

The Untouchable Ex Wife by Mizuki Sei

Chapter 351

Xavier instantly felt deflated.

Renee was indeed not like ordinary women. She was way too smart. She could easily see through him. It wasn't as easy as he thought.

Never mind the other stuff—Xavier had spent the entire evening running around the dock, and he couldn't even find Renee. Defeated, that was when he finally went to Stefan to gather some intel.

Feeling a little awkward, Xavier tried to change the topic. "Stefan, what are you doing? You're holding a bamboo tube. Are you performing a magic trick?"

Stefan ignored Xavier and started to focus on shaking the

bamboo tube. After five or six shakes, a bamboo stick fell to the ground.

The old man picked it up and read the text on the stick, and a complicated expression emerged on his face. "What are you looking for, young man?" he asked.

"I want to know if she and I still have a chance," Stefan said

coldly. Needless to say, by 'she,' he was referring to Renee.

The old man let out a long sigh. "The breeze comes and goes; the beginning and the end of fate originates from the heart." Stefan frowned. "What do you mean?"

"Like the breeze, your fate with her is uncertain. You might say it's over, but it's not completely over. Based on the bamboo stick's inscription, you might have no contact with her whatsoever for the next four years. What happens after four years depends entirely on the two of you. If you miss each other, the energy field will grow, and there's still a chance you might get back together. If either side gives up, fate itself will mark the end of your relationship for good."

The old man's explanation was detailed and straightforward.

"..." Stefan seemed to be deep in thought. He remained silent for a long time.

Xavier, who was listening next to him, was extremely annoyed. "Tsk. You're a con artist. You might as well have said nothing. You say they're over for good one second and the opposite in the next second. That basically covers both the good and the bad."

Xavier couldn't resist consoling Stefan. "Stefan, don't listen to this old man. I've already given the order to seal the entire dock off. No matter where she hides, she won't be able to escape. One of us will find her first. You won't have to wait for four years!"

The old man wasn't upset. He stroked his beard. "Young man, if you're not happy about what I said, you can draw a bamboo stick of your own."

Xavier reached for the bamboo tube. He closed his eyes and began shaking them.

Soon, a bamboo stick fell out.

"The phoenix has risen from the ash. Romance is a single step away!" Xavier read the words aloud. He couldn't conceal his excitement. "Hey, this is interesting! According to this, I'm about to get lucky. Will I really be able to win Renee over?"

The old man chuckled. "This bamboo stick certainly is one that signifies very good fortune. It's hinting that you'll meet the love of your life tonight."

Stefan and Xavier reacted in two drastically different ways upon hearing this.

Stefan's facial expression turned extremely cold. Xavier, on the other hand, had a beaming smile on his face.

"The love of my life... It has to be Renee!" Xavier instantly clapped. "Master, I was wrong. You're way too accurate!"

Oddly enough, Xavier's phone rang. His subordinate told him that Renee had been found, but it was a little complicated. Xavier was immediately asked to make his way to the underground casino in the antique market.

"Stefan, Renee is in the underground casino. I guess she's in trouble. For fairness' sake, let's quickly make our way there together. Whoever rescues her first gets to be with her. What do you say?"

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After finishing his sentence, Xavier ran off the same way he did

before. "How childish!" Stefan rubbed his temples and shook his head speechlessly.

However, he was a little worried that something bad might happen to Renee. He stood up and prepared to leave.

The old man stopped him. "Young man, that is your friend's fate. You don't have to get involved. Why don't you stay here and browse through these treasures? Perhaps, something you buy might one day become the thing that brings you and the love of your life together."

It was strange. Whereas others would've thought this old man was making nonsense up, Stefan trusted him and stayed. He scanned the things on display, and that was when a silk object caught his eye.

To be more precise, the art on the silk object caught his

attention. "How much is this?" Stefan asked.

"Since you and I met by fate, I'll sell it to you for a dollar. Consider it as a payment for drawing the bamboo stick." The old man then put the silk object in a box and handed it to Stefan. "You've got a good eye. This silk object is very lucky to have found you as its owner."

