

A Beauty With Multiple Masks Chapter 1761

The difficulty of the rescue operation increased when the sun set and darkness encroached. Despite that, the search and rescue team continued searching for the victims.

By the time it was the early hours of the next day, they had fished out fifty-two bodies. Along with the ten bodies from earlier, the current deceased count was sixty-three.

There were still two hundred and eighty-nine people missing, for there were a total of three hundred and twenty passengers and thirty-two crew members.

During that period, every time someone fished out a body, Aaron would check it himself. When he saw that it was neither Arielle nor Vinson, he would let out a sigh of relief.

Although that was impolite to the deceased, no one could stop themselves from being selfish at a time like that, including the king. Some of the deceased were his people, and yet, he still could not help but feel glad that they were not Arielle and Vinson.

“Your Majesty, I’ll be watching here. You should go back and rest for a while. There are many things to work on tomorrow,” Morrison murmured after walking over to Aaron.

However, Aaron waved his hands dismissively. He would rather stay there because even if he were to go back, he would still be too worried to rest properly.

At the very least, he would be able to receive news about Arielle and Vinson right away if he stayed here.

There was nothing Morrison could do when he saw that Aaron refused to rest. Thus, he waited beside him.

In the meantime, when the gloomy Nancy found out that the ship Arielle was on had exploded, she finally broke out into a smile.

“Arielle, this is the price you pay for going up against me!” Nancy muttered as she sneered.

“You’re rather fast,” said the Duke who heard the news as well.

He was wearing a similar wicked grin too. “My dear little brother, good luck...”

With that said, he summoned another person into the room and instructed, “Go there and keep an eye on the people. If they’re found alive, do me a favor and help them to the afterlife. I don’t want to see them in this world anymore.”

“Yes, sir!” the person answered before turning to leave.

Once Nancy and the Duke were the only ones left, the latter summoned Linda. "Convey the news of Arielle and Vinson's death to Chanaea. Tell them to move quicker."

"I'll see to it now," Linda replied before leaving.

The news of the explosion of Arielle and Vinson's ship soon traveled across Chanaea.

The company directors' mess had tired Susanne out, so she decided to stay in the mansion to rest instead of going to the office that day.

All of a sudden, her phone rang, and she picked it up to look at the screen. When she realized that it was a call from one of the directors, she muted the phone and closed her eyes again. She frankly did not know what to say to the directors, so she was going to leave it all to Vinson upon his return.

Right as she closed her eyes and was about to take a nap, someone knocked on the door.

"Mrs. Nightshire, Mrs. Nightshire," Geoffrey the butler urgently called out as he knocked on the door.

Susanne came down from the bed and opened the door.

When she saw the anxious look on Geoffrey's face, she frowned and asked, "What happened?"

"Bad news, Mrs. Nightshire," Geoffrey started.

"What happened?" Susanne arched a brow and asked. "Please don't tell me the directors are right outside the house."

The butler shook his head fervently. "No, no."

"What is it then?" Susanne let out a relieved sigh when she heard that the directors were not actually by the door. "My head's hurting a little, so hurry up and say it. I'm going to take a nap once you're done."

"Mrs. Nightshire..." Geoffrey mumbled, unsure how he should break the news to her.

He did not even know if she could take it or not.

Noticing his reaction, Susanne's heart lurched. Did something horrible happen?

"Tell me what it is. You're only making me more nervous like this."

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“Mrs. Nightshire, this is about Mr. Vinson and Ms. Arielle...” The butler remembered the news he saw, and he didn’t know how to deliver the news to Susanne.

“What happened to them?” Hearing that it was about Vinson and Arielle, Susanne immediately got anxious. “Stop hesitating and spill everything at once! What happened to them?”

“Mrs. Nightshire, the cruise ship that Mr. Vinson and Ms. Arielle were on had exploded. So far, they had already found more than eighty corpses.”

As soon as Geoffrey finished talking, Susanne closed her eyes and fell backward.

“Mrs. Nightshire!” The butler quickly reached out his hand to support her, lightly slapping her face to wake her up.

After a while, Susanne opened her eyes again.

“Did you say the cruise ship they were on had exploded?” Susanne grabbed Geoffrey’s collar with her trembling hands.

