."

Chapter 1943

"I used to think the same way. I wanted a pure and passionate love... but my thoughts have changed now. I think the most important thing in love isn't the so-called sparks or the butterflies in our stomach but..."

"But what?" Leia asked eagerly.

"Comfort!" Renee smiled. "A couple needs to spend the rest of their lives together, which is a long time. It isn't enough just being attracted to each other-being comfortable is the most important thing. If it's a very intense and passionate love, it'll end up hurting them both. It'll only bloom for a while and won't last long. In the end, the two people holding hands as they watch the sunset will keep each other company, take care of each other, and listen to each other's woes."

Leia listened to Renee's explanation and nodded thoughtfully. "You sound so logical. Attraction won't last forever, so the most important thing is compatibility!"

"Yeah, I think you and Xavier are pretty compatible. You're very relaxed when you're with him, so you both can be together forever," Renee remarked, sounding jealous.

"You can't say that." A sigh escaped Leia. 'Of course, we're relaxed when we're not fighting. But when we are, feel like beating him up. I always torture myself because of him, and I'm not confident in the relationship either. I think it's very sweet when you're lovey-dovey with someone, and when you're comfortable with them. But if you fight, all you can feel is pain. Being comfortable doesn't mean that Justin is right for you."

"So?" Renee chuckled helplessly. "Do you want me to give Haze up and go back to being entangled with that man?"

"No, I don't mean that!" Leia waved. "I want you to start again, but I don't want to see you date a guy just to get it over with. I hope you choose Justin because of love. That's fairer for the both of you."

"Got it." Renee understood Leia's concerns. She hugged Leia and said, "I know what I'm doing."

*Speaking of which, where are you guys going today?" Leia asked with curiosity.

"I'm going to try an escape room with him," Renee answered honestly.

Escape rooms were popular right now, and youngsters loved them. Leia, however, hadn't experienced one yet. "Oh, an escape room. You should have invited me! The more, the merrier. It isn't fun if only the two of you play, and if you get paired with strangers, it'll be boring."

*Sure, let's go together, Renee invited enthusiastically.

"Okay, wait. I'll get more people." Leia took out her phone enthusiastically.

Soon, Justin's car arrived at the entrance of Everheart Manor. Renee and Leia hurriedly got into the car.

"Mr. Baldwin, I'm sorry for disturbing your date. I'm sure you won't mind a few third wheels?" Leia asked sweetly as she got into the car.

Justin shrugged. "It's fine. The more, the merrier. You guys can light up my romance with Phoenix!"

Chapter 1944

They chatted and laughed before eventually reaching the most popular escape room center in Beach City Screaming Night. Screaming Night stood out and remained on the top of the review list because of its realistic scenes, thrilling levels, and scary atmosphere.

After getting out of the car, Justin paid for the game while Renee and Leia waited in the lobby.

An attendant holding a tablet explained the themes to them. "Hey, beauties! There's a total of four themes in Screaming Night. Each theme is focused on horror with four, six, eight, or ten members in a group. I recommend you take the package with six people in a group. It's suitable for the theme 'Hospital Horror'. Its storyline and gameplay are the most interesting."

"Let me check it out." Renee held the tablet and read the summary for Hospital Horror. She smiled and said brightly, "Alright, we'll pick this!"

"Okay." The attendant put in the order and looked at the three of them. "You need six people to play this game, but there are only three of you. Do you need me to get other players for you?"

"It's fine." Leia waved. "My friends will be here soon." She took her phone out and called someone. "What's taking you so long? If you're not coming, I'll find someone else." After ending the call, she told Renee and Justin, "Let's wait another five minutes. They're parking the car."

As expected, three people exited the elevator five minutes later. They were Xavier, Jeffrey, and... Stefan! The atmosphere instantly grew tense.

Leia walked forward and yanked Xavier close to pinch him harshly. She whispered, "I asked you to find someone, but why did you bring him? Were you trying to make this place a battlefield?"

