

# The Love that Never Really Dies

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"Ian, what should we do now that Mommy is taking you to the doctor? Didn't I tell you to be more talkative and smiley like Matt? Ian was speechless. *I...don't know how. How would I? I'm used to living alone in a big house, and everyone around me has a cold attitude. Isn't it weird if I grew up having a cheery personality? Besides, is it even easy for me to change just like that?* After frowning for a while, he suddenly broke into a confident expression. "No worries! You'll see!" "What? How can you lie to a doctor for being sick if you're not?" "Stomachache." "Oh? This should work. Let me tell you something: When I didn't want to go to preschool before, I would always lie to Mommy about having stomachaches. Wow, Ian, you're so clever."

The little girl became happy again. She held Ian's hands with her chubby little hands and looked at him admiringly. Ian was rather speechless. A few minutes later, Sasha finally grabbed a cab and took the siblings into the car. Actually, she was a doctor herself, and she could tell if her kids had a headache or stomachache. But sometimes, mothers were just too cautious. For example, she was worried about her son falling sick now. Hence, she must take him to a good hospital to get a blood test or use modern medical equipment to have a medical check-up to play safe. Otherwise, she wouldn't simply send her kids to any hospital. Sasha was nervous and was holding the "sick" kid on the way there. But Ian, on the other hand, was enjoying her sweet embrace as he had never been this loved while Vivian was staring at him enviously. "Mommy, what about your other baby?"

"Huh? What?" Sasha didn't understand what her daughter meant at that moment until after the chubby little girl climbed from her seat into her mother's arms. "Vivi, don't come near. Matt will get you sick too." "No, he won't." Vivian didn't believe Ian as she knew that he made this up to steal her mother for himself. Besides, she didn't want to be away from her mother either. Fortunately, it was only a ten-minute drive from Old Town to the hospital, and Sasha quickly got her children off the car into the building. "Hi, nurse. It's Matthew Wand. We would like to see a pediatrician, please." "Pediatrics? It's crowded over there now. How about visiting a specialist instead? You don't have to waste time lining up.

"The registrar nurse said while clutching the card that Sasha handed over. *That's even better! Nothing is more important than my children consulting a doctor.* After making an appointment with a specialist, Sasha took her registered number and headed to the specialist clinic on the ninth floor. Meanwhile, Ian was still relatively calm after lying about his stomachache, but when he was suddenly brought to the specialist, his expression changed, and he wouldn't move anymore. "Matt, why did you stop?" "I don't want to go!" Ian forcefully broke free of Sasha's hands and ran away.

"Hey, where are you going? Matt, why are you running away?" she yelled anxiously. At that moment, in the corridor of the clinic, an old doctor with gray hair wearing a white coat came over. When he saw the little running figure, he was a little startled. "Mr. Ian? Why is he here?" "What? That's Mr. Ian?" "Yeah! Quick, stop him and carry him over. Is there something wrong? Where's his father? Call him now!" After instructing the other doctors with him, he went after Ian as well. Sasha was rendered speechless. When she was staring at the doctors chasing after the boy, she blanked out as if an explosion happened in her head. *Oh my, why did I forget about this?*

*This hospital is the largest public hospital in Avenport. Since Ian was always sick, he must've been a frequent patient. Besides, the Hayes would've found him the best doctor here. Good lord, what a stupid thing have I done?* Sasha froze. Then, she quickly took her daughter and followed after them, but her son, Matteo, was already carried by the doctors! "Mr. Ian, why are you running away? Where's your father?" "Who cares about his father? Dr. Lee, take the child and run a check-up on him with me. And you, Ms. Stone, call his father." "Yes, Professor!" Sasha almost blacked out. *Oh no, what now? He's not Ian but my Matteo! If they asked Sebastian to come here, he would know about the two children when he went to check at the Empire Preschool!*

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*Will he return my son to me?* Sasha was like a cat on hot bricks. Having little choice, she could only take her daughter, follow after them, and play by ear. Then, she would take the child away when she got the chance without anyone noticing. Unfortunately, it was too late. When she took her daughter there, her son was taken to the clinic by the old doctor without asking any preliminary questions. "Wait! Doctor, I'm sorry, my child is okay, and he doesn't need to be checked." Sasha was losing her mind. *How could they run a medical check-up in a fully enclosed room like this?*

*My Matteo is fine! They would only scare him.* Nevertheless, the doctor ignored her after shooting her a glance. "And you are?" "Huh? Oh, erm...I'm this child's nanny, and I'm new here," replied Sasha guiltily. "You're new, eh? Do you know why Mr. Hayes let you send the kid here? We're actually very familiar with him as he has been coming here since little. Alright, that's enough talk. You can wait here while I do a check-up on him." Then, the old professor disregarded Sasha's protest and let his assistant carry the boy into the MRI room. Sasha was rendered speechless. *No, he's not Mr. Ian! He's my Matteo!* Frantic, she wanted to explain once more. However, the computer screen had displayed the test results of the child lying on the MRI bed.

