

Returning from the Dead: His Secret Lover Chapter 1361

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Chapter 1361 A Substitute

Nevertheless, Solomon did not question Ichika and simply let her do what she wanted.

That day, Ichika did not go to Frontier Bay.

No one suspected the reason she gave, except one particular person, who felt that something was amiss.

“So, you married him because you’re a stand-in for someone else, huh?” the woman sneered over the phone.

Upon hearing her vicious remark, all the color drained out of Ichika’s face. “No, I’m not!”

“Really? Then why did you call Mom last night? You must have upset Mom because you spied on Sasha. Stop acting, Ichika. You knew what it was all about since the day you realized that woman looked like Grandma,” Himari Minamoto continued to scoff.

Himari could not help it. She was utterly jealous of Ichika’s grand wedding in Terrandya.

We both come from the Minamoto family, but how come she got to enjoy such a privilege? Deep in Himari’s heart, she knew her wedding would never be as grand as Ichika’s, no matter who she would end up marrying.

There was intense hatred in Himari’s eyes as she spat, “Why? Did I say anything wrong? You two have not consummated your marriage, haven’t you?”

“Excuse me?” Ichika’s face became even more pallid.

That sarcastic remark caused Ichika to suffer an emotional breakdown.

In a daze, she accidentally cut her finger while slicing the vegetables. “Ouch!”

Blood started dripping off of her dainty fingers, and everyone around her was shocked.

“Oh dear, Ichika. How could you be so careless? We’re in a cooking class, so you have to stay focused.” The teacher went over to check her out.

At this point, Ichika was already crying profusely.

She could not remember what happened after the class. By the time she regained her composure, she was already standing outside of Hayes Corporation, looking up at the building with a dazed look on her face.

Upon noticing Ichika at the entrance, the security walked up to her and greeted, "Don't you want to come in, Mrs. George? Mr. George is in the office now."

The moment Ichika heard that, she started to freak out. She left in haste as if someone had found out about her wrongdoing.

At about four in the afternoon, Sasha texted in the group chat: Ichika, why didn't you pick Vivi up today? She has been asking for you.

Solomon replied instead: She attended a cooking class today.

He replied swiftly, not because of Sasha but merely because he had his phone with him when he read the text.

Sasha replied: Oh, Okay. I'll tell Vivi then. I'm sure she did this for you. You've married a virtuous wife, Solomon!

Sabrina texted: I know, right? I don't even bother to attend any cooking classes.

Devin replied with a facepalm emoji.

Sasha texted: Well, at least my cooking skills are somewhat acceptable. Someone's gotta do it for the kids.

Sebastian did not know how to react to that remark.

The remarks by the two women had rendered their husbands speechless.

Mr. Wand wrote in the group: Ichika is indeed a great girl. Vivi's classmate celebrated her birthday two days ago, and Ichika took the trouble to learn how to bake a cake so that she could teach Vivi to make one on her own.

Sasha: She's so patient! I don't think I can handle that.

She praised Ichika from the bottom of her heart.

Solomon kept mum and did not reply, but his expression softened after putting down his phone.

Solomon did not return home in the evening as he had an appointment, but he still texted Ichika: I won't be going back for dinner.

Ichika froze for a bit upon receiving his message. She could not help but take a glance at all the ingredients she had laid on the table.

Her heart sank, and she became disheartened.

Why is he not coming back for dinner? Where is he going?

Is he upset because I didn't spend time with the two kids in Frontier Bay?

Her eyes were filled with despair.

She took a glance at her bandaged finger and did not want to cook anymore. After cleaning up the kitchen, she returned to her room.

That night, the woman who relocated to a foreign country after marriage and did not have any friends spent through it in agony.

The next day, a sound emerged from downstairs even when the villa's gate was still locked. "Hello? Aunt Ichika? Are you still sleeping? I'm here with Jessica!"

"Vivi?"

Ichika woke up and opened her eyes. Before she could respond, she could already hear Solomon talking to Vivian.

In response to Solomon's question, Vivian answered, "Yes, Uncle Solomon. I didn't have a chance to tell you since you were not around yesterday, but my friends and I would like to hold a 'fashion show' here. Is that okay?"

Vivian, who came with a group of friends, was all smiles when she lifted her head to look at Solomon after he had opened the door.