"Thank you." Stefan accepted it.

Although he still had many questions, he recalled that Renee's situation was still unclear. He stopped talking and quickly made his way to the underground casino.

The underground casino below Water Dock's antique market was a dangerous place. It was a place unbounded by the rule of law, where only the size of one's fists mattered.

This place was dark, bloody, and full of violence. Countless lives were taken here. Stefan couldn't understand why Renee would come to a place like this.

She was constantly looking for trouble!

It was very crowded in the underground casino. There was a heavy scent of various types of tobacco present. One could also smell danger in the air.

In this lawless place, anything could be bought and sold. Gamblers stood around tables with intense gazes in their eyes. They could make a lot of money with a snap of the fingers, but they could also lose all their money just as quickly.

As soon as Stefan walked in, he frowned at the disgusting stench that permeated his nose.

After casually scanning the surroundings, he saw a bloody heart on a casino table that was still beating.

A sexy female dealer in a tight black leather jacket and leather skirt, who also had on a pair of bunny ears pointed at the heart. "Everyone, listen up. This is a cow's heart that was just extracted. It's still beating. If you eat it raw, it'll improve your stamina and extend your lifespan. You'll need a bit of luck to make it yours... Come on now. Place your bets!"

Everyone began placing their bets. The dealer swayed her hips from side to side while she rolled the dice.

After the results were announced, a plump man found out he had won. He smiled widely and began gnawing at the heart. His mouth was covered in blood, and everyone cheered.

Feeling sick to his stomach, Stefan quickly looked away.

The heart might have belonged to a cow, but it looked no different from a human heart. The sight of it was revolting.

When Stefan looked away, he saw other similar gambles taking place. It didn't look like the human world. It looked more like hell where demons roamed.

He'd heard that the underground casino in Water Dock was famous for the wrong reasons, but he didn't know it was this bad.

Stefan's haloemia was kicking in. He found it increasingly difficult to breathe, and his head was getting heavy. He probably wouldn't even last for a minute longer.

After taking a deep breath, he forced himself to keep searching.

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Stefan murmured to himself, "Renee, oh, Renee. You're such a pain in the ass. You're going to be in deep trouble once I get my hands on you!"

The casino was huge. People gathered in large groups in each area, but there was one particular area with the greatest number of people. Eager gamblers surrounded a round casino table as they made excited cat-calls.

Stefan instantly knew something fishy was going on, and he quickly strode over.

Unsurprisingly, novelxo.com there was a young woman all tied up on the table.

The woman barely had any clothes on—the white silk dress that concealed little of her skin was extremely thin, while a feathered mask covered the upper half of her face. Curled up into a ball in the corner, she was evidently trembling.

Stefan felt a tightness in his chest. He clenched his fists and prepared to charge forward.

That's because he could tell the woman's facial features were nearly identical to Renee's despite the feathered mask she was wearing.

She had the same pointy nose, the same pink, smooth lips, and even the same neck and collarbone. She was, in essence, Renee's doppelganger.

However, a tall, muscular man held the rope around her.

"This is high-quality meat. If you win, you can use her yourself or share her with others. She's definitely worth the money. Who else wants to place a bet?!" The man shouted and forcefully tugged the rope, causing the woman to moan as she was violently jerked forward.

The sound of her moaning was like a battle song that motivated the men instantly, who mindlessly stepped forward and started placing their bets!

When Stefan saw this, he stopped moving completely.

He stood there quietly and seemed to be thinking about something. The facial expression on his face turned colder.

Right then, Xavier, who stood at the center of the crowd, started saying something.

"I'm counting down from three. Hand her over, or you'll all be in trouble!"

The man holding Renee came across people like Xavier every day. Naturally, he was very calm. "Sir, everyone likes a beautiful woman. If you want her, you'll have to place your bet. If you win, you can take her with you. If you lose, you'll have to wait for your next opportunity!"