"The pylorus still hasn't closed well, and there's even some swelling. Is there a problem recently?" "Maybe it's the food again. Poor kid." After the doctor and his assistant had studied the image projected, they began to discuss distressedly. After Sasha heard them, there was a buzzing noise in her ears. *The pylorus isn't closed? How? Isn't my Matteo all well and good? Why didn't I know about this*

*before?* Her heart plummeted, and horror surged. She didn't care about anything else and ran to the front of the computer between the two doctors like a madwoman. "That's impossible! How could it be that his pylorus hasn't closed up? There's no way!" "Why is it impossible, nanny? This problem has stayed with Mr. Ian. Not only that, his small intestine is shorter than others, and his kidney is not fully developed. Didn't your employer tell you all about these?" When the doctor saw her denying it like a maniac, he furiously banged on the computer screen. Sasha finally went silent. Since she was also a doctor, she understood the contents displayed on the screen, and the doctor was right. Sasha slumped back into the chair.

When Sebastian arrived, the old doctor had completed the check-up on Ian. Actually, it was natural and temporary for Ian to be in this situation as he grew up with the problem. His premature birth had caused many physical defects. As long as there were no new problems that occurred, he would be fine. After hearing the results, Sebastian remained calm. However, when he turned his head, he saw Sasha sitting in a chair in despair. Her face was as pale as death, and she had a somber expression. She was glaring hollowly into space and lost in thoughts without realizing Sebastian calling her. *What is this woman doing?* He cast his gaze on the little girl standing next to her, but the adorable girl was already staring back at him with black, beady eyes. As soon as she met his gaze, she immediately hid behind her mother's back timidly. *Whose child is this?*

*Why does she resemble...this pale woman?* Sebastian was taken aback for a second. "Who are you? Why are you here?" Vivian was shocked by her father's sudden question and immediately buried her face in her mother's chest. "Mommy..." *Mommy? She calls her Mommy?* His face muscles spasmed, his expression hardened, and a wave of anger surged from his chest. "Sasha Wand, who's this girl? Why is she calling you Mommy?" "Huh?" Sitting in the chair, Sasha was finally brought back to her senses by the man's angry questioning. She looked up and saw the enraged man and found her daughter clinging tightly to her and became dumbfounded. "She...She's..." "Mummy, let's go. Vivi wants to go home."

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Vivian started having a fit. Unlike her two brothers, the girl was more cowardly, and she had always heard her brothers talking about how bad-tempered her father was and how he bullied their mother. Thus, she was petrified by that time. Sasha finally regained consciousness and hugged her daughter, trembling with fear as she was afraid that things might get worse. "She..." "She really is your daughter? Wow, you're incredible, Sasha. Didn't you just display your pure and righteous side this noon? I didn't know that your illegitimate daughter is this old! You really disgust me!" Unexpectedly, the man had already started railing before she could say a word. His expression turned ashen with anger, and hatred filled his eyes.

At that moment, Mr. Hayes, who was famous for being placid in the business world, had lost his temper. Sasha was startled. *Illegitimate daughter? He actually thought that this child was fathered by someone else?* Sasha's heart sank, and she looked at the man with an exasperated expression. *Should I be glad or sad about this? How can someone this stupid man be the top businessman in the field?* "Speak! Why don't you say anything?" "What should I say? What do you mean by illegitimate daughter? Sebastian, I have nothing to do with you for a long time ago. Why can't I be with someone else if you can be with that b\*tch, Xandra? If I gave birth to a bunch of children with someone else, let alone only one, it's none of your business too!"

"Sebastian went quiet. *Finally, this has immediately shut that scum up!* He clenched his fists, and his handsome face darkened. However, he couldn't utter any more words. Sasha sneered silently. *You have asked for it since you dared to argue about this with me!* Then, she ignored him after her retorts. When she saw her son coming out from the MRI room, she took her daughter and went forward. "Doctor, is he alright? Can we go now?" *I had to take my children back as soon as I can. Otherwise, this ill-tempered scum would definitely tear me into strips if he found out about my other son!* When she was about to take her son, the man suddenly pulled him away before she could carry the boy, and she couldn't fight the man's strength.

"Sebastian, what are you doing? Take your filthy hands off him! You have no right to touch him!" *How dare this man snatch away my son from me and forbids me from touching him! He's really driving me nuts! This is my Matteo, not his Ian! Who is he to stop me from taking my son? I only have him now.* She finally lost it under a massive flood of fear. With teary eyes, she almost wanted to snatch her son back, but the child finally spoke, "Daddy, what are you doing?" Sasha was dumbstruck. *Daddy? My Matteo...called this man Daddy?* On the other hand, Sebastian wasn't surprised as the hospital notified him about Ian. So he lowered his head and looked at his son. "Daddy will take you home." "No! I want to go to preschool."