Solomon froze for a moment.

Upon listening to their conversation, Ichika sat up from her bed.

Did he not go to Frontier Bay last night?

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Chapter 1362 Blushing

Heavy footfalls sounded as Ichika raced down the stairs.

She came to a stop and saw a man still dressed in casual wear helping the kids to carry in the items.

“Aunt Ichika, we’re having a fashion show today. Are you going to watch us?”
Right away, a perceptive Vivian noticed Ichika spying at them, still in her pajamas.

Ichika was stunned speechless and didn’t utter a response.

Before she could hide, the man in the garden had heard Vivian and glanced toward them.

“You’re awake. Breakfast is ready in the kitchen. Freshen up and have some.”

“What?” With a head still muddled with sleep, Ichika’s eyes widened comically like saucers.

He made me breakfast?

Oh, my goodness!

My husband actually made me breakfast.

That simple gesture had instantly mended her broken heart from the night before, and her face lit up with joy, her eyes sparkling like the stars in the night sky.

“Okay, Darling,” she answered meekly before turning to skip away.

A girl like her was pure and innocent. She was easily hurt, but conversely, it was easy to cajole her, too. It was like giving candy to a kid. With a few coaxing words, she would be right as rain in no time.

That day, Ichika had been particularly active on WhatsApp.

She had been taking pictures and sending them to the group chat, giving tips on how to strut on the catwalk to the girls, and taking selfies with everyone.

Sasha chortled as she scrolled through the messages. “Ichika finally sent some pictures. It was strange that she had been on radio silence these two days.”

Not far away, a man who was sprawled on a chair reading a book observed her quietly.

He couldn’t be bothered to remind her because he was of the same mind as Sasha. As long as Ichika didn’t harbor ill intentions, all was good with him.

He would turn a blind eye to anything else.

Everyone's lives returned to normal, and Ichika in Avenport got closer with Solomon under the same roof.

One morning, after Solomon had finished his breakfast made by Ichika, she stopped by his side abruptly with bright, hopeful eyes and blurted, "Darling... my mom said she is coming to visit me. Is that okay?"

Solomon's hands stilled while he was cleaning up the table.

"When is she coming?"

"These two days, if you're okay with it." Ichika sounded hesitant, afraid that he would disapprove.

As per the customs in Jetroina, if one wanted to visit a son-in-law's home, his permission was needed, no matter if the mother-in-law was an elder. Unexpected guests were considered impolite.

Solomon was conflicted.

After all, he was so used to living alone that it took him close to two months to habituate himself living with Ichika.

And now my mother-in-law is showing up...

"Okay, I'll book the tickets for her." In the end, he chose to be a filial son-in-law and arranged for the trip.

Ichika almost burst with joy.

"Thank you so much, Darling! You're the best!" Impulsively, she took a few steps forward and rose on her tiptoe before pressing a kiss on his cheek.

For a moment, deep silence hung in the air, and every sound was suddenly stilled. All that was left was the two people who stood there. One of them picked up a frantic heartbeat while the other was motionless.

It was as if they were frozen.

Oh, no, is he mad? Was I too reckless?

Bright red splotches appeared on Ichika's cheeks. As reality started to creep in, her thoughts were in disarray, and remorse plagued her.

"Darling, I-I..."

"All right, you should go tidy up the room for your mother. I'll be heading off to work now," Solomon interrupted.

Then, he took a handful of dishes and cutleries to the kitchen before grabbing his keys and driving off.

Ichika was silent the entire time.

What does he mean by that?

He didn't seem to have much of a reaction. Does this mean he's angry?

Her thoughts started to run amok, and she felt bad after Solomon left with unnatural calmness.

Does his impassivity toward my kiss mean he doesn't have feelings for me? A little temper tantrum would have been fine by me, too.

Puzzled, her brows knitted together.

What Ichika didn't know was the man who had just left had done so with quickened steps. He was usually a calm and steady person, but all he wanted to do at that moment was to flee.

In Frontier Bay, Wendy found out from Vivian's loose lips that Ichika's mother was paying a visit. Startled by the news, she failed to keep the information to herself. In the end, the Hayeses found out about it, too.

Sasha texted: Her mom is coming? Should we go back?