Xavier, however, lacked patience. He sneered. "Three, two..."

When he counted down, the security staff in the casino picked up their

weapons. Despite the hostility, Xavier wasn't afraid at all.

Although the casino held a lot of power in this area, they were nothing compared to the Stuart

family. By the time the security guards started moving, Xavier had already sent his men to close

off all exits. The security guards were now pointing their guns at Xavier.

The man jumped off the table and shouted at Xavier. "You ignorant fool. How dare you stir up trouble here? Go to hell!" He swung his fist at Xavier's face, but Xavier dodged it and kicked the man with force.

The man was sent flying. Even the chain in his hand was sent flying.

Seeing how Renee would soon tumble off the table along with the chain, Xavier quickly reached out and caught her firmly. Her body was light as a feather. It was lighter than he remembered!

Xavier's heart raced. He felt like a young kid who was touching a girl for the first time. He held onto Renee stiffly while asking if she was alright in a nervous tone. "Renee, are you alright? I rescued you again!"

Stefan stood at the outermost section of the crowd while he watched the entire saga without any emotion on his face. It was almost as if he was watching a movie and had nothing to do with it.

Meanwhile, the man on the ground, humiliated, became enraged. He called out to the hundreds of bodyguards, "Open fire! I want them torn to shreds!"

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"Watch out!" Stefan shouted from the edge of the crowd.

After all, this was someone else's turf. Xavier's behavior was too conspicuous, and he was putting himself in a passively dangerous situation.

"You actually have an accomplice!" The man discovered Stefan and gave instructions to another group of security guards. "Capture him and shoot him right away!"

"How dare you?" Xavier, who was relatively calm in the beginning, instantly lost his cool.

He gently put Renee down before glaring coldly at the man. "You can be rude to me, but you're asking for trouble if you talk to Stefan like that!"

The man was dumbfounded by Xavier's reaction.

He'd met fearless people before, but none audacious to such an extent. Xavier was practically dicing with death. How was Xavier brave enough to provoke him like this?

Without saying a word, Xavier delivered a kick to the man's stomach. "Get on your knees and apologize to Stefan!"

Stefan felt a little speechless. 'You can get on your knees, but that won't be necessary.' Stefan wanted to say this out loud, but he didn't.

He was only an observer, but Xavier's action literally dragged him into the eye of the storm. It seemed he was going to have to take a few bullets no matter what. He had Xavier to thank for this.

By now, the security guards were all aiming their guns at Xavier and Stefan. However, they were overwhelmed by the two's strong presence novelxo.com fast update. Nobody dared to open fire, and none wanted to become the scapegoat either.

"Let the two of them go and ask your manager to come here. I'll take full responsibility." Stefan kept his hands in his pockets and looked down at the man who was on the ground.

"Stefan, you should leave with Renee. I'm better at dealing with situations like this," Xavier said.

Nearly ninety percent of the entertainment industry in Beach City was monopolized by the Stuart family, and most of the industry happened to involve grey areas. Dealing with situations like this was naturally a piece of cake for Xavier.

"Do you all think I'm dead?" Xavier stepped harder on the man's head. His face was red from rage. "Go on, fire, you idiots! Do you think this is funny?"

The security guards could no longer stay still and got ready to make their move.

Just as all hell was about to break loose, they heard someone shouting. "Hold your fire! Hold your fire!"

The man was about to start yelling again, but his face turned pale when he saw who the person

shouting was. At the same time, the security guards with guns in their hands lowered their

heads in fear. "H-Hank!"

It seemed that this was their manager.

Hank seemed like a cultured man in his forties.

He ran past the crowd before directly approaching Xavier and Stefan. "Mr. Stuart, I'm terribly sorry. I had no idea you were visiting with your friend today. It's all our fault. Please forgive my subordinates for their ignorance..."

After saying this, Hank kicked the man several times and pointed at his head. "You're a worthless piece of crap. How dare you offend Mr. Stuart? Did you know this casino wouldn't have been built if his father hadn't approved it back then? You're biting the hand that feeds you. I'll have you killed!"