Then, Ian broke free from his father's grip and walked directly toward Sasha. She was overjoyed when she saw this. Ignoring everything else, she stepped forward and carried him in her arms. "Alright, we won't go home but to the preschool. Sebastian, I'm only taking him back there and nowhere else. Since he's so eager to go there, let's not affect him with our matters," said Sasha while she carried her son instantly. Then, before the man had time to react, she left speedily with the two children and was soon nowhere to be seen. Left behind in the clinic, Sebastian was enraged.

*Sasha Wand!*— Sasha ran frantically with her two children all the way until they got in a cab. After the frightened family had arrived at Old Town, she finally carried them off the car. Then, she went to a small park nearby and didn't want to move anymore. "Mommy?" As a girl, Vivian was more meticulous. When she saw her in this situation, she immediately leaned her chubby face over and asked caringly. Sasha hugged her adorable daughter when she saw this. Not long after, she saw her son staring at her eagerly, so she reached out her hand and pulled him into her arms too. "Mommy is okay, don't worry. Mommy's just a little tired, and I just need to rest for a bit."

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She held her two children in her arms. Worn out, she felt incredibly guilty and pained. *When and how did Matteo know about his father? Besides, why does he have so many physical defects that I have no idea about? What am I doing? How can a mother not know anything this serious?* For the first time, she felt that she had failed miserably as a mother. "Matteo, tell Mommy. Did you already know about Daddy?" Sasha finally calmed herself down and asked the boy. After hearing that, Ian, who was lying in her chest, immediately drooped his head. He felt helpless and didn't know how to explain it to his mother.

He was actually scared that she would abandon him after he told her the truth. Fortunately, Vivian was there. When she saw him afraid to speak, she blinked her sparkling eyes and helped Ian. "Yeah, Mommy. Vivi knows too." "Huh? You too?" "Yeah, because Mommy was always bullied and even kept away by Daddy, Matt became angry, so he followed the bad guy that got you and found out who Daddy is." In a childish voice, the little girl explained how the siblings found out about their father. After listening, words couldn't describe Sasha's emotions at that moment. *Well, it makes sense. Although my son is only five, he has an exceptional IQ and can hack into the entire local network server in Clear. So what's so strange about him finding out about his useless father?* Sasha decided to drop the topic and looked at the little girl sadly. Both mother and son went quiet.

Suddenly, the two kids had a gut feeling that something terrible was about to happen. "Matteo, Mommy feels really guilty about you because... I never knew about your health problems. It's all Mommy's fault. Mommy will take you back to Clear, alright? Let's go as soon as possible. From now on, I will only focus on getting you well, alright?" Sasha held her son's tiny hands and told him her decision while enduring her pain within. *Huh... I should've prioritized the more important things instead of those significant matters that didn't belong to me in the first place. How can he endure all these without me knowing?*

*He's only five!* Sasha lowered her gaze and tears started flowing down uncontrollably. The siblings were shocked upon hearing her words. *Go back to Clear? No way! Mommy is taking us out of here? Then, what about Matteo? He's still in Frontier Bay!* Ian was frightened. *If Mommy leaves, does that mean I'll be left alone again? I don't have anyone here... Is she abandoning me again?* Ian teared up and ran away from his mother's arms. "Matteo! Why are you running away? Come back! Don't run!" Sasha quickly stood up and rushed over with her daughter. *What's wrong with him? Why did he run away when I told them about going back to Clear?* Sasha was confused. Perhaps, if she realized that it was Ian instead of Matteo, she would understand.

However, for Ian, it was the most unacceptable thing for his mother to abandon him again. — Matteo's father brought him home that day. *This bad Daddy must be rejected by Ian, who chose Mommy, so that's why he looks so angry. He even ignored me when I said hi to him first. Hmph! Bad Daddy. I won't talk to you if you neglect me!* Sitting at the back, Matteo took out his snacks from his little backpack from preschool and ate his lollipop happily. "What are you doing?" "Huh? Nothing! I'm just playing." *There's no way I will tell Daddy about how I have helped Ian secure his place at school today. If Daddy knew,*

*he would beat me up!* Matteo took out his toy car from one of his winnings. *Eww! What's this childish thing? I'm already in preschool!* Sebastian had been observing the boy from the rearview mirror. *How dare this ungrateful little brat turn to that woman immediately after five years of me taking care of him! But what is he doing?* He was a little surprised when he noticed the little guy's behavior. The boy simply threw his backpack on the seat and sat with his legs crossed. "Ian, who taught you how to sit like that? Didn't Daddy teach you about proper manners? Why did you already learn these bad habits after going to preschool for only two days?"