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Chapter 1363 Here Comes Trouble

Sabrina replied: Count me in!

Devin and Sebastian said nothing, but they could sense the girls' excitement from their phone screens.

In the end, Rufus chimed in: It's fine. I'm here. You guys don't have to worry. I'll make sure everything is in order.

Jonathan added: He's right, Rufus is an elder. So, it's perfectly logical if he wants to welcome his in-laws, but there's no reason for both of you to show up, so stay put.

Sasha and Sabrina tactfully stayed silent, sharing the same thought that he was stern.

Since Jonathan had spoken, they could only listen and do nothing.

In the end, the heavy responsibility to receive Ichika's mother fell on Rufus.

Of course, the same responsibility was on the Hayeses, too. Everyone was glad at Ichika's mother's arrival from faraway Jetroina and volunteered to help, making Ichika feel overjoyed and blessed.

That night before her mother's flight, Ichika excitedly told her that many people had prepared a grand welcome reception for her arrival.

Aoi Minamoto was thrilled to hear that and brought many extravagant gifts with her the next day.

Ichika and Solomon had gone to the airport to pick her up.

"Mom..."

As soon as Ichika laid eyes on her mother, she brightened with childlike delight.

However, as she closed the distance between her mother, her face was bleached of color when she caught sight of the person behind Aoi.

"Himari? You're here too?"

"Yes, Ichika. Am I not welcome?" Himari was dressed exceptionally beautifully, towing a suitcase behind her as she greeted Ichika with a wide smile.

Ichika was silent for a pause before forcing her lips into the semblance of a smile. "No... you're welcome."

Solomon had taken over Aoi's suitcase, his demeanor was gentlemanly and respectful.

"How was the plane ride? Are you exhausted?"

"We're fine, and the journey was pleasant. As it should be since you arranged it for us." Evidently, Aoi was pleased with her son-in-law, and her tone revealed pride.

Solomon smiled and gripped the suitcase, ready to leave the airport.

Just then, a saccharine voice sounded from behind, "Mr. Akiyama, I have another luggage here, and I brought your favorite sake. If I'm mistaken, this is your favorite, right?"

The voice belonged to Himari, and she was speaking openly to Solomon as if they had known each other for a long time.

Ichika heard it, and her heart lurched. Walking up to her sister, she said, "I'll take it."

"You? Why? There's alcohol inside, and it's heavy. Leave it to Mr. Akiyama." Himari shoved her sister away and brought the suitcase over to Solomon.

Ichika stood rooted to the ground, her dark eyes reddening.

Just as she was about to see Solomon carry her sister's suitcase, he suddenly turned and said, "Ichika, drag it over to me and help me with this smaller one."

"Okay!" She immediately broke out into a smile.

She forcefully took over Himari's suitcase and lugged it over to him. "Here you go, Darling."

"Thanks." He accepted it.

Then, they carried a suitcase each and walked out of the airport. Never once did he leave her side. When they reached the car, Solomon heaved the suitcase into the trunk.

"Go and get your mother. We'll be leaving in a while."

"Okay," Ichika acknowledged and put down the smaller suitcase in her hand before heading in Aoi's direction.

She wanted to sit with her mother in the backseat. After all, they hadn't seen each other in a long time.

When Ichika and Aoi got into the back, Himari opened the door to the front passenger seat and promptly slid in.

Ichika stared aghast, her expression crumbling.

What's Himari doing? Why does she always do things that she knows I dislike? What is she trying to achieve here? That seat belongs to me and me only.

Besides, doesn't this situation call for three of us to sit in the back? This way, we could have a long-overdue conversation.

Ichika was losing the reins on her emotions.

"Ichika, isn't Mr. Akiyama the President of Hayes Corporation? Why is he still driving the same car from before? Did he not get a Rolls-Royce?"

Himari was still obsessed with the few Rolls-Royce she saw at Ichika's wedding.

Ichika replied, "What's wrong with this car? He's always driven it."

"That's right, it's only a vehicle. Anything would do," agreed Aoi.

Himari stewed in silence when she saw how their mother was clearly siding with Ichika.

A moment later, when Solomon got in and saw his adjacent seat occupied by someone other than Ichika, his brows furrowed with displeasure.

