**Chapter 1: Returns**

"Jack, marry me, please," a young girl requested her companion, who was walking by her side at the beach on this lovely evening, watching the sunset.

"No, I can't do it now, Cia. How many more times will you ask me the same question?" Jack said.

"Why? It's already been 7 years, and I know we will marry eventually, so why not now? The sooner, the better, you know," Cia said with a puppy face, trying to win the argument.

"You know why already, and also..." Jack couldn't finish his sentence as he focused on something right in front of him.

"What is that?" Cia asked, but even Jack didn't have any idea about it.

Right in front of them, the sand was moving, like a mountain forming out of sand, but it was too short for a mountain. It was the size of a tiny sandcastle.

Then the sand from the sides of it began to fall down, and eventually, it formed a hand made of sand that rose from the earth, as if to destroy it.

"Wait! It's a hand!" Jack and Cia bent down, still afraid of whatever that stuff was. Jack slowly touched the hand and felt something familiar.

"It's human skin!" he shouted.

After confirming, they didn't need any command. Jack started pulling the hand up with all his might, while Cia started digging an area near the hand. Obviously, we see who is the smart one here.

After some tiresome digging and pulling, they finally managed to pull the whole body out. Jack confirmed that the heart was still beating. They didn't want their hard work to go in vain, would they?

They dug him up, but what to do now? Should they call the authorities or should they try to carry him until they can? As it was already night, the rescue might take a long time to arrive. They decided to carry him while informing the police about their situation over the phone.

"Hello, 911? I am calling from Xeno Beach, and how do I explain this? We found a man buried in the sand. His hand came out first... I don't know. Can you please send some help?" Jack explained.

"Okay, sir, calm down. We will be sending someone to you quickly. Just stay calm," came the reply over the phone.

Jack heard something. It turned out to be the man muttering something. "The... ba... will start soon."

"Uhh, neither Jack nor Cia understand what that means, but they continued to carry him.

After half an hour, the police arrived and helped them move the man to the hospital while they explained what happened.

"And then he started murmuring, but we didn't understand it," Cia told the lady officer who came to take their statements.

"Thank you, Ms. We will contact you if needed," the officer said.

At the same time, a nurse came and gave a report to another police staff.

"He seems to be totally normal. It's like he has been sleeping for a very long time, and his body just needs some time to make a complete recovery."

"Hmm, well then, until we find out anything about him, you two are required to take care of him, okay?" the officer said, making it sound like a request, but those who heard it knew the pressure he put in the air, like a threat.

"Oh, but I actually can't, officer," Jack said.

"It's an order... a governmental order," the officer replied with a glare.

"What he means to say is, officer, we are a working couple, so it would be difficult. But I am pretty sure we can make arrangements," Cia interjected, trying to diffuse the tension. "We'll figure something out, Officer. We understand the importance of this situation."

The officer eyed them suspiciously but seemed somewhat satisfied with Cia's response. "Very well. Just make sure he is properly cared for and monitored. We will be checking in periodically."

With that, the officer left, leaving Jack and Cia alone with the unconscious man in the hospital room. They exchanged glances, both feeling a mix of curiosity, concern, and a newfound sense of responsibility.

"We have to come up with a plan," Jack said, breaking the silence. "We can't simply leave him here without any support."

Cia nodded in agreement. "I think we should start by contacting the hospital staff and discussing his condition and any immediate medical needs. We need to understand what we're dealing with."

Jack pulled out his phone and dialed the hospital's main line. After a few moments, he was connected to the nurse who had given the initial report. He explained their situation and expressed their willingness to support the man during his recovery.

The nurse listened attentively and appreciated their concern. She explained that the man seemed to be in stable condition, but they were still running tests to determine his identity and any potential underlying medical issues. She assured them that the hospital would provide guidance and support throughout the process.

Feeling a bit relieved, Jack and Cia thanked the nurse and ended the call. They looked at each other, realizing the magnitude of what they had gotten themselves into.

"We need to prepare our home for his arrival," Cia suggested. "We can set up a room where he can rest and recover comfortably."

Jack nodded, appreciating her practical approach. "Let's gather some basic necessities like clothes, toiletries, and bedding. We should also inform our employers about the situation, as we might need some time off to take care of him."

Cia grabbed a notebook and pen, making a to-do list. "We should also reach out to friends and family for support. Maybe they can help us with this unexpected responsibility.".

Jack and Cia looked back; the man was rubbing his eyes while sitting straight.

“Syrugfjyffrtdyd ugfgxshkojlomhs?” Something came out of his mouth but they couldn’t understand

Any of it.

“What? Sir do you speak English?” Cia asked.

He looked at her and then at Jack and suddenly grabbed one of Jack’s shoulders.

“Whatttttt!” Cars goes out of control but Jack still manages to control it back.

“Man, what was that for? We would have died you know, firstly who are you? And why were buried

in the beach? And what the hell does it mean to grab the guy’s shoulder who is driving the car?

Hey are you even listening?” Jack shouted top of his lungs.

Nobody said something for 30 sec, then Jack suddenly stopped the car.

“Either you answer me now or you are leaving this car!” Jack turned back and shouted.

” Sir, are you understanding what we are saying? Can you say something?” Cia asked politely

trying to cool Jack down.

2sec later which felt like eternity the man said.

“It’s been so long.” And a tear dropped down his face.

*What others can’t see was the demonic smile behind that tear of sadness.*