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Matteo became quiet. After two seconds, Matteo slowly changed his sitting posture into how the little bore, Ian, would. *I bet it was Daddy who taught the little bore to sit like that.* Matteo sighed. Fortunately, his father didn't say anything else after he corrected his sitting posture. Then, the two finally returned to Frontier Bay. "Hi, Mr. Ian. Are you hungry? I have made your favorite pastries! Do you want some?" "Yay! Thank you, Ms. Dolivo!" Smilingly, Matteo quickly agreed, and his bright smile stunned Wendy. *Did Mr. Ian smile at me? Good lord, he actually smiles at me! I didn't know that he would! He looks fantastic!* The surprised Wendy immediately went to the kitchen to get the pastries. After Matteo saw that she had left, he went back to his room on the second floor with his little backpack. *I gotta call Ian back. He called me when I was in the car just now, but I had to hang up on him so that Daddy won't know.* "Ian, where are you going? Aren't you going to change?"

"Huh?" Matteo stopped heading upstairs and stared blankly at his father. *Change? Why?* Matteo didn't know why his father said that. However, he would understand if he knew Ian was used to his father's severe mysophobia, and his brother was trained with good hygiene habits. "What are you waiting for? Don't you know that you have to go to the disinfection room to change into clean clothes before going to your room? Have you forgotten?" Sebastian felt strange. *What's wrong with my son today? Why is he so unusual?* Matteo was shocked. *Disinfection room? That little bore actually made one in his house?* Defeated, Matteo could only come down from the stairs. "Sorry, Daddy. I forgot. I'll go right away."

Then, the little guy went to the disinfection room with his little backpack. Sebastian sank into his thoughts. At that moment, with the pastries in her serving

tray, she saw the scene and asked, "What's the matter, Mr. Hayes?" He frowned as if trying to say something. Eventually, when the little figure was nowhere to be seen, he kept quiet and went upstairs. A few minutes later, Matteo called Ian with his smartwatch when he went back to his room. "Hey, Ian?" "Matt! Matt! This is bad! Mommy is taking us to Clear, and Ian is ignoring everyone now!" Unexpectedly, Vivian answered the call, and she anxiously told her brother the situation in a childish voice. *Mommy's taking them out of here? Why?* Matteo became worried too, and he quickly asked,

"Why? Why is Mommy taking us back?" "Because she mistook Ian for you! When Ian was taken to the hospital, an old doctor took him for a medical check-up and discovered many illnesses. So Mommy became upset and thinking he was you instead. Now, she wants to take us back to Clear to heal you!" The little girl might look stupidly cute on the outside, but she could also explain things very clearly. Matteo's expression changed after hearing that. "How did it turn out like this? I have to go back now if that's the case." "Yeah, you have to! Ian has been locking himself up forever and ignored Mommy no matter how she tried to talk him out of it!" Vivian turned to look at the locked door while agreeing with her brother.

At that point, there was no other way out except for Matteo to go back to solve the problem. Hence, he let his sister soothe Ian for the time being, and he would go over and explain it to his mother when he got the chance. *Well, it seems like we can't hide it any longer.* Matteo hung up and he got frustrated thinking of the situation. Unexpectedly, Sebastian came up at that time. When he saw the closed door, he strode toward it and knocked. "Ian, what are you doing?"

"Huh? Nothing, Daddy. I'm just playing inside." As soon as Matteo heard his father's voice, he gathered himself and quickly opened the door. "Daddy, why are you here? Are you looking for me?" Sebastian went quiet as he was not used to this smiling, little face. *When did this little brat learn how to smile? Isn't his attitude usually frosty? It's so unusual for his five-year-old to show any signs of joy. What's going on?* After staring at the bright face for a while, he scowled and added, "I'm just here to tell you that the lady doctor won't be here anymore from tomorrow onward."

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"Why?" Matteo asked with his eyes widened. *Mommy won't be here anymore? Why not? Is she unwilling to do that, or did Daddy ask her not to come anymore? I think it's more likely to be the latter.* Sure enough, Sebastian, who was peering down at the boy, immediately became impatient. "If she's not coming, then so be it. Why do you ask so many questions?" "Then, it must be you who don't want her to come over, right? Daddy, are you still angry about the thing that happened at the hospital? You can't really blame her because I was the one who called her. Since I assumed that you're too busy, I asked her to take me there. Don't be angry,

Daddy," explained Matteo. He thought that his father was angry because of that, and he only knew about it after Ian texted him. He also assumed that his father became jealous when Ian chose Sasha over him.

Unexpectedly, his father's face became even uglier after Matteo's explanation. "Why am I angry? Alright, let me tell you this. From tomorrow onward, Mr. Scott will be taking you to school, and Ms. Wendy will be taking care of you at home." "What? Mr. Scott?" Matteo was not too happy with this news. *He's actually letting Mr. Scott take Ian to preschool every day now? So he's really not letting Mommy over anymore? How can he do that? This is so unreasonable of him! I've tried so hard to let Ian spend more time with Mommy and even switched our positions. Now Daddy banned her from coming just like that? He has no idea how big of a misunderstanding he has caused her! She's feeling so guilty right now for assuming that I'm the one who's sick! How can he be so thoughtless?* Matteo became furious as well. He tightened his tiny fists, and anger replaced his smile.