"It's fine if I sit here, right, Mr. Akiyama? Ichika and Mom are back there, and they have a lot to catch up on, so I'm giving them some space."

Seems like this woman is quite the sly one.

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Chapter 1364 Yearn For Happiness

Himari had spoken before Sebastian could even say a word, thus putting him in a position where it would be awkward to refuse her.

Ichika watched the scene with her cheeks puffed out in anger. Himari is going to annoy the hell out of me. She just landed, but she keeps doing such irritating things.

"I'm fine with it, but your sister might not like it," Solomon replied.

"Huh?"

The three ladies were taken back by his response.

Himari asked curiously, "Why wouldn't she like it? Isn't this your car?"

"It is. However, when one is married, the front passenger seat is usually reserved for his wife. If you want to sit here, you should ask for her permission, not mine," Solomon explained nonchalantly without even bothering to come up with an excuse.

Himari's face instantly turned as red as a beetroot.

She stared at him, looking upset. After a long while, she turned stiffly toward Ichika in the backseat and asked, "Is it all right if I sit here?"

Ichika seized the opportunity to vent her frustrations.

"Oh, it must've slipped my mind. Thank you for the reminder, Darling. Himari, I think you'd better join us in the back seat. That's my special seat, so I can't let you sit there," she replied.

Ichika was quick-witted, and she immediately played along with Solomon's explanation. Ichika's refusal struck Himari like a hard slap across her face.

Himari's face flushed red with anger.

Left without a choice, she climbed out of the front passenger seat sulkily and got into the back.

Solomon started the car. In the rearview mirror, he could see Ichika looking cheerful again as she hugged her mother's arm and chattered away happily.

He could not help smiling helplessly.

That day, Rufus, Wendy, and several others from the Hayes family gathered at the villa to welcome Aoi and Himari to Avenport.

By the time Solomon returned that night, everything was in full swing. It was the first time since their marriage that the villa was abuzz.

It's odd. After living alone for three years, I should prefer peace and quiet.

However, as he took in the sight of the villa filled with people and laughter, the fragrance of the flowers and wine permeating the air, and the tantalizing aroma of the food... He found that he quite liked the lively atmosphere.

I suppose it's true that humans tend to crave warmth. No matter what I've gone through or how much I've shut myself from the world, I still yearn to find my own happiness.

When Ichika spotted Solomon outside the villa, she rushed over to him. "You're finally back, Darling! Look, we have so many guests! They're all here to welcome my mom and Himari, and they brought lots of mouthwatering food!"

Solomon's gaze softened when he saw her childlike excitement.

"I'm glad to see that you're happy. By the way, where's your mom? What is she doing?"

"My mom?" Ichika echoed with a mysterious smile.

She stood on her tiptoes and leaned closer to him. This time, she did not kiss him. Instead, she spoke softly, her warm breath tickling his ear. "She's learning how to make calzone from the ladies of the Hayes family. She said that she wants to make it for my dad when she gets back."

She was smiling so widely that her sparkling eyes had curved into crescents.

Solomon froze, and a flush crept up his neck to the tips of his ears.

When Ichika pulled Solomon into the villa a few minutes later, everyone erupted into cheers. Now that the man of the house had arrived, they were ready to party.

Amid the hustle and bustle, no one noticed that someone was watching the scene with a spiteful gaze.

That person was none other than Himari.

At the moment, she was gazing down from the second floor.

A large part of the reason I came was that I wanted to regain some peace of mind. I couldn't believe that Ichika had snagged such a good husband. After all, the man she married is just a love child. How could he have so much money and power? That's why I wanted to see it with my own eyes.

When she saw the beautiful villa, she grew even more jealous. The urge to claim it as her own burgeoned within her.

It was clear that everything in the villa was expensive and valuable, down to the very carpet she was standing on. She had used her smartphone to look it up online and learned that the carpet had to be specially imported, and it was estimated to cost hundreds of thousands per square foot.

Sabrina really went all out. No expense was spared on the decorations either. Even in Ichika's room, any random bottle of skincare on her dressing table could easily cost one million. Despite being a prestigious family, the Minamoto family is nowhere near as wealthy as this.

Himari lingered in that room for a long time.