At that moment, her complexion had turned pale.

Geoffrey nodded solemnly. After getting confirmation, Susanne fainted again, and Geoffrey woke her up once again.

“Mrs. Nightshire, we don’t know what happened to Mr. Vinson and Ms. Arielle yet, so you must hang in there. We have to quickly arrange for men to go search for them. If you break down, who’s going to do that?” Geoffrey asked.

Susanne was utterly heartbroken to the extent that she was having trouble breathing.

My son! My only son! Please be alive!

She then asked Geoffrey to fetch her the phone. Susanne unlocked the screen with her trembling hands and dialed Vinson’s number. To her dismay, her calls couldn’t get through. She tried Arielle’s number, but that didn’t work either.

Right then, Susanne’s heart sank.

Did they really get into trouble?

She then quickly looked for Harrison’s contact because she wanted him to give her Harvey’s contact so that she could ask Harvey about what had happened.

“Susanne, I called Harvey right away when I heard about what happened to Vinson. He told me that Vinson was indeed on that cruise ship, and that cruise ship had exploded. They had already sent people there to help with the search...” Harrison uttered.

Upon hearing that, Susanne dropped her phone and froze on the spot. Her heart lurched, and she suddenly found it laborious to breathe, as if a huge rock was weighing on her heart.

“Mrs. Nightshire, Mr. Vinson and Ms. Arielle need you! You must hang in there!” Geoffrey urged when he saw Susanne’s face turning pale, seeming like she was about to collapse anytime.

On the other end of the line, Harrison heard what Geoffrey said, so he hung up silently. After hanging up the phone, he sent his men over to search for Vinson and Arielle.

Susanne knew she had to compose herself when she heard what Geoffrey said.

I need to save my son and my daughter-in-law!

She supported herself to sit up and looked at Geoffrey. “Get Rayson to come here. I have orders for him.”

Seeing that Susanne had pulled herself together, Geoffrey hurriedly picked her phone up from the floor and gave it to her before whipping out his own phone to call Rayson.

Susanne took her phone from Geoffrey and wanted to thank Harrison. When she saw that the call had ended, she didn’t try calling him back. At that point, all she could think about was Vinson and Arielle.

Meanwhile, Rayson was at the office, and the entrance to the office was surrounded by the directors of the company.

Early that morning, the news of Vinson’s accident had caused quite a stir. Besides, it was widely reported by the media.

The directors tried calling Susanne, but they couldn’t get through to her. Coincidentally, they all ended up going to Rayson’s office to look for him.

At the same time, Rayson also tried calling Vinson, but he couldn’t get through to him as well. Consequently, he was getting more and more worried by the second.

Is it true? Did the cruise ship really explode?

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As he was about to call Vinson again, his phone rang. When he saw that it was Geoffrey calling him, he quickly answered the phone.

Before Geoffrey could say a word, Rayson asked worriedly, "Geoffrey, does Mrs. Nightshire know about what happened to Mr. Nightshire yet?"

Rayson was worried that Susanne couldn't handle the news.

"Mr. Seet, Mrs. Nightshire already knows about the accident, and she wants you to come over. She said she has things for you to do," Geoffrey answered.

Rayson's gaze darkened when he saw the directors gathering outside his office.

What a bunch of ungrateful b*stards! They were able to lead a wealthy life because of Mr. Nightshire, and now, when something happens to Mr. Nightshire, these people are so eager to take over. How despicable!

"Tell Mrs. Nightshire I'm on my way." With that, Rayson hung up the phone and kept it in his pocket.

He then stood up and walked out of the office.

"Are we having a board of directors meeting today? Why is everyone here?" Rayson asked and acted like he didn't know why they were there.

"Mr. Seet, do you know anything about Mr. Nightshire's accident?"

The man who asked that question was Oswald Waysea, a director of the company. He was also Vinson's father's close friend when Vinson's father was alive.

"How could I not know? It's being reported by all the news outlets."

Rayson looked at Oswald and raised his brow. "Why do you ask?"

"Mr. Seet, don't you know our share prices are dropping drastically?" Oswald shot Rayson a cold look and said, "If this goes on, the company is going to go bankrupt."