Xavier shrugged innocently. "I had a meeting with Jeffrey and some directors, and Stefan happened to be there too. When you called me, they were there, so I brought them along. I couldn't ask those old directors in their fifties or sixties, could I?" Xavier had purposely put the phone on speaker mode when he answered Leia's call. Naturally, Stefan had heard everything since he was sitting beside Xavier.

Stefan hadn't reacted when Xavier sent him the photo of Renee and Justin hugging, but Stefan would always ask Xavier how close Renee and Justin were every time he met Xavier. Impatient, Xavier told Stefan that Renee and Justin had started dating, and went on dates almost every day. Stefan finally couldn't take it when Renee and Justin had wanted to try an escape room, and had shamelessly tagged along.

*Mr. Hunt, how rare! To what do we owe this honor?' Leia switched targets to Stefan. Stefan looked like he was about to negotiate an important business deal in his suit and leather shoes. "Isn't it beneath an elite like you to do an escape room? It'll be a waste of your time. Also... Why aren't you keeping your witch girlfriend company?"

"Lei!" Xavier scolded. "We're all old friends, and it's just a game. What's important is we're having fun. Stop bringing up irrelevant things!"

"I don't want to, but..." Leia didn't want to let Stefan off the hook that easily. She was furious with him and wanted to vent her frustrations.

'Lei, Xavier's right-we just need another player. You don't have to be so serious about it." Renee extended her hand to Stefan. "You're welcome to join us, Mr. Hunt."

Chapter 1945

"It's my honor, Ms. Everheart." Stefan was expressionless as he shook Renee's hand, equally formal. Everyone was speechless. It was so obvious they were pretending to be unaffected.

Justin's heart clenched when he saw them holding hands, but he forced a wide smile onto his face. He walked over and held Renee's shoulders as he said to her soothingly, "Relax, it's just a game. I'll protect you later."

Renee seemed to realize something and immediately let go of Stefan's hand. She looked up at Justin and smiled sweetly, saying in an unusually coy voice. "You promise? I'll hide behind you later, okay?"

Justin patted his chest. "Of course!"

"Hmph!" Stefan snorted in disdain, making the atmosphere even more awkward. Leia and Xavier looked at each other and subconsciously took a step back. It really was a battlefield!

Jeffrey was the only one who didn't understand what was going on. He stood in the middle of the three of them eagerly and said, "Renee, it's my first time doing an escape room. They said it's pretty scary and challenges our intelligence. You're the bravest and smartest person I know, so I'll stick with you, okay?"

"No problem!" Renee looked at Jeffrey and touched his head dotingly. "Just follow me. Let's go!" She held Jeffrey's arm as they followed the attendant, then asked Jeffrey, "Have you gotten used to filming yet? You seem to have lost a lot of weight."

Jeffrey answered obediently, "Yeah, the crew is so nice to me. The director even said that I was born to be this character. I've been working on horseback riding every day, so I might look a lot slimmer, but I have muscles too. I think being an actor is very fulfilling. I'm very happy!" Jeffrey babbled happily. He was no longer as self-conscious as before, and looked confident and optimistic like any young man his age.

Renee was happy to hear it. She felt that her decision to help Jeffrey join the entertainment circle was a good one. 'Is that so? Do you have muscles? Show me your abs,' she joked and lifted his shirt. She saw muscles on his abdomen that came with nice lines.

'Do you like them, Renee? You can touch them if you want to,' Jeffrey invited enthusiastically. It might sound cheesy if any other man said it, but Jeffrey had no impure motives. He simply wanted to make Renee happy.

Stefan and Justin followed them with matching annoyed expressions, and said at the same time, 'Pretentious brat!'

Chapter 1946

The attendant brought them to an abandoned building. It looked like a hospital with six floors.