Xavier raised his brows when he saw that the man was about to be shot in his head. "That's enough. Stefan doesn't like seeing blood. Let's stop here for today. Just be mindful in the future."

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"Yes!" Hank nodded repeatedly. The man on the ground nearly peed his pants. "Thank you for sparing my life... Thank you for sparing my life," he muttered continuously.

It wasn't their fault for being so humble. The Stuart family was leagues above them. They might not care about the law when it came to grey areas like these, but they wouldn't dare go against the Stuart family unless they no longer wanted to dabble in this field.

In actual fact, Xavier was only so arrogant because he had told his subordinate to inform Hank about the situation before he went there.

"This casino is simply too gory. I can't stay here for another minute!" Xavier covered his nose and exclaimed in disgust.

"It can't be helped, Mr. Stuart. This is the only way the casino can attract people. It's messy, but it's also where all things are possible. Here, you can win anything under the sun, things that you'll never be able to buy anywhere else!" Hank wasn't the owner of this underground casino. He was, at most, the person in charge.

Over the past few years, under the behest of his boss from behind the scenes, he had managed the place so well that it became world-famous.

Xavier sneered. "Yes, you can get anything here. You're so brave that you even put up Stefan's wife for grabs. Anyone would think you have guts of steel!"

Hank broke out in a cold sweat upon hearing this. "Dare I ask... Is Stefan H

Group's..." "Exactly!" Xavier cut him off.

"Oh my... This is bad!" Hank felt the weight of the world bearing down upon him.

The Hunts were the leading family among the eight most powerful families in Beach City. In fact, the Hunt family was even more powerful than the Stuart family. These people who kidnapped Stefan's wife and tried to gamble her away practically had a death wish!

Hank kicked the man on the ground several times more. "Damn it! How dare you kidnap Mr. Hunt's wife? Do you wish to die?"

Didn't I tell you that you could touch anyone, save for one member of the eight most powerful families? You've gotten us in deep sh*t!"

The man took the beating while he carefully tried to defend himself. "I-I didn't kidnap Mr. Hunt's wife. More accurately speaking, I didn't kidnap anyone... This woman... She's Mr. Hunt's wife? I didn't kidnap her. She sold herself to us!"

Everyone looked at Renee, the woman in a white dress and a feathered mask, whose mouth was still sealed with tape.

Xavier was so angry that he could kill the man himself. "How dare you make up such nonsense. Stefan's wife has millions in assets. Why would she sell herself for so little?"

The man begged and cried. "It's true. I wouldn't dare lie. She asked me for 150 thousand dollars. After I transferred the money to her account, she said I could do anything to her. If you don't believe me, ask her!"

"Are you serious?" Xavier found it strange.

Renee owned a technology company and a law firm. She even got a huge sum of money from Stefan. Logically speaking, she wouldn't have sold herself for 150 thousand dollars.

Xavier walked up to Renee and was about to take off her mask when something suddenly occurred to him. He stopped. "Stefan, you should do it... You found her first. Rightfully, it's you who gets to do it," Xavier said.

Although Xavier was attracted to Renee, he told himself to keep his feelings in check.

It was fine to make certain jokes, but he needed to know his place when it really mattered.

To his surprise, Stefan shrugged nonchalantly. "Didn't the old man say that this is your fate? It has nothing to do with me. Hurry up. She's waiting for you to rescue her!"

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After Stefan finished his sentence, he turned around and left without even looking at Renee.

"Hey, Stefan. Are you leaving already?" Xavier realized that his joke had gone too far with the joke when he watched Stefan leave. "I was only joking, and you took it seriously. Don't worry. Renee still belongs to you. Even if I rescued her, she's still yours. I won't do anything stupid!"

"It doesn't matter. Do whatever you want." Stefan made an 'okay' gesture with his hand before walking out of the controversial place.

