

## **Eternal Return**



## **Eternal Return**

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**To the ones who love.**



Chapter 1.

The Lady in Captivity

Six months ago, I woke up in a haze, my mind a blank slate. I couldn't remember my name, my life—anything.

When I opened my eyes, the first thing I noticed was the room. It was grand, almost oppressively so, with red curtains framing tall windows and deep green walls that seemed to absorb the dim light. On the far wall hung several paintings, their subjects enigmatic and solemn, like fragments of a forgotten faith.

And then there was the man. He stood beside the bed, dressed in blue, his posture tense, his face etched with exhaustion. His eyes, rimmed with red, told stories of sleepless nights and unspoken worries. His left hand constantly toyed with the silver watch on his wrist, as if it was the only thing anchoring him.

I didn't know him, yet he felt familiar—hauntingly so. But with that familiarity came a jarring contradiction: a wave of inexplicable hatred surged through me, cold and unrelenting.

When he saw me stir, his breath hitched. In an instant, he clasped my hand, his voice trembling as he exclaimed, "Reece! You're awake!"

His relief was palpable, but it was fleeting. As if realising his outburst, he reined himself in, his tone softening. "Reece..." he began, his words carefully chosen, "you might not remember anything..."

He paused, his voice dropping to a tender and heavy murmur with unspoken grief. "I'm Wens. I'm your husband. You had an accident... and because of your current condition, you can't leave the house."

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His words landed like whispers on a stormy sea. Questions surged within me—Who am I? What happened? Why does this man, my supposed husband, feel both familiar and repellent? But I couldn't ask any of them. My head throbbed with a searing pain, and my body felt as though it had been drained of all strength.

I could only watch as his face twisted with worry and something deeper—guilt, perhaps? His eyes searched mine desperately, but I was too tired to hold his gaze. Moments later, the world blurred, and I slipped back into the void of unconsciousness.

When I woke again, the man who called himself my husband, Wens, was no longer by my side. The room was eerily empty. I pushed myself to my feet, my body stiff and unyielding.

Looking around, I took in my surroundings—a room both unfamiliar and oppressively elegant. Moving toward the window, I pulled back the heavy curtains. Outside stretched an immaculate expanse of green lawns, meticulously groomed, surrounding what appeared to be an estate. The building I was in resembled a castle, its imposing structure isolated, with no other buildings in sight.

I turned to the door and tried the handle. Locked.

A wave of surprise swept over me. I began shouting, “Is anyone there? Open the door!”

Before long, I heard the metallic click of a key turning in the lock. The door creaked open, and a woman stepped in. She appeared to be in her fifties, of Asian descent, short and slightly plump, with long dark hair cascading over an outfit that was both extravagant and strange—a crimson robe over a deep green skirt, paired with black leather boots.

Her voice was calm but carried a measured distance. “Miss, you're awake. I am Saul, your maid. I'm here to care for you.”

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I frowned. “Saul... was it you who locked the door?”

Her tone grew uneasy, almost defensive. “Miss Reece, Mr. Moore instructed me... you are not to leave this room.”

“Why?” I demanded, the memory of Wens’ earlier words flashing through my mind. My voice sharpened. “Mr. Moore? Wens? Where is he? I need to see him!”

Saul hesitated, her words faltering. “Mr. Moore said... you cannot see him right now...”

Her vague response stoked my frustration. The room, the rules, the isolation—it was suffocating. Without thinking, I pushed past her toward the door. Saul tried to block me, raising her hands to stop me, but her resistance was no match for my strength. I brushed her aside with surprising ease, and she stumbled to the floor.

I bolted from the room, my bare feet pounding down the hallway and onto the grand staircase. At the bottom, I glimpsed a sprawling sitting room, its space yawning open like a labyrinth of secrets. I paused, uncertain which way to turn.

Then it struck—a sharp, electrifying pain at my waist. My body seized, and the world around me blurred. Before I could even cry out, darkness claimed me once more.

I woke again to find myself back in my room, lying on the bed. Faint voices reached me through the door—Wens and Saul, speaking in hushed but tense tones.

“I didn’t mean to, Mr. Moore,” Saul stammered nervously. “Miss Reece... her strength is unnatural. I was afraid...”

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“Miss Reece?” Wens cut her off sharply. “She is Mrs. Moore. Address her properly!”

“Yes... yes, of course...” Saul replied quickly, her voice tinged with fear.

Their exchange intrigued me. Wens’ words carried a strange intensity, as though I meant the world to him. And yet, I couldn’t shake the suffocating sense of revulsion he stirred in me. Why did I feel this way about him?

Before I could dwell on it further, their conversation ended, and they left. I remained in bed, alone and frustrated, questions spinning through my mind. What had happened to me? What kind of accident had robbed me of my memories?

I tried to piece together the fragments of my existence, but there was nothing to grasp. My mind was a blank slate, stripped of all personal history. Yet my body told another story. I felt certain I had lived for over thirty years, my knowledge of the world sharp and intact—history, science, even stranger, more intricate things. And there was something else, a faint and elusive power within me, one I didn’t understand, let alone control.

In the following days, Saul tended to me. She was meticulous in her care, bringing me tea and preparing simple yet exquisitely made meals. Her presence was dutiful, but I remained wary of her. From the keyhole of my locked door, I occasionally glimpsed others in the house. Two young girls, teenagers—Wens’ daughters, I overheard—laughed and cried as they played, their voices echoing down the halls.

But the confinement wore on me. I grew restless and determined to explore.

One quiet evening, I inspected the lock on my door. It was an old, simple design, and with two hairpins from my dressing table, I managed to pick it open. The soft click filled me with a thrill of triumph, and I slipped out into the hallway, eager to uncover the secrets of this place.

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The corridors stretched on endlessly, the dim lighting casting shadows that seemed alive. Eventually, I reached the grand staircase and descended into the silence of the main floor. As I approached the sitting room, faint voices and the flicker of candlelight caught my attention.

Peering inside, I froze. There, on an emerald-green sofa, was Wens. A woman with golden hair and a gray dress draped herself over him, their laughter mingling with soft whispers. Their bodies pressed close, entangled in intimacy.

Shock turned to fury as I stood there, unable to tear my gaze away. The man who claimed