Rayson responded with a cold glare. "What do you want to do about it?"

Oswald kept silent and put on a stern look.

What do I want to do about it? I want to take over Nightshire Group, of course!

However, can I just say that out loud? I can't!

If I say it out loud, it means that I have a malicious ambition! I need someone else to say it on my behalf.

He then shot a discreet glance at the man next to him, signaling him to speak up.

Heeding the message, the man began, "Mr. Seet, it's not that we're trying to force things through. We just can't bear to watch the company go bankrupt. After all, the company doesn't belong to the Nightshire Group alone. We've all worked hard to build this company."

The person who Oswald had signaled to speak up was Dayver Young. He was also a friend of Vinson's father before his death. However, he didn't have much knowledge of business finance either.

Back then, he managed to become a director of Nightshire Group because he forked out a portion of money when Nightshire Group needed help. In order to express his gratitude, Vinson's father gave him some shares.

"What are you saying?" Rayson looked at him and asked.

"Well, Vinson had gotten into an accident, right? The company needs a leader. I'm recommending Mr. Waysea to be Nightshire Group's chairman," Dayver answered.

"I can't do anything about it, can I? I'm just an assistant," Rayson replied with a grim expression.

The directors knew there was nothing Rayson could do about it. However, they couldn't reach Susanne.

Since Rayson was Vinson's assistant, they assumed that he would surely be able to contact Susanne. That was why they had gone up to him and told him what they had in mind. They just wanted him to relay the message to Susanne.

Rayson glanced at the other directors and raised his brows when he asked, "How about the others? Do you guys feel the same way? Do you guys want Mr. Waysea to be the chairman?"

The other directors looked at Oswald before turning their attention back toward Rayson. In fact, they felt that it didn't matter who was the chairman of the company.

They just wanted the company to do well so that they could make a fortune. However, they saw Oswald staring at them solemnly, and they all thought that Vinson was most probably dead.

Hence, they answered, "Well, we guess so."

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“Got it. I’ll inform Mrs. Nightshire,” Rayson said while looking at them.

He then made a sarcastic remark. “We have no idea if Mr. Nightshire is dead or alive, yet, none of you seniors in the company and business partners showed him any concern. And it seems fighting over the chairman’s position is more important than anything else at this point. You should be proud of yourselves.”

Rayson walked out of the room after ending his sentence. The expression on all the directors’ faces turned grim when they heard what he said.

Oswald nearly wanted to respond with a cold snort and storm out of the room, but since there were still other directors around, he steadied himself.

After plastering a cursory smile on his face, he looked at the directors and asked, “Let’s have some breakfast, shall we?”

One of the directors replied, “Forget it. There are other things I have to attend to!”

“Yeah, me too. I have to take my mom to the hospital as she’s not feeling well,” another echoed.

The directors all left the room.

The grim expression on Oswald’s face gave Dayver a shudder. After a short pause, he bade Oswald farewell and left in a hurry as well. Even a gullible fool like Dayver chose not to stay. Infuriated, Oswald threw a punch at the wall.

Meanwhile, Rayson drove to Nightshire Manor. After parking his car in the garage, she went straight to look for Susanne.

His heart sank when he saw how ashen-faced Susanne was. Things would have been different if Mr. Nightshire was still all right.

Oh, goodness. The heavens have already taken her husband away, so let’s hope the heavens don’t take her only son and daughter-in-law away, too.

“Mrs. Nightshire.”

“Hi, Rayson. You must have heard about Vinson, right? Send people to rescue them right now,” Susanne pulled herself together and said.

“I’ll make the arrangement right now,” Rayson said. He took out his phone and spent half an hour instructing his men to look for Vinson and Arielle.

Susanne heaved a sigh of relief when Rayson was done making all the arrangements.

“Mrs. Nightshire, Mr. Waysea brought all the directors to corner me in my office today.” Initially, Rayson did not want to disturb Susanne with this update, but on second thought, he felt he was obliged to keep her informed.

Should anything dreadful happen to Vinson, Susanne would have to take over Nightshire Group. Rayson would not allow the company to fall into the hands of opportunists.