Xavier couldn't make Stefan stay, and he stood there

dumbfounded. Was Stefan so generous that he'd give his wife away?

Xavier turned around and looked at Renee, who was still tied up. She looked like a gift waiting to be unwrapped. For some unknown reason, Xavier felt embarrassed.

"Renee, don't be afraid. Stefan is probably just jealous. He's gone. I'll have to take care of you for now." Xavier had never spoken to Renee like this. It only served to show what a gentleman he was.

However, at this point, the more politely he behaved, the more he seemed to be making his intentions obvious.

It couldn't be helped. Renee's dress was so thin that it was nearly transparent. Anyone would have inappropriate thoughts!

"Mmmph!" Renee's mouth was sealed with tape, and she couldn't speak. She could only make muffled sounds while shaking her head fervently. She seemed to be in a state of shock.

"Don't panic. I'll untie you first," Xavier said before proceeding to untie Renee.

The rope was rather thick, and it was wrapped multiple times around her body. It took a long time to untie her. It was hard to stop their bodies from coming into contact.

Her long hair had a faint lilac scent. When her hair brushed against his face, it made his heart flutter. "Don't worry... You'll be untied very soon!"

Xavier took a deep breath and tried to suppress his tempesting desire.

Tsk, tsk. This is harder than I thought. Xavier had no idea that Renee, the woman he used to find annoying, could be this attractive. Who could resist her when she was this sexy?

Finally, the rope came completely loose.

Xavier was already covered in sweat, but it wasn't because he was exhausted. Instead, it was because he was nervous.

Renee, who was now freed, gently moved her limbs. There were red marks on her skin from the pressure of the rope. She looked rather pitiful.

"I'll remove your mask too. I've got to say; you look pretty good in that mask. Somehow, it makes people want to protect you, and you don't seem as aggressive as you usually do..." Xavier said while carefully removing Renee's mask.

The moment the mask was removed, their eyes met, and Xavier realized this wasn't Renee!

"Y-You are..." Xavier took a step back from the shock he experienced. He stared at the woman as if he'd seen a ghost.

Her eyes were clear as the cloudless sky. There was a hint of strength in those fragile-looking eyes, and this was what she and Renee had in common.

Not only that, but her facial features were also very much like Renee's. She was practically Renee's doppelganger. It wasn't hard to understand why Xavier would mistake her for Renee.

The woman quickly tore off the tape over her mouth and looked at Xavier with tears in her eyes. "Thank you for rescuing me, good sir. If it weren't for you, I'd have fallen into the hands of some other men. I'd be dead for sure. You saved my life... From now on, I belong to you."

"What the heck?" Xavier couldn't hide his astonishment.

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Xavier gulped. He couldn't process what the woman just said.

"I sold myself to the casino, and the casino could do anything it wanted to me. I had already lost the will to live because my fate would be equally torturous no matter which man I ended up with. Thank goodness, God took pity on me and left me in your hands..." The woman was overly emotional and couldn't help but lean closer to Xavier.

"Wait a second. Don't come near me!"

Xavier, a towering man of over six feet, backed away as if he'd just seen a terrifying beast. He intentionally kept his distance from the woman.

The woman seemed visibly hurt by his response, and she stopped moving. "Mister, are you disgusted by me? Are you afraid I might keep bugging you?"

"No, that's not it!" Xavier waved his hands. "That's not what I meant. I just think that you're a person, not an object. You shouldn't allow others to control your life."

"I get what you mean, but I've already signed a contract with the casino. If you don't want me, I'll fall into their hands once again. I don't want to be tied up on a casino table like an object again while those evil men fight over me."

"Does such a contract exist?" Xavier frowned and glared at Hank.

Hank seemed terrified. He immediately urged his subordinate to hand over the contract. "H-Here it is... The casino bought her for 150 thousand dollars. She belongs to you now!"

The man retrieved a contract that had the woman's signature and fingerprint from his bag with trembling hands.

Xavier accepted it and read the name out softly. "Shirley White?"