"Daddy, do you know that you are really annoying?" "What did you say? Annoying?" "Yes, I want to like you, but look at yourself. You lose your temper and bully others as you please. No one likes this kind of Daddy, and I won't either!" After the disappointed child had expressed his thoughts with teary eyes, he turned around and slammed the door shut. Sebastian was dumbstruck as he didn't see it coming from this little guy, and he hadn't heard anything like it from him before. *What did he mean by wanting to like me? Did he not like me before? Am I not his Daddy? What is actually going on with him today? Is he a different boy?* Sebastian was enraged again. However, since his son had shut the door on him. Seeing that, he contained his irritation and thought of talking to him after he felt better. *Sasha, look at what you've done!* When the man left, he still assumed that it was her who changed his son's temper. — Sasha was serious about leaving with her two children and started looking up flights on her computer as soon as she got home. Remaining silent, Vivian would still check on Ian's closed-door as told by Matt.

*I have to make sure that Ian's fine.* The little girl stood guard loyally. After looking for a while, Sasha realized there weren't many flights to Clear because of the cold weather, so she could only turn her computer off in disappointment. "Vivi, what are you doing? Where's Matt?" "Huh? Oh, Matt? He's still in his room. Mommy, are we leaving now?" Vivian was still concerned about this matter and immediately asked as soon as she saw her mother. Sasha shook her head.

"No. We will probably be in a day or two. Has Matt come out yet?" Sasha asked. After Ian locked himself in his room, Sasha wanted to coax him. *Why is my son acting strange? He didn't respond to me at all, even when I tried to call for him. Is he feeling guilty that I've found out that he's sick and tries to hide from me?* That thought stabbed her in her heart. Vivian nodded. "Yeah, Mommy. Maybe Matt didn't want to leave. So please can we stay?" "No, we have to. Matt's sick. Don't worry, Mommy will cook first, and I will talk to him later. I'm sure he'll be fine after that." Sasha soothed her daughter and went to the kitchen to start cooking. She had confidence in her son as he had always been very understanding. She believed that he would be fine after talking to him. Unexpectedly, she found the room to be empty when she went to unlock the door after she finished cooking.



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*Gosh! Please tell me this is not happening!* Sasha could hear her heart pounding away as the surroundings suddenly became muted. "Vivi, where's Matt?" "Matt? He's inside his room. I didn't see him coming out, Mommy," Vivian replied without taking her eyes off the paper plane in her hand. She had been folding paper planes on the floor for some time and did not even realize that her brother was missing. Vivian was not a very observant kid. She was still young and unlike her brothers, she was not very sensitive to her surroundings. She put the paper plane down and blinked her eyes at Sasha in oblivion. Sasha clicked her tongue at her clueless daughter. She knew she had to go look for Matteo on her own.

Grabbing an overcoat from the clothes stand, she hurried out of the house without losing another moment. It was almost seven in the evening and night was falling. — Over at Royal Court One, the clock struck seven—it was dinner time. When Sebastian heard Wendy calling from downstairs, he quickly tidied up the stuff in his study and went downstairs after a whole day of tiring work. "Here you are, Mr. Hayes. I've been knocking on Ian's door a few times, but he refused to come out. What should I do now?" the anxious housemaid asked, clasping her hands before her chest. "

Don't worry, I'll go get him," Sebastian said, turning towards Ian's room. He had been working the whole day, and just as he thought he could finally have dinner and relax, Ian was being difficult. A frown spread across his brows on his tired face as he headed towards the nursery. "Ian, open the door, Daddy's here. It's dinner time." No one answered. There was dead silence, as if there was no one inside. *Is he asleep?* The frown on Sebastian's brows deepened and he turned the door handle. Behind Sebastian, Wendy poked her head in and looked around. "There's no one here. Where's Mr. Ian?" the maid asked nervously. Her face started turning pale and she gasped in horror. Even Sebastian was shocked. The frown instantly vanished and his eyes widened in fear as he checked out every corner of the room. Ian was a bad-tempered child, and he liked locking himself in his own room whenever he was upset—but he would never leave without telling anyone. He was not that ill-behaved.

He knew Sebastian would be furious if he were to do it. *Where on earth is he?* The veins on Sebastian's forehead throbbed like they were going to burst. "Summon all the guards! Find out what happened!" he roared as he darted downstairs in light speed. "Yes, Mr. Hayes!" Wendy cried out and followed after him. She knew things were going to turn really ugly this time. *It's already so late at night, where can Ian be? Everyone will be in deep trouble if we can't find the kid anywhere in the compound.* Wendy gathered all the guards within just a couple of minutes. The whole villa was brightly lit and the whole team was mobilized to look for the missing child. Meanwhile, Matteo was already outside of the villa when everyone was frantically searching for him. It was totally not his intention to leave without telling anyone. After receiving Vivian's text, his original plan was to wait till

tomorrow morning when Daddy would be out for work. But Ian called him twenty minutes ago and his whole plan just went haywire.