Upon hearing that, Susanne looked upward to glance at him. “Cornered you in your office? Why would he do that?”

“Mr. Waysea wants to be the chairman of Nightshire Group!”

Rayson adjusted his glasses as his gaze darkened. “The company’s share price has plunged because of Mr. Nightshire’s accident. Since no one is leading Nightshire Group, they were worried that the company would go bankrupt.”

Susanne started trembling in agitation when she heard what Rayson said.

These are the so-called friends whom we had been through thick and thin with!

She could not believe these people would insist on taking over Nightshire Group when something had just happened to her son.

I’ll not allow Nightshire Group to fall into their hands. I’ll defend it with my life while waiting for my son to return. I’m sure he’ll come back alive!

“Tell everyone in Nightshire Group that I’ll be overseeing the company temporarily. Also, I want you to warn anyone who spread rumors about Vinson. We will file a lawsuit against those who disseminate false information about my son.”

Rayson was relieved to see the determined look on Susanne’s face. He was worried she might become disheartened after receiving the unsettling news about Vinson.

“All right, I’ll see to it. Make sure you get enough rest, Mrs. Nightshire. The company needs you.”

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Another week went by, and the rescue team had fished more than a hundred bodies out from the sea. Yet, there was no sign of Vinson and Arielle.

Aaron was overwhelmed with despair. He had not been able to sleep well as he was busy handling national affairs and keeping a watchful eye on the rescue operation.

Celeste was so worried about her son that she decided to leave the palace to meet him. Her heart sank when she saw how frail and skinny Aaron had become.

“It has been a week, Aaron. Arielle and Vinson might have...”

Before Celeste could finish her sentence, she noticed Aaron had turned around and glared at her. “Don’t utter those inauspicious words, Mother. Don’t make wild guesses.”

He gritted his teeth and emphasized those last four words, as he refused to believe Arielle and Vinson were dead.

Celeste did not want to think they had perished in the incident either, but she did not believe the couple could survive in the ocean for a week, no matter how capable they were.

Upon seeing how determined Aaron was, she decided not to say anything that would make him feel awful. Nonetheless, Celeste was still worried about his health since he had not had enough rest during this period.

“I understand you’re worried about them, Aaron, but you have to take care of yourself too. What if you fall ill, and they’re still not found? Who else can command the search operation?” Celeste said while looking at him.

At first, Aaron wanted to continue monitoring the rescue operation, but he had to agree with Celeste. When he decided to return to the palace with her to take a rest, Celeste was overjoyed.

In the meantime, a man leaned against the chair with his legs crossed while tapping on his phone.

He asked with a wicked smirk, “How did the share acquisition go?”

The man standing opposite cautiously answered, “Mr. Rhaylie, though the price has plunged, no one has sold off their shares yet.”

The man’s expression turned grim instantly.

Useless!

“Then think of a way to force them to sell their shares.” A corner of his lips quirked up. “I’m sure you know what to do.”

The person standing in front of him started sweating buckets. “I’ll try my best, Mr. Rhaylie...”

The man narrowed his eyes and responded with a deep grunt. After putting his phone aside, he tapped his index finger on the table repeatedly.

I have to do something about it to speed things up.

He picked up his phone once again and dialed a number.

Meanwhile, at Chanaea, the media still reported on Vinson's disappearance even though Rayson had warned them not to spread the rumors.

The press release did not mention Vinson's death but insinuated it to a certain extent. Anyone who came across the news would know who the person was.

The news today even reported that the rescue team had discovered another thirty-eight bodies and implied that Vinson might have died in the incident.

Nightshire Group was a large company. The fact that the chairman had met with a tragic mishap meant that the company had lost its pillar. Though Susanne had stepped in to take charge of Nightshire Group, there were still people who doubted her capability.

As the share price continued to dip, all the directors and employers were like cats on hot bricks as they were scared that the company would go bankrupt and they might lose their jobs.

Rayson's face darkened as he issued another warning. Susanne's heart sank even deeper as another week went by without any news about Vinson and Arielle.

Nevertheless, she had no choice but to pull herself together.

When she took out her phone and was ready to call Sasha, she received a text from Sasha instead. After reading the text message, her eyes widened in shock.

