



Chapter 70

The woman wasn't especially pretty, but her smile made her seem approachable.

Dominic smiled back. "I'm heading to City Plaza. I hope I'm not bothering you?"

After all, she'd gotten in the taxi first. He glanced at his watch. It was only three in the afternoon. Lillith wouldn't get out of school for a while yet, so there was no need to rush.

"No... Not at all." The woman hesitated, her voice slightly hoarse.

Dominic nodded and said nothing more.

Then she leaned forward curiously. "Hey, young man, what happened to your face?"

Instinctively, Dominic touched his cheek. Pain flared where it was swollen, and he drew in a sharp breath. Only then did he remember how battered he must look. No wonder she'd been staring earlier. He had assumed it was because of his looks.

Feeling awkward, he gave a sheepish smile. "It's nothing. Just a little disagreement with someone."

The woman clicked her tongue. "Oh, young man, you shouldn't be fighting at your age! What if something serious happened? You'd be the one to suffer. Being alive is more important than anything else..."

She kept talking beside him, and Dominic felt a headache coming on. He nodded quickly. "Right, right, you're absolutely right, ma'am."

His perfunctory tone didn't bother her. She continued with heartfelt



sincerity, "You must listen to me. I've been through things! Out in the world, the most important thing is to protect yourself. Nothing matters more than safety."

Dominic admitted she had a point, but he couldn't help feeling helpless. Of all people to share a taxi with, he had to meet a talkative stranger. If their roles were reversed, he couldn't imagine striking up a conversation so easily.

Just then, the taxi jolted to a stop.

Dominic lurched forward, nearly hitting the seat in front of him. Looking ahead, he saw nothing unusual. "Hey, what's going on?"

The driver wiped sweat from his forehead, forced a nervous smile, and said, "Uh... Maybe you should take another cab. Something urgent came up..."

Dominic frowned. "At least drop me somewhere I can find another ride. It's hard to catch a taxi here."

The driver kept smiling, but fear clouded his eyes. "Ahem, don't worry about the fare. I really have something to take care of..."

"What about her—" Dominic started, then froze. Slowly, he turned toward the woman.

The driver's face drained of color. He swallowed hard and stammered, "Please, sir... Have mercy..."

When Dominic had first gotten in, the driver had assumed he was talking on the phone. But after checking the rearview mirror, he realized Dominic hadn't been holding one and had been chatting and smiling at empty air. The sight terrified him.



Dominic understood instantly. 'Another spirit... No wonder the driver is terrified.'

He opened the door and stepped out.

"Hey, young man, wait! Don't close the door!" the woman called.

Dominic paused and held it open. She stepped out, and as soon as the door shut, the taxi roared off like a race car.

Standing under the sunlight, the woman looked perfectly at ease. She studied Dominic curiously. "You know what I am, don't you? Aren't you afraid?"

Dominic smiled. "You're not the first."

The woman blinked. "You mean... there are others like me?"

Clearly, she couldn't bring herself to say the word.

Dominic chuckled. "Of course. Every second, someone dies in this world."

She nodded slowly. "That's true."