"Is Mommy going to desert me again?" Ian asked when he was on the phone with Matteo. Matteo tried explaining everything to him and assuring him, but to no avail. "It's not like that, Ian. Mommy did that because she thought you were me. You must understand that she was worried crazy." "So, it means she chose you over me, right?" Ian asked coldly after considering the issue from every angle. Ian had always thought that Sasha could not wait to bring Matteo back to Clear because she was worried sick and she felt guilty. But when Ian thought harder about the whole thing, it also meant that Sasha was abandoning his eldest son again.

Matteo really did not know how to comfort Ian, but before he could do anything, Ian had already hung up. Matteo tried calling him again, but Ian had already switched off his smartwatch and was no longer reachable. This made Matteo broke out in cold sweat. So instead of just waiting for Ian's news, Matteo stole away immediately to look for him. He was afraid Ian would do something stupid. By the time he got off the cab and dashed up to his house, only Vivian was home.

"You're back? Ian's gone and Mommy's looking for him right now. What should we do now?" Vivian ran over and asked anxiously the moment she realized it was Matteo who came back. She quickly filled Matteo in on everything that had happened at home. Matteo's face darkened with worry as he listened to Vivian. *I knew it. I knew something's gonna happen. Seriously, why does this little bore have such a short temper? Can't he just wait a little longer?* Matteo paced around in the house with his heart in his mouth. Thoughts raced through his mind as he tried to come up with a plan. He ruffled his hair in frustration before dashing for the door and headed out to look for Ian. He figured it would be easier for him to look for Ian since he had called him on his smartwatch earlier on. As a skilled hacker, Matteo could use his tablet to locate Ian.

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After Matteo left the apartment, he found a suitable spot and sat down. But just as he thought he would not bump into anyone he knew, a car sped by in the neighborhood and someone spotted him. "Kelly, I'm not sure if I'm seeing things, but I think I just saw your niece's stepson in Old Town." The sky was already dark and the woman in the car was simply taking a cursory glance at the surroundings. If it were not for the sudden beam of light from the tablet that shone right in Matteo's face in the dark when he switched on the tablet, she would not have even spotted him sitting there all alone.

"Old Town?" Kelly asked, alarmed. Kelly was at home when her friend called her and told her what she saw. The family had never had a moment of peace ever since Xandra went to Hayes Corporation to work two days ago. She was all

dressed up and her mood was phenomenally good when she went out. But she came back dejected when she did not even get to enter the company. "Are you sure you saw that kid?" Kelly asked, her grip tightening around her phone. "Hm, I think it's him. Let me go back and check," the woman said, taking a U-turn and driving back to where she first saw Matteo.

Kelly stole a look at her niece and shook her head. Xandra had been fervently trimming her plants like a psycho for the whole day. After a few minutes, Kelly's phone beeped and a photo showed on her screen. It showed a boy who looked exceptionally familiar. He had a small bag on his back and he was sitting on a staircase, playing with his tablet. *This is really him! This is Xandra's stepson!* She sprung from the couch and beckoned her niece to come over. "Cut it out, Xandra. You won't get to go to the company even if you cut away all the flowers in the world. I have something that you might want to see. Come here." Xandra looked up at her aunt without saying a word. Tending to plants was never her favorite pastime. But ever since she got back from the company, she had been trimming the bonsai. Even she herself could not understand why she became so compulsive.

She realized she had been cutting the branches a lot ever since that darn woman came back to life and ruined her life. *Snip!* The thought of that woman made Xandra's blood boil and she clenched her grip tight around the scissors, cutting off another branch forcefully. She looked at the nearly-bald bonsai before throwing the pair of scissors aside and walked over without betraying any emotions on her face. Kelly held out her phone towards Xandra and showed her the photo. "Take a look. Isn't this boy Sebastian's son?" *Sebastian?* The mention of his name lightened Xandra's mood. She hastened her steps towards her aunt and grabbed the phone over. "Who sent this?" she asked the moment she saw the photo. "One of my besties. She said she saw him in Old Town. I wonder why Sebastian's son is there though. What do you think?" Kelly asked. Xandra darted her eyes around as she thought hard. "I don't think he'll ever go to that place. It looks filthy." "I know right. He's Ian Hayes. I don't think someone of his status will ever go to a place like that. Why not we probe into this? Who knows what we might find out?"