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Sasha sent her a photo of a luggage bag with Vinson's and Arielle's ID photos beside it.

Upon seeing the photo, Susanne's hand could not stop trembling. She could not stop her hands from shaking as the fear of the unknown overwhelmed her. Subsequently, she immediately looked for Sasha's number and called her.

She had to muster up all her courage to ask this short question, "S-Sasha, any news about them?"

Upon hearing Susanne's broken voice, even Sasha, who was usually indifferent, couldn't help but feel sad.

She suppressed her emotions and responded with bloodshot eyes, "We haven't found them yet, Mrs. Nightshire..."

Susanne tried to console herself.

Ah! No news is good news.

"Sasha, continue with the search operation. Let me know if you need more money. I'll get Rayson to make the necessary arrangements," Susanne said after steeling herself.

Sasha nodded. "All right, Mrs. Nightshire. I'll call Rayson if I need help."

After ending the call, Sasha started looking for the couple again.

Meanwhile, Susanne packed her things and made a trip to Nightshire Group.

The moment she stepped into the company, more than ten journalists caught up with her with cameras and asked her questions incessantly, "Hi, Mrs. Nightshire. Now that the company's share price had dipped, and Mr. Nightshire is still missing, would you allow someone capable to take over the chairman's position?"

Another journalist asked, "Another week has passed, yet, there's still no news about Mr. Nightshire. In your opinion, what are the chances of him surviving the tragedy?"

"Mrs. Nightshire, who will become the next chairman of Nightshire Group if Mr. Nightshire is declared dead? Do you have any candidate in mind?" Another question emerged from the crowd.

"Mrs. Nightshire..."

"Mrs. Nightshire... Could we have an answer please..."

While bombarding Susanne with hurtful questions, the journalists kept on snapping her photos.

"Get out of the way!" Rayson immediately came to Susanne's rescue after seeing what the journalists were doing to her.

Susanne knew this would happen. She kept herself composed, not allowing those burning questions to get the better of her.

I'll continue to safeguard the company while awaiting Vinson and Arielle's return.

"Please ask them to quiet down. I'll answer a few questions," Susanne whispered into Rayson's ear.

She knew she had to address the matter to appease the journalists and shut their mouths.

“Are you sure you can do this, Mrs. Nightshire?” Rayson was worried.

Susanne gently patted his hand and shook her head. “It’s fine. I can handle this. I can’t collapse before they return.”

Rayson’s heart wrenched when she made the remark. He then helped Susanne up the stairs.

When the journalists were about to walk up the stairs, he instructed the security guards to stop them from advancing. He then glared at the journalists, asking them to remain silent.

“Feel free to ask Mrs. Nightshire any questions, but she’ll decide what to answer.”

The journalists were overjoyed. They had gathered at Nightshire Group today merely to try their luck since Susanne refused to speak to the media in the last couple of days.

“Mrs. Nightshire, if Mr. Nightshire isn’t around anymore, which candidate do you think is qualified to take over the chairman’s position?” A young male journalist started the session with a sharp question.

“We don’t want bad things to happen to Mr. Nightshire either, but we have yet to receive any news about him for a week now. What are the odds of him surviving the ordeal? Have you not thought of a succession plan at all?”

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Hearing the crowd claiming that Vinson was no longer around, Susanne felt a pang of anger blaze within her. Nevertheless, she did not let her emotions get the better of her.

I can’t get mad at these reporters. Who knows what kind of story they’ll try to fabricate?

I mustn’t let my actions affect Nightshire Group in any way.

“I firmly believe that my son will come back alive. So, I will not be making any useless plans right now.”

“Mrs. Nightshire…”

Noticing how Susanne tried to hold herself together to answer the reporters’ questions despite her pale complexion, Rayson interrupted, “We’ll stop here for today. Please be merciful and not come up with untrue stories for your articles.”

With that, he held Susanne by the arm and led her into the building.

Of course, those reporters were unsatisfied as Susanne had only answered two questions throughout the session. Unwilling to let her leave just like that, they swarmed toward her. Yet, before they could get anywhere near her, the security at the entrance stopped them.