After that, his eyes lit up. He realized something.

"I remember now. You're the girl who danced with Stefan in the bar. I knew I'd seen you somewhere!"

"You finally remember me. We met in a bar not too long ago. You left a deep impression on me." Shirley's eyes welled with tears while she looked gently at Xavier.

Apart from Stefan, Xavier also caught Shirley's attention the other night.

That's because she'd always preferred outgoing and handsome men like Xavier.

However, Stefan's stoic and depressive attitude had her completely charmed. She couldn't even be bothered to focus on anyone else.

By the time she came to her senses, she realized she didn't like men like Stefan all that much. On the contrary, she would occasionally think of Xavier.

When Xavier rescued her earlier, she fell absolutely in love with him...

She used to think that life wasn't worth living, and she was prepared to die. Now, she found a new motivation to live!

"Will you take me with you? I promise I won't drag you down. I can work for you or earn money for you..." Shirley held onto Xavier's arm and put in a serious effort to promote herself. She even told him which college she went to, her major, and what she was good at.

"Fine. I'll take you with me." Xavier nodded and escorted her out of the filthy casino.

Outside, the sky was blue, and the air was fresh, a world of difference from the foggy dimness of the casino.

Xavier glanced at his watch. It was getting late. After tearing up the contract, he turned to face Shirley. "You're free now. You can go."

Shirley was stunned for a moment. She looked at her torn contract. "I know you don't like me. That's why you don't want me around. However, I don't like owing anyone favors. I'll try my best to repay the 150 thousand dollars... Goodbye!"

Xavier raised his brows. He wanted to clarify something, but he chose not to in the end.

"Goodbye!" The two bid farewell for good.

Shirley had barely taken a few steps when she suddenly collapsed on the ground...

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"Oh no! Someone fainted!" There was a panicked scream from the crowd.

Xavier had already gotten into his car. He didn't want to get involved with a woman who had nothing to do with him.

However, the crowd grew larger and larger, and among them included some men with ill intentions. Hence, he couldn't resist frowning and walked over quickly.

"Get out of the way!" Xavier pushed his way through the crowd. His voice was loud and

powerful. The crowd could instantly tell that he was from a rich family, and they made way for

him.

However, there was an arrogant goon who didn't think much of Xavier. He tried to carry Shirley, who was now unconscious, back to his place for his own pleasure.

"Let go of her!" Xavier shouted at the man with a scar on his face, keeping his hands in his pockets while doing so.

"Who the hell are you? Mind your own business. I found this chick first. Don't try to snatch her from me!" The man exclaimed before openly carrying her over his shoulder and trying to leave.

The surrounding crowd didn't seem surprised by this. They not only didn't try to stop him, but they even seemed

envious. This was certainly a unique characteristic of Water Dock. Men tended to bring unconscious women home.

Any woman who found herself unconscious on the streets from getting drunk or fainting from hunger or illness was considered a public resource. Even the law couldn't inhibit this 'first-come, first-served' practice.

Beautiful women like her were hard to come by. Anyone who found her wouldn't want to let her go

easily. "I told you to let her go!" Xavier stood in the man's way. His stern expression was extremely

intimidating. Of course, the man was somewhat well-known in the area.

Ordinary folks wouldn't even dare to offend him. Despite of all that, however, he didn't think much of

Xavier. "Why do I have to do as you say? Who do you think you are?"

"She belongs to me!" Xavier uttered before retrieving the contract he'd just torn up. "I just received this contract from Hank. If you insist on taking her away, I'll have to ask Hank to retrieve her."

"H-Hank?" The man gulped. His eyes went wide.

Hank was the most powerful person around. Nobody dared to get on his bad

side. "You have three seconds to decide whether you want to let her go...

Three..."

"Take her! Take her!" The man instantly shoved Shirley into Xavier's arms. He then tried to salvage his ego. "This girl is too skinny. I'm not interested. Whoever wants her can have her. I don't care!"