'Players, you'll start your adventure here. I'll give each of you a walkie-talkie and handbook, and you can clear the levels based on the clues you find. The attendant passed them the items, then continued, "The handbooks include the background of the story and the things you need to pay attention to. Enjoy yourselves!" The attendant waved and left.

'It's living up to its name as the top escape room in Beach City. This building seems so real and gloomy. I feel like someone must have died here!' Leia looked up at the tall and decaying hospital as she swallowed nervously, goosebumps prickling her skin.

"It's said that the shop owner purposely bought an abandoned hospital to create this theme. This hospital was built one thousand years ago. In the past, many people came here for treatment, but all of them would die a mysterious death. This place is said to be haunted!" Justin flipped through the handbook, looking intrigued. "Rumour has it that the hospital administration colluded with businessmen to conduct illegal experiments on the patients, and at last, the patients' families found out. The hospital used cruel means to kill them off to keep their secrets, so their angry ghosts lurk in the hospital all year round. Gradually, the hospital started to collapse, and nobody dared to approach it."

"Is it that evil?" A chill ran down Leia's spine, and she timidly hid behind Xavier. "Let's not play this. Today is Halloween, and there's no point in getting bad luck from playing this game."

It was rare to see the tough Leia act timidly, and Xavier acted like the perfect boyfriend by pulling her into his arms protectively. "We should believe in science; There are no gods or ghosts in this world. I'm sure this place just made all that up to scare people. We'll expose them today! If you get scared, just hide in my arms. I'll protect you."

'Don't forget your promise.' Leia clung to Xavier. "This is the first time I've seen you this manly. I'm glad I called you."

"Of course! I'm the most manly man in Beach City, you'll realize it later. You've got to spend more time with me to know."

Their lovey-dovey moments were too much for the others.

'Just stop with your pretentiousness. Let's go!' Stefan kicked Xavier and scoffed.

Everyone had something weighing on their minds as they approached the entrance of the hospital and pushed the old door open. With a creak, the door opened to reveal the hospital lobby. There was a shabby registration desk, moldy chairs, crooked dustbins, and flower pots.

'It's so weird... Should we go in?' Leia hid behind Xavier and did not dare to move.

"What's there to be afraid of? There are six floors in this hospital. Isn't it embarrassing if we leave before even making it past the door' Renee declared, then summoned her courage and walked into the lobby. Then, she studied the surroundings carefully. The paint was coming off the walls, and moss was growing on the comers. There were old-fashioned chandeliers in the dark hall, giving everything an eerie vibe.

"Here I come, Phoenix!" Justin eagerly followed Renee.

Chapter 1947

When the others saw that, they walked into the hospital one by one. Stefan, however, stood at the door, observing his surroundings vigilantly.

"Stefan, why are you still standing there? You're the last to go in." Xavier waved at Stefan and said teasingly, "You scolded me just now, but how come you're so timid now? Don't be scared. Look at how brave Renee is-she was the first to go in. You just need to hide behind her and let her protect you."

Stefan glared at Xavier and said coldly, "You all go ahead and look for clues. I'll bring up the rear." Although it was a childish game, he would always take note of his surroundings. If all of them went into the hospital, they might be doomed if there was a trap inside the hospital or if there were other clues that were not in the lobby.

"What clues should we be looking for?" Jeffrey asked naively, "Should we be looking for a key or treasure? I don't see any treasure here."

"We're here to find treasure. Look around and see if you can find any gold or jewelry!" Renee patted Jeffrey's head and tried to comfort him the way she would with Adie and Abby. She did see Jeffrey as her older son in some aspects since she grew up with him. Knowing he was scared, she made the game into a treasure hunt for him.

"Yeah, I love finding treasure!" Jeffrey's eyes lit up, and he said eagerly, "Don't worry, Renee-I'm an expert in finding treasure. You know I've loved looking for treasure in the sea since I was a child. If it's easy for me in such a big ocean, this hospital with just a few floors is nothing."

"Wow, that's great. Go ahead!" Renee smiled and gave Jeffrey a thumbs-up, and off he went in search of treasure.