Since those reporters could not get more answers, they could only leave with their cameras and head back to work on their press releases.

Meanwhile, Rayson helped Susanne into the elevator. After heading to her office with her, Rayson instructed the secretary to bring her a glass of warm water. Her raging emotions finally eased after she took a few sips of water.

“What are they up to recently?” Susanne recomposed herself and asked.

As the series of recent events crossed Rayson’s mind, a ruthless glint flashed across his sharp eyes. “They’re scrambling around to buy shares.”

“Buying shares?” Susanne’s heart skipped a beat. “Did anyone sell their shares?”

Rayson shook his head. “Not at the moment. Those small shareholders might be observing the situation by the sidelines too.”

Mr. Nightshire’s capabilities are evident. The decisions he made all these years have always helped those shareholders earn hefty profits.

Learning that no one had sold their shares yet, Susanne heaved a sigh of relief.

Nonetheless, she still reminded Rayson, “If anyone can’t take it anymore and decides to sell their shares, you have to buy it back at once.”

Rayson nodded. In truth, he thought the same way too.

Given the company’s current situation, we cannot afford to lose any shares to the other shareholders anymore.

The company was facing a ripple effect after experiencing a massive drop in stocks. Many companies would rather breach the contract than continue the collaboration with them.

When he shared the news with Susanne, she scowled at once.

They’re obviously making things more difficult for us now. But what can I do?

After all, everyone has the right to make a choice.

“Get back to work...” Susanne rubbed her forehead.

With a nod, Rayson returned to his office.

Just as he entered his room, the phone on his desk rang. Without hesitation, he answered the call.

In the next second, his face darkened tremendously after hearing the news from the other end of the call.

“Are you sure you want to withdraw the investment? You better think twice. If you withdraw now, Mr. Nightshire will never agree to you joining in again when he returns later,” Rayson grimly uttered.

Previously, they had gone to great lengths and established many connections to fund the capital investment for the company. Sadly, the investor had decided to pull out in less than a week.

The company’s in a difficult situation right now. How can he decide to withdraw investment so easily? Isn’t he adding fuel to the fire?

“Mr. Seet, I know it’s not a good idea to withdraw my investment now. But please understand that I have my difficulties too.”

As the other party was adamant about withdrawing his investment, Rayson had no choice but to divulge the news to Susanne. Well aware that there was no way to persuade someone who had his mind made up, she agreed to his investment withdrawal without hesitation.

“Mrs. Nightshire, our cash flow will be affected if he withdraws now...”

Rayson tried to dissuade Susanne, yet she stopped him from finishing his sentence. “I still have some savings. You can make use of it.”

In actuality, Susanne had already made plans beforehand. She then pulled out a card from her bag and passed it to him.

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Holding onto the card, Rayson felt as if it weighed a ton.

Deep down, there was a burning urge in him to ask if Susanne wanted to save the money for the rainy days ahead. But at the same time, he thought it was not a very appropriate question.

That’ll sound like I’m cursing Mr. Nightshire.

“I’ll save this sum of money as our last resort.”

Meanwhile, on an island on the other side of the ocean, a fifteen-year-old youth and an almost thirty-year-old woman were making their way back after getting off a boat.

The youth stared at the burly woman before him as he asked softly, “Aunt Sophia, can I return to school after this batch of goods gets delivered?”

Everything here is pretty good, but I love the world outside even more. I don’t want to stay here any longer.

Hearing his words, Sophia stopped in her tracks and whipped her head around to look at him. “Do you really wish to go out and study so much?”

At the sight of the youth bobbing his head, Sophia frowned. “Isn’t it nice here? From food and drinks to daily necessities, we have the best of everything here.”

“Aunt Sophia, it is nice here, but I prefer the world outside.” The youth raised his head and directed his sparkly gaze toward her. “I want to be with my classmates and make friends with like-minded people. Also, I want to be able to do whatever I want to do.”

Seeing the glimmer in his eyes, Sophia furrowed her brows. “We’ll talk about it again.”

Having said that, she turned and continued forward.

“All right,” the youth responded before following behind soullessly.

“Ow!” Suddenly, he twisted his ankle and fell to the ground.

Sophia hurriedly turned around and asked, “Are you hurt?”