Xavier carefully held Shirley in his arms as if he was holding a baby, worried she'd fall and hurt herself.

She was certainly very skinny. Only slightly over five feet, she was light as a feather. He figured she weighed less than a hundred pounds. Evidently, she wasn't getting enough nutrition.

Xavier used to think Renee was the skinniest woman he'd held. But, surprisingly, Shirley was even skinnier than her!

He looked down at the woman in his arms. She had a face that looked a lot like Renee's, but her skin was slightly fairer. She also had brows that made her seem gentler than Renee.

Right then, her brows were furrowed as if she was in pain. Not knowing what she'd gone through, he felt bad for

her... Xavier subconsciously reached out to rub Shirley's forehead so that her brows would relax.

This was when Shirley opened her eyes a little. Despite feeling weak, she smiled gently at him.

"Hey, you're awake. There was a mosquito on your face. That's why I..." Xavier explained guiltily.

He'd been with countless women, but he'd never panicked like this before. It was honestly

embarrassing! "I heard what you said earlier..." Shirley whispered softly in his arms.

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"Uhm. What did you hear?" Xavier asked.

"I heard you saying I belonged to you. Does this mean you've accepted me?" "Please

don't misunderstand. It was an emergency. I had to..."

"Thankyou!" Although Shirley was smiling, her eyes filled with tears. "I have no regrets after hearing what you said. Thankfully, I won't become an aimless, wandering spirit after I die."

"What are you saying? What do you mean after you die?"

Xavier felt a tightness in his chest. This woman was weird. It sounded like she was saying her last words. "Can I

ask for a small favor from you?" Shirley grabbed Xavier's arms and asked in a sad voice.

She looked so pitiful that Xavier couldn't help but give in. "Tell me what it is."

"After I die, keep my ash in a small box and bury it in a well in the village. You don't have to organize any rituals. Just send someone to pray for me each year..." She was barely breathing when she said this.

Xavier felt something was off. He asked sternly, "What's the matter? Are you keeping something from me?" "I'm

fine. I... Bleurgh!"

Shirley suddenly threw up a mouthful of blood and fell unconscious.

Xavier panicked. He quickly carried her to the car. "Hang in there. I'm taking you to the hospital right now! Stay strong!" 1 He

drove as fast as he could despite the heavy traffic.

This was perhaps the moment their fates became intertwined.

Just as the old man had explained, according to the bamboo stick, Shirley was fated to be in Xavier's life. That also meant she posed a challenge for him to overcome!

Stefan returned from Water Dock to Hunt Villa on his own. By the time he arrived home, it was already late at night. Nobody had found any new information regarding Renee.

This woman had disappeared from the face of the earth as if she wielded magic!

"Stefan, don't worry. I'll send more people to search for Ms. Everheart. They will expand their search abroad... I've already reached out to the intel departments of other countries to lock in on information related to her. I believe it's only a matter of time until we find her!" Christopher said.

However, Stefan had lost his passion. "Stop the search. Let her be!" "What do

you mean, Stefan? Are you giving up?"

"We have too large a gap between us, she and me. Even if I find her, we'd only end up hurting each other. We might as well just live our lives apart!" Stefan exclaimed.

"That makes sense, but... Are you sure you can move on?"

"Does it matter? Perhaps, she and I were never right for each other, to begin with. I only refused to let go because the divorce happened out of the blue. Time will heal everything." Stefan didn't suddenly think things through. It was all thanks to the things the old man said to him.

The old man told him that he and Renee wouldn't have anything to do with each other for the next four years. Whether that would change after four years would depend on their feelings toward each other.

Time was a good thing that gave a person an opportunity to think things through before arriving at a conclusion. It also

allowed people who had intense feelings to gradually understand themselves better.

Stefan believed that both he and Renee needed time on their own to calm down and sift through their emotions... 1 After

finishing his sentence, Stefan returned to his bedroom upstairs.