" Kelly's keen observation told her things were not as simple as they seemed. She pored over every detail of the picture and her gut feeling told her there must be something more to it. Beside her, Xandra nodded in agreement before instructing their men to do a thorough investigation of the area. Now that they had started an investigation, it was impossible for Sasha and the kids to remain under the radar. Although Old Town was not as well-surveilled as New Town, there were still security cameras on the main roads. It did not take long before Xandra and Kelly found out about everything. "Sasha Wand! She lives in Old Town?" Xandra exclaimed at the top of her voice when she looked at the footage on her phone. Her face turned crooked in disgust and anger as if she would rip the woman in her screen into shreds. Kelly was equally shocked when she saw the footage. But the two did not realize that the little boy in the footage was not Ian, but Matteo since the brothers looked identical to each other.

"So she actually brought Ian to her place? I really don't understand what's happening. Ian has grown so fond of her ever since she came into his life. Look at

this. He's following her around wherever she goes!" Xandra seethed with anger as her slender finger pointing at the screen quivered uncontrollably. What happened at the company two days ago already made her feel humiliated beyond measure. Now that she saw the surveillance camera footage, she totally lost it. "Stupid b\*tch! I'm gonna kill her! I swear I'm gonna kill her!" she screamed and ran out of the door. Kelly reacted immediately and pulled her back.

"Are you crazy? Do you want to kill her yourself? Get someone else to do it! She won't be lucky enough to survive," Kelly reminded her. A glimmer of devilry shone in her dark eyes as she drilled her glare through the photo of Matteo. — Back at Royal Court One, Frontier Bay. Sebastian almost went berserk when he saw Ian standing calmly at the door with his bag. The boy stood in front of the gate and looked at his dad quietly. Sebastian rushed over immediately, his furious glare fixated on the boy as his steps hastened into a run. He raised his quaking hand at the child when he finally came close, ready to teach him a good lesson.

## The Love that Never Really Dies

### Chapter No 99

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Sebastian stopped in the air as his worried gaze fell on the boy he had been looking for the past hour. Ian's eyes were watered with tears and his nose was red. Sebastian's hand gradually lowered and guilt budded in his heart. He knew he should not have lashed out at Ian for no reason. The kid would not have run away if he had not lost his temper. "Where have you been?" Sebastian knelt down before Ian, trying to soften his voice. But he never expected that his gentle tone would make that stubborn boy broke down in tears. Ian ran up into his embrace and dug his head in Sebastian's chest. "Daddy..."

After everything that happened at Sasha's place, Ian could not hold it in any longer when he saw Sebastian. Hot tears rolled down his cheeks, soaking Sebastian's shirt wet. Ian felt Mommy and his siblings had all forsaken him. And the only person he had now was Daddy. Sebastian was his only comfort when the whole world turned against him. Sebastian slowly wrapped his hands around the wailing child, not knowing how to react. "What happened, Ian? Daddy's here. Tell me what happened." Sebastian's voice was rigid and awkward. He had attended countless business talks at work but never had he felt this nervous and helpless. A thought flickered in his mind and the expression on his face instantly hardened. *I'll turn the whole Avenport upside down if I find out who did this to my child.* But instead of answering Sebastian, Ian just cried his heart out.

When he finally calmed down again, he looked at Sebastian and said, "Daddy, can I sleep in your room tonight?" Sebastian's eyes widened as he looked Ian in the eyes. He scooped him up in his arms and fury glistened in his eyes. Ian was a withdrawn child. Although he was very attached to Sebastian, he had never once asked to sleep in Sebastian's room. Ian was a grown boy and he had his own ego. His dignity never allowed him to ask to sleep in his father's room. *Something must have happened to him. I know he'll never put aside his pride and make such a*

*request.* After bringing Ian up to his room, Sebastian mobilized all the bodyguards under Hayes Corporation to get to the bottom of what happened. He wanted to know exactly what happened when Ian went missing. — Meanwhile, Sasha could not find Matteo after searching every nook and cranny.

She had been looking for him for the whole night, but still, she found no sign of him. “Matt? Where are you? Matt! I’m sorry! I won’t force you to go back anymore, I promise!” Sasha was on the verge of losing her mind. Her search had been unfruitful for the past hours. She flashed her torchlight around desperately as she strolled down the streets of Old Town. Fear was eating her up and she was contemplating if she should just knock on the neighbors’ door one after another to look for Matteo. Back at home, Vivian was also getting anxious. Mommy and Matteo had been out for a few hours already, and there was still no news of them. Vivian could not just sit and wait any longer. She picked up the phone and called Uncle Jackson. “Uncle Jackson, Mommy and Matt are missing. What should I do...” Vivian’s voice broke into tears once the call got through. Jackson and Sharon were already in bed when the phone rang. The night was cold and it was already midnight.

Anyone would be in bed already. Jackson immediately sat up in his bed the moment he heard Vivian’s voice. “Vivi? Is that you, Vivi?” The girl bawled her eyes out over the phone. “Yes... I’m Vivi. Could you please come over? Mommy and Matt have been missing the whole night, and I’m alone at home...” Jackson struggled to get out of bed in a hurry as Vivian’s cry rang through the phone. He told Vivian he would go over and hung up immediately, but Sharon quickly stopped him. “Where are you going? It’s so cold outside. Go back to bed and leave it to me.” Having said that, she got out of bed, bundled up, and made a call. In no time, a few people came over and all of them set out for Old Town.