“I-I...” Before he could finish his sentence, he widened his eyes in shock. “Aunt Sophia, there’s a woman here.”

At that, Sophia reversed her tracks to where he was, only to spot a woman lying on the ground motionlessly. Her brows squeezed together at once.

“Don’t mind her,” she casually answered and shifted her attention back to him. “How are you? Are you all right?”

The youth got back on his feet and lightly moved his ankle before shaking his head. “I’m fine,” he said.

“Let’s get moving then.” While Sophia strode forward, the youth bent down and placed his fingers near the woman’s nose.

Realizing that she was still breathing, his eyes lit up. He raised his voice and shouted, “Aunt Sophia, she’s still alive. Can we bring her back?”

When she heard those words, she immediately stopped him. “Clyde, don’t be nosy!”

God knows who that woman is! What if we stir troubles for ourselves after bringing her back?

“I want to help her, Aunt Sophia. Let’s bring her back.”

Thanks to Sophia’s great upbringing, the fifteen-year old Clyde had a kind heart. The determination in his eyes was so intense that Sophia eventually gave in.

At that point, the sky gradually turned dark. Walking up to the woman, Sophia, after taking a few glances, noticed that the woman’s body had swelled up, making her face beyond recognition.

Since Clyde wants to save her, I shall be kind and save her this time then.

With that thought in mind, she agreed to the youth’s request to take the woman back with them. Elated, he quickly bent over and carried her on his back.

After their return, he instructed the servant to help the woman wash up and change into clean clothes. Under his request, they also called a doctor over to examine her.

Three days later, the woman still showed no signs of regaining consciousness. Thus, Clyde whispered, “Miss, wake up. Aunt Sophia is going to throw you out if you don’t.”

Just as he was about to leave, he noticed the woman open her eyes.

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Upon opening her eyes, Arielle saw a brown-haired youth gazing at her in surprise.

Without waiting for her to say anything, Clyde joyfully broke the silence. “You’ve finally regained your consciousness. Did you perhaps wake up because you heard what I said earlier? You woke up just in time. Aunt Sophia is really about to throw you out had you not wake up.”

He lowered his voice as he said the last sentence, almost as if he was worried someone might overhear his words.

“W-Where...”

Cough! Cough!

Arielle wanted to ask where she was after having listened to his rambling. However, her throat was too dry that she began coughing the moment she spoke.

Clyde immediately poured her a glass of water.

Arielle took the glass from him and gulped down the water in a few mouthfuls.

“Who are you? What is this place? Are you the one who saved me?” Arielle threw Clyde a barrage of questions.

It was fortunate she had learned many languages before. Otherwise, she would not have understood what Clyde was saying.

Little did the youth expect that Arielle would understand the language he spoke. Of course, he was overjoyed.

“Hello, I’m Clyde. We’re on an island in Irushea. My aunt and I saved you. You’ve been lying here for the past three days. Aunt Sophia says she will kick you out if you aren’t waking up.” As he said that, he scratched his head. “Aunt Sophia is just kidding. With me around, she won’t do that to you.”

Hearing those words, Arielle curled the corners of her lips into a faint smile.

This kid really doesn’t have his guard up, isn’t he?

“It’s been a few days since you stayed in bed. Are you hungry?” Clyde thoughtfully queried.

At the mention of that, she realized she was indeed famished. Regardless, she could not care less about her hunger pangs.

“Clyde, am I the only one you guys saved? What’s the date today?” Arielle anxiously asked.

“Aunt Sophia and I only saw you, so you’re indeed the only one we saved,” the youth explained and walked up to the wall to check the calendar. “Today is the third of May.”

Third of May...

Arielle’s heart sank at once.

It has been a week since we jumped off the cruise ship. How is Vinson right now? Did he get saved by anyone?

Overwhelmed by anxiety, she looked at Clyde and asked, "Do you have a phone? Can you lend me for a moment?"

She had wanted to call Susanne and Aaron. Nevertheless, the youth shook his head.

"Miss, I don't have a phone," Clyde whispered. "Aunt Sophia always takes my phone away from me when we enter the island."

That was also why he had never gotten in touch with his classmates for almost a month since his return to the island.