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Chapter 1365 Sleep In My Room

At that moment, Aoi called out, "Himari, what are you doing up there? Come downstairs!"

When Himari heard that, she quickly left Ichika's room.

As she walked out, she grabbed a hairpin from the dressing table and slipped it into her pocket. The diamonds on it must be real, right?

When she got downstairs, one of the guests asked, "So, this is the Minamoto family's eldest daughter?"

"She's gorgeous, and she has a dignified aura," another person remarked.

Someone else nodded and said, "You're right."

It turned out that the ladies from the Hayes family were curious about Himari. Ichika was so cute and endearing, so they wanted to see what her older sister was like, and they were pleased with what they saw.

Since Himari and Ichika shared the same parents, the ladies guessed that Himari would be just as beautiful and charming. When they finally met Himari, they broke into satisfied smiles. None of them had the slightest inkling of Himari's true nature.

As for Himari, she played her part as the eldest daughter of the Minamoto family to a tee. She was respectful, modest, and gentle.

The ladies' impression of Himari soared when they saw that.

Some even thought of introducing her to the unmarried men in the Hayes family, hoping they could make a match.

However, Himari sneered at the suggestion inwardly. Do they think it'll be that easy to have me marry into their family?

At the end of the night, they sent off the guests. Since there were still no housemaids at the villa, Wendy decided to stay behind.

She turned to Solomon and asked, "Which room will Mrs. Minamoto be staying in tonight? I'll go and run her a bath."

"The second floor," Solomon replied, pointing upstairs at once.

With that, Wendy hurried off to prepare the bath.

Suddenly, Himari piped up, "How many rooms are there on the second floor? Ichika, I saw a pink-themed room upstairs. Is it yours? Don't you sleep with Solomon?"

As soon as she said that, the expressions of everyone in the living room shifted slightly.

Aoi already knew about it, and it was the sole reason why she had come to Avenport in the first place. But even if I do know about it, how could I mention it in front of Solomon? It's too embarrassing.

Hence, Aoi remained silent.

Solomon replied calmly, "No, that's Vivi's room. She stays here sometimes. Our room is on the third floor. Wendy, why don't you change the bedding in Vivi's bedroom and let Himari sleep there?"

Ichika, who had turned deathly pale at Himari's question, spun around to stare at Solomon. A look of joy flashed across her eyes, then her cheeks flushed. Does that mean... we're sleeping in the same room tonight?

Her heart was pounding so fast that it felt like it was going to leap out of her chest.

Meanwhile, Himari was furious. I wanted to expose them and humiliate Ichika, but my plan backfired!

That night, the couple who were married in name only slept in the same room. It was also their first time sharing a room since they got married.

"Darling, I-I can't go to my room downstairs to get my pajamas. Otherwise, H-Himari will find out," Ichika stammered.

She looked around uneasily at the room done up in cool-toned colors. It was not unfamiliar to her, but it was her first time spending the night there. As she watched him shrug off his jacket, she found that she could barely speak properly.

Unsurprisingly, her face was as red as a beetroot.

"Hmm," Solomon murmured as he undid the clasp of his watch.

After setting the watch aside, he walked over to the closet and took out one of his shirts. "Why don't you wear this tonight, then."

"What?" she exclaimed.

Ichika stared at the shirt for a long time. It was long enough for her to wear as a dress. Blushing profusely, she finally reached out and took it from him.

It smells nice. It smells like him.

She secretly sniffed at the shirt, and a look of contentment spread across her face.

Solomon did not notice anything. Frowning slightly, he rummaged through the closet and found a brand-new bath towel and some toiletries.

"Take these with you too. It's getting late. You should go to sleep after washing up."

"Okay," she replied.

It warmed the cockles of her heart to see him so caring toward her. Happily taking the things he handed her, she went into the bathroom.

As soon as the door closed behind her with a click, she began trembling from nervousness. Heat rose in her cheeks, and her face flushed a deep red. She was so embarrassed that she could barely even look at her reflection in the mirror.

What's going to happen after I wash up? Are we...going to... Oh!

Her hands flew up to cover her eyes, and she blushed from her neck to her ears. She did not dare to think any further. Hiding her face in her hands, she dashed into the shower.

She was a woman, and she was legally married to Solomon. Hence, it was natural that such thoughts would cross her mind.