

REBORN, REAWAKENED, REKINDLED

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Bailey, get me some reliable housekeepers from an agency. They need to be whizzes in the kitchen, and a dietitian certificate would be a bonus, I directed Bailey, a pile of Supplements seated next to me in the back seat. "Sure thing, ma'am, Bailey responded. After marrying Neil, both our folks suggested we hire help for chores, gardening, cooking, but I was head over heels in love with him, so I wanted to do everything myself and turned down their advice. Our little love nest was just for the two of us – I didn't want anyone else invading our private space, like our kitchen and living room. You could imagine, it wasn't exactly a bed of roses. Being reborn, I was not going to chase pointless dreams anymore. Back home, with my Prada handbag in hand, I led, while Bailey trailed behind with a bag full of supplements. Opening the door, I saw Neil coming down the stairs, cufflinks being adjusted, his casual movements so charming. "Bailey, you can hit the road now," I told him as I put my bag down. Bailey left the supplements on the table, saluted Neil, and made a swift exit. "We have a cocktail party in an hour, your folks will be there too. Get ready and come with me," Neil coldly informed me, seemingly oblivious to the pile of stuff I brought back. He never wanted me to accompany him unless the occasion required me, like when my parents were there. Since being reborn, I hadn't visited my parents yet. Not because I was ungrateful, but because I felt guilty, and ashamed. I didn't dare to see them. "Okay, cool." I got up and headed upstairs. For the past two weeks, I'd been busy shopping for a new wardrobe. The styles and designs were nothing like my old clothes. I picked a red dress, off-shoulder, with a sheer layer over the chest and a

fishtail design that showed off my slender legs. I was skinny, but my skin was smooth. I'm pretty

content with everything except my chest. The innocent style just didn't cut it for me anymore. After all, I was not 20 anymore.

After doing my makeup, I put on crystal earrings and a matching necklace. I was sure they'd catch the light and sparkle. I used to keep a low profile, but now I wanted to stand out. Neil was waiting downstairs, on the phone. He didn't react when he heard me coming down, not even a glance in my direction. I didn't care and headed to the car to wait for him. Minutes later, Neil got in, not sparing me a single glance from the moment he got in until we pulled out. The entire ride, we didn't exchange a single word. He was focused on driving, I was texting on my phone. I added Oscar on WhatsApp and was chatting with him. Me: [Oscar, if the hospital food is not to your taste, I can have some better food sent over.] Oscar: [No need, ma'am, it's decent.] Me: I forgot to get you some supplements today. I'll bring some when I visit you tomorrow.] Oscar. You really don't have to go to such lengths!] Me: it's not a big deal, I'm the one who got you in the hospital, so don't feel embarrassed. Let me know if you need anything.] Oscar's family was about as well-off as Bonnie's. Just like how Neil was the wealthy, handsome man in front of Bonnie, I could play the role of the beautiful, cultured woman in front of Oscar. In a way, it made us equals. This brought a sense of balance to my heart. At a red light, the car came to a stop. Neil finally moved his neck to glance at me. He seemed to realize my change in appearance, but his words were still sharp, "You're wasting that dress." I guessed those scenes in TV shows where the female lead's change in style left the male lead speechless were all made up. I put my phone down and cupped my chest, retorting, "Are my boobs really that small? I specifically wore a thick padded bra today." This action darkened Neil's face. He coldly said, "Irene, can you please watch your manners?"

"Why should I?" I shot back. I'd been watching my manners for years. What good did it do? People who'd experienced death tended to see things differently. Might as well let loose. "Don't forget who you are," Neil's tone was harsh. He never treated me as his wife yet expected me to limit myself this role. I turned to look at the view outside the window, not in the mood to speak. I remember being thrilled whenever Neil initiated a conversation in the past, always trying to keep it going. Upon arriving at the party, Neil and I acted like a couple. After exchanging pleasantries with some business associates, I sat down to rest. Coincidentally, the young woman sitting next to me was Fiona, the one rumored to be close with Neil recently. "Fiona, why are you sitting here alone?" Another woman approached Fiona. "Just taking a break, Tessa. Why don't you join me?" Fiona's voice was sweet. I noticed Neil seemed to like women with pleasant voices. Bonnie's voice was pleasant, and so were the women he'd been rumored with before. The two began chatting next to me, seemingly unaware of my presence. Tessa was joking around, "Mr. Whitmore is over there. Why don't you go say hi?" "Don't be ridiculous. He's a married man," Fiona retorted in a teasing tone. "His wife is just a figurehead. Everyone knows you two have been close lately. I heard he bought you a house?" Tessa asked, green with envy. "Yeah, he's really generous with me," Fiona boasted, "I don't know why he's so good to me. I'm really lucky to have met him." Neil was generous with everyone, except his figurehead wife. Every ex-girlfriend of his had nothing but praise for him after breaking up. That was the power of money. At that moment, my parents walked over, seeing me sitting alone, they asked, "Rena, where's Neil? Why ain't he hanging around with you?" Hearing Neil's name, Fiona and Tessa immediately turned their heads to look at me, their expressions grew curious.

I stood up and hooked my arm around my mom's, "What's the point of hanging out with him? It's just some boring business chatter. I'd rather shoot the breeze with you guys, it's way more fun." My mom gave me a surprised

look, it'd been ages since I last acted all spoiled and cute around her. 1/2
17:55 Chapter 5 You two ladies catch up, I'll go find Gregory and the gang”
My dad was an honest bloke, he didn't notice my change. He cheerfully went
off to catch up with his old buddies.