At this point, Arielle's heart sank further.

Where exactly is this place? Why must they confiscate his phone upon entry?

A frown formed between her brows. Deep down, she was overwhelmed by her worry for Vinson and Lorraine, but she still tried to keep her emotions hidden.

"Miss, if you want to make a call, I can help you ask Aunt Sophia when she's back," Clyde suggested after noticing Arielle becoming solemn and silent.

"All right. Thank you!"

"Wait here. I'll get someone to cook you some pumpkin soup. You'll need something to eat since you just woke up." Right after he spoke, he stood up and headed out.

About half an hour later, Clyde brought over a bowl of piping hot pumpkin soup. The delicious smell instantly made Arielle's stomach growl in hunger. Looking at the smiling youth, she could not help but curse inwardly.

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"Be patient. The pumpkin soup is still steaming hot. Wait till it cools down before you eat." said Clyde as he placed the bowl of soup on the nightstand.

Nevertheless, Arielle, who was famished, could not wait any further. As Clyde watched with an astonished expression, she struggled to sit up on the bed, grabbed the bowl of pumpkin soup, and started shoving spoonfuls of soup into her mouth while blowing on it.

Only after downing the entire bowl of soup did Arielle feel a lot better though she was still quite weak and feeble.

"Miss, did you manage to eat your fill? There's still more in the pot," Clyde attentively asked while staring at her.

Arielle shook her head.

I can't overeat in one go since I just woke up, but small meals throughout the day sound like a good idea.

I wonder if they'll allow me to cook. Oh well, I shouldn't say anything even if they don't. I'm thankful enough that they saved me.

"Clyde, did you hear anything regarding the explosion of a cruise ship a few days ago?"
Arielle was trying to pry information out of Clyde.

In response, he bobbed his head. Despite not heading out for the past few days, he had learned about the accident through the news since there was a television on the island.

He initially wanted to ask Arielle why she would ask him that question. Yet, before he did, he recalled how her body was swollen when they saved her.

Now that I think of it, she did look like she was soaked in water for a long time.

Lifting his gaze at Arielle, he asked, "Don't tell me you were on board that cruise ship?"

She nodded in acknowledgment.

Anticipation filled her as she fixed her eyes on Clyde. "Since you know about the explosion, do you know if they've managed to rescue anyone alive?"

The youth shook his head. "Miss, there are only dead bodies so far. No one's alive."

Upon receiving that piece of news, Arielle's expression turned grim. A turmoil of emotions blazed within her.

Her worry for Vinson and Lorraine's safety only grew stronger.

Are they as lucky as me and got rescued by someone?

While she was worrying about them, Vinson and Lorraine, after being rescued by a lackey of the slave market, were put up for sale like goods. Before long, someone bought them.

The one who bought them was the daughter of the ruler of the island, named Anna. In actuality, she only had eyes for Vinson, but when she was about to take him away, Vinson told her that Lorraine was his sworn sister and that if she wanted to buy him, she would also have to buy Lorraine. Otherwise, it would be pointless to bring him back alone.

Anna had chosen Vinson simply because of his looks, but it turned out that she loved his character even more. As such, she hastily decided to fork money to buy Lorraine too.

After taking the two of them back, Anna separated them. Then, she brought Vinson to her mansion and got someone to prepare a few sets of men's clothing before ordering him to shower in the servants' room.

When he returned, Anna's eyes lit up at once.

This man is really handsome! He's totally my taste. Oh my gosh!

Just one glance at him makes my heart pound wildly.

"What's your name? Why would you be sold to the slave market?" Anna rested her chin on her hands as she stared at him curiously while suppressing her raging emotions.

Vinson had yet to have a complete grasp of Anna's identity and the location he was at, and thus, to answer her question, he readily built a response.

"I'm Maddox. The force from the turbulent waves sent me here after the cruise ship exploded. Those people who saved me then sold me to the slave market for trade," Vinson explained in a deep voice.

I can't believe I'd get sold as a slave one day...

Confoundment struck Anna as she did not expect Vinson to be a passenger on the exploded cruise ship.

Well, I have to thank that explosion. Otherwise, I won't get to meet this man.