When Sharon and her friends reached twenty minutes later, they saw Sasha going from door to door, asking people if they had seen Matteo. “Hello! Open up, please. I’m looking for my son. Could you please open up?” Her voice was growing coarse after a whole night of shouting, and her tears had dried under the chilling cold. But the exasperated mother was still looking for her son in the cold dark. *Has she gone crazy?* Sharon shook her head as she came over and stopped Sasha. “What are you doing? Do you know what time it is already?” Sasha turned her stiff neck around slowly and saw her aunt. Her face was red and swollen under the beating of the freezing wind. “Aunt Sharon... Matt... Matt is missing...” Speaking, she clung to Sharon as if she was her last hope and started weeping.

## The Love that Never Really Dies

### Chapter No 100

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Sharon had never seen Sasha this distressed. She heaved a sigh and held her niece in her arms. “Listen to me, Sasha. We will find him. I will make sure we find

Matteo." Sasha nodded and composed herself. Her aunt's words echoed like a beacon of hope in the storm. Sharon's appearance was like the light at the end of the tunnel for Sasha. She knew Aunt Sharon would be able to help her. Sharon was the only reason why the Wand family could survive after they went bankrupt. She was also the one who dealt with the mess Sasha created for the whole family. Sasha was confident her aunt would be able to help her this time. After a whole night of investigation, Sharon and her lot found out that someone had kidnapped Matteo.

"Yeah, I swear I saw the boy. He was on his tablet when a black van drove up next to him. A man came down and covered his mouth before dragging him into the car." The stranger told them everything he saw and even described accurately what Matteo was wearing and the bag he carried when he was pulled into the car. Sasha almost fainted when she found out Matteo was kidnapped. No mother would be able to take the agony of losing her child to a kidnapper. They treasured their children like their own lives, and they would protect their children with their lives. Sasha lay in Sharon's car until the break of the day. She opened her eyes gradually when the first ray of the morning sun struck her face. After a short rest, her throat was sore and parched. "I hope you feel refreshed. We need to make a police report today and ask them to look into this,"

Sharon said when she saw Sasha finally awake. *The police?* Sasha was still feeling groggy after a nap. Everything happened so quickly yesterday it took her some time to recall everything. When she finally came around, she sat up in alarm and shook her head. "No, we can't go to the police. He will find out about it if I make a police report. I will look for Matt myself!" She opened the car door and dashed out, disheveled and not even knowing where she was going. "Sasha Wand! Come Back! What do you think you're doing?" Sharon jumped off the car and raced towards her when she saw Sasha running away. *Gosh, does she have to be so quick? Damn it!* Sharon lost Sasha after running after her for about five minutes. Panting heavily, Sharon went back to her car and made for the police station. She knew who Sasha was trying to hide from.

She did not want the child's father, Sebastian, to find out about it. If this spiraled out of control, the news would reach his ears. But Sharon could not afford to worry about that anymore. The police were their final resort. This could well involve a whole ring of human traffickers and the police would have to step in if this was the case. They would put Matteo's photo online and asked the community to help look for the missing child. Anyone who knew Sebastian had a son would easily recognize Matteo. — Little did Sharon and Sasha know, despite them trying all they could to hide it from Sebastian, he had already received a call from the kidnappers in the morning right after he woke up. "Morning,

Mr. Hayes. Did you sleep well yesterday? Or were you up worrying about your missing child? Do you miss him?" The mechanical voice on the phone sounded heavily altered, but still, the insolence in the kidnapper's voice was conspicuous. Sebastian looked at the sleeping child from the corner of his eyes and hung up without saying a word. *That's crazy!* He let off a grunt and went to wash up in the bathroom. After getting a change, he headed downstairs, only to see the bodyguard he dispatched yesterday waiting for him by the staircase. "Mr. Hayes,

we found out where Ian was yesterday. He went to Old Town." *Old Town?* Sebastian's brows furrowed. "Why did he go to Old Town?"

The bodyguard evaded his questioning glare. "We're not sure why he went there. But we found him going in and out of a rental apartment. And the apartment belongs to Ms. Wand." "Who? Sasha?" The air suddenly became cold in the living room. *So Ian went to her place last night. Why is he so fond of her? Did she cast a spell on him or something? I can't allow this to go on. Ian ran away without telling any of us yesterday, who knows what he will do in the future?* Anger clouded Sebastian's face as he thought about Sasha. "Call Luke and ask him to get that woman out of Avenport. I don't want to see her again!" Opposite Sebastian, the bodyguard raised his brows in surprise. *Get her out of Avenport? Aren't you the one who brought her back in the first place? Now you're asking us to get rid of her after everything you've done to get her back?* The bodyguard was totally befuddled.