He put the silk object he bought from the old man on the table. He then spread a sheet and pieced the two together. Just as

he thought, it was a drawing of a phoenix and a red spider lily. The patterns seemed to suggest it was a map. He salvaged

this sheet from the Everheart family's residence on the day of the fire, but he never told Renee about it.

Back at the antique market, he felt that the drawing on the silk object had something to do with Renee's sheet the moment he laid eyes on it.

Stefan took a closer look. Suddenly, he discovered something. " This map..."

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Stefan was shocked to discover that the topographical structure and direction of the route on the map were identical to the entrance of the Hunt family's ancestral grave on Mount Lodge in North City.

The Hunt family spanned a long history that dated as far back as the Thame Dynasty. In fact, there were generals and ministers in the family throughout the generations, and they all held prominent positions. The family had always been active in North City, and their ancestors were also buried on Mount Lodge, which had the best Fengshui and was inaccessible to outsiders.

Only during his great-grandfather's generation did his family move south to create their business empire in Beach City, which was located on the other side of the country.

Apart from periods when important festivities were held, the Hunt family rarely returned to North City.

"This is odd. Why would the map to the Hunt family's ancestral grave be sewn on Renee's sheet?" Stefan asked out loud.

Could there be a connection between the Hunt family and the Everheart family from the time of their ancestors?

Stefan would have to ask his grandfather when the opportunity presented itself.

With this in mind, Stefan carefully stored the sheet and the silk object in a small box.

Suddenly, a thought occurred to him. He retrieved Renee's notebook and called Xavier on the phone.

At that moment, Xavier sat on a long bench outside the emergency unit while waiting for Shirley to be treated.

He thought he had probably gone mad.

Clearly, he wasn't the nosy type of person, and he was used to doing everything for himself. This time, he was actually "kind" enough to tend to someone else's "trouble." He even skipped dinner because of this "trouble."

"Stefan, it's late. What's up?" Although Xavier picked up Stefan's call, he was still focused on the blinking red light above the emergency unit.

That's because the end of the blinking indicated that the treatment was complete.

Although he knew next to nothing about Shirley, he couldn't help but feel worried about her. He hoped she wouldn't die at such a young age.

"I showed you the notebook in the car not long ago. You promised to do something for me. Do you still remember that?" Stefan asked patiently.

"Ahem, can I say otherwise?" Xavier knew Stefan was up to no good.

In other words, Stefan dug a hole and pointed at it while asking him, "Didn't you say you wanted to jump into a hole? Here, I already dug it for you. Hurry up and jump in."

"Don't be nervous. This is a profitable deal. I won't cheat you," Stefan said.

"Thankyou, Stefan, but I don't need the money. You should do it yourself if it's profitable!" Xavier replied.

'Don't be silly.' Xavier, Stefan, and Christopher had been joined at the hips since they were kids. Xavier knew exactly the kind of people they were.

As soon as Stefan called, Xavier knew something fishy was going to happen. The most sensible thing was to turn it down!

"You don't need the money, do you?" Stefan asked half-jokingly. " Looks like the Stuart family's business has been doing very well. It's time for them to go through a little hardship..."

"Hang on, Stefan. Stop beating around the bush. Just tell me what you need help with." Xavier was afraid of getting into trouble again. He surrendered immediately.

If Xavier was a predator that everyone avoided, then Stefan was the apex predator that he avoided.

It was a losing war whether Xavier fought back or not. He might as well just surrender from the get-go!

"What did you think about the content of the novel?" Stefan asked in a serious manner.

"It's great. I think it's the best novel I've ever read!" Xavier slapped his own thigh. He instantly felt inspired. Perhaps, he genuinely felt this way. He might've also done this because he wanted to insult Stefan. "The male lead couldn't have been described better. He's a literal piece of trash, a monster, and the ultimate representative of a scumbag!"

Stefan frowned intensely.

He suspected that Xavier might have been indirectly insulting him, but he didn't have any proof.

That was because he, too, agreed the male lead was dumb and an absolute scumbag!