"Now I know this guy isn't a brat-he's an idiot!" Justin muttered in disbelief, his hostility towards Jeffrey decreasing. There was no way this naive and pure kid could be a rival in love. Stefan, however, was his biggest threat.

"But what clues should we be looking for?" Leia asked, slowly getting used to the surroundings. She stood in the middle of the lobby and looked around.

"Let's read the background of the story," Renee suggested.

"That makes sense! Listen up, guys. I'll start reading." Leia took out her handbook and flipped through it. Under the dim light of the chandelier, she cleared her throat and said, "Hello, welcome to my world. My name is Jayla. I was a patient in this hospital twenty years ago."

Chapter 1948

"I got a strange disease, and the doctors and nurses had no idea what it was. Eventually, I died in the hospital, but my family insisted that I didn't die because of the disease. They claimed that the hospital staff had harmed and killed me, so they refused to take my body away from the hospital, insistent on finding out the truth... However, something happened, and my soul became trapped in the hospital. Now, I wander the hospital every night. Please help me find the murderer and take me away. Please help my soul rest in peace." Leia finished reading the background story, and she took a deep breath, her heart pounding. "Did this place make all that up, or did it really happen? It's so creepy!"

"*Find the murderer and help the soul rest in peace," Justin summarized and snapped his fingers. "That's our objective. Let's get going!" As a programming genius, his critical thinking skills were top-notch. He loved mysteries and solving puzzles, so he was looking forward to this.

They stood in the lobby and started looking for clues. Suddenly, a dark shadow flashed by.

"Ah, it's a ghost!" Leia was the first to notice the dark shadow, and she screamed, clinging tightly to Xavier. "Did you see that shadow on the wall? It's a ghost! It had long hair and a long tongue! Oh, I want to stop playing this game... It's so scary! I want to leave," Leia babbled anxiously. Although she knew that the game hadn't even started and others would laugh at her for a year if she left, she still didn't want to stay. She couldn't help it-she felt that staying alive was more important than adventure.

"*Calm down. This place is doing these things on purpose to make the atmosphere scarier. If you leave now, you'll only be giving them free business, Xavier tried to comfort Leia, who was pale with fear. Truth be told, he was scared too. The dark shadow really did look like a ghost watching them in the corner.

"Guys, come here. What's this?" Renee had been looking for clues, and had finally found a rusty iron hook in a corner of the wall. Everyone went over to see the iron hook in Renee's hand, except for Stefan who was standing at the door.

"What is this hook for?" Justin took it and studied it curiously. "Is the black stain on it rust, or..."

"Blood?" Renee chimed in. She had sniffed the iron hook when she held it just now, and it smelled like blood. "If it is blood, does it have something to do with Jayla's death?"

Suddenly, there was a loud bang, and a huge net fell onto them.

"Ah, we're going to die!" Leia howled, struggling wildly in the net.

'Calm down, it's just a net. We won't die. We'll figure a way out. Xavier hugged Leia, patiently trying to comfort her.

Chapter 1949

It was a blessing in disguise. Xavier rarely had the chance to play the protective boyfriend back then, so he was overjoyed that he could now.

"Renee, I... I'm feeling scared!" Jeffrey leaned against Renee, looking helpless. "I used to be afraid of nets. We used them to fish, but now... we're trapped in one! I'm sure we'll be chopped into little pieces like those fish!"

"Of course that won't happen. You're so cute!" Renee wasn't scared, she just found the net uncomfortable. She tried to pat Jeffrey's hand through the net. "Jeffrey, you're a son of the sea. You've been through a lot and survived it, so don't be scared!"

"A son of the sea? Is that like the king of the sea? Does that mean he's a playboy who has plenty of fish in his sea?" Justin growled. He was also squeezed in with Jeffrey, and he couldn't take the way he always begged for Renee's protection. It made Renee protective of him, and then Justin couldn't be protective of Renee...

"The king of the sea?" Jeffrey looked happy with the nickname, and tried to turn to Justin with a naive grin. "I like the sound of that, Justin! It fits me since I grew up on the beach, and the sea is like my home. I would like to become the king of the sea!"

"Ugh..." Defeated, Justin cleared his throat. "Since you like it so much, I'll call you that from now on. It suits you well."

"Can the two of you stop talking nonsense and at least try to appreciate this escape room?" Renee grumbled. The center put so much thought into this, so hurry up and think of a way to escape. King of the sea... Do you think you're a fish?"

"Well, I'm a fish in your sea, right?" Justin muttered.

"What did you say?" Renee asked curiously.

'Nothing. Let's get out of here!" Justin sighed and started tugging the net, studying it carefully to figure out how to escape.

Suddenly, the rumbling sound of a chainsaw echoed in the empty lobby. It grew louder, accompanied by heavy footsteps.

"W-What is that?" Leia shuddered in despair. She felt like she had just spent money to get tortured.

"My friends, you finally came... The sound of the chainsaw lingered in the lobby as a dark figure stood there. He laughed at them. "I've been waiting for you for a long time. Did you come for Jayla?"

"Yeah, you... Did you kill Jayla?" Leia asked tremulously, holding Xavier's arm tightly. Even though she was scared, a small part of her was enjoying the game.

Chapter 1950

'No, I'm Jayla's guardian!' The dark figure boomed, the chainsaw roaring in his hands. It felt like the god of death was approaching them. 'Everyone who enters this hospital wants to harm Jayla. All of you should be punished!' "Ah!" Everyone squeezed together anxiously, trying to get away from the intruder.

Even Xavier was terrified at this point. "What should we do? We're trapped! If we wait any longer, he's going to cut us up!"

"There has to be a way to resolve this," Renee mumbled thoughtfully. She and Renee were both calm as they examined the net, trying to find a way to escape.

"Do we need to use the iron hook to cut the net open?" Renee stared at the iron hook, feeling like there had to be a use for it.

"I don't think so. The net is too thick, so the iron hook won't be able to cut it open," Justin disagreed.

"Not necessarily." Renee kept studying the net and said carefully, "The net is symmetrical, and the iron hook is sharp and thin. If we cut the net according to the lines, we might be able to cut a hole in it and escape."

"Stop overthinking-that has to be it!" Terrified, Leia grabbed the hook from Renee and cut the net according to the lines.

"Are you ready, my friends? You're about to die." The figure walked over to them slowly. He raised the chainsaw, smiling bitterly. "My Jayla is the purest girl in the world... Why can't you guys let her go?"

"What do you mean? We don't know what you're talking about." Leia hissed in frustration as she cut the net.

"How could you not know? You villains desired Jayla's charms and forcefully made her yours. Then, she got pregnant..." The dark figure said gloomily, "You locked Jayla up in the cellar to keep the affair a secret. She couldn't ask for help, so she could only await her death in the dark."

'No, you're wrong about us! Let us go. We'll avenge Jayla, okay?' Leia was scared at first, but now she felt like the man was too absorbed in the game. He kept talking and ignoring their words, and the iron hook was too blunt to cut through the net. It looked like they wouldn't be able to escape.

"This guy doesn't seem to be faking it. Is he a ghost who snuck into this place? Does he want to kill us to offer us as sacrifices to Jayla?"

"How can that be?" Justin scoffed. "Think about it rationally-he should be a middle-aged man if he really is Jayla's guardian, but he just sounds like a college student..." Even though he said that, Justin still made the sign of the cross and mumbled, "Dear God, please keep us safe." He was worried that Leia was right and that a real ghost had snuck in.

Renee, however, was rather calm. She said to the figure, "Tell me how Jayla died."

*All of you harmed her... Sanctimonious people like you harmed and killed her!"

"Let me ask you another question: Does this iron hook belong to her?" Renee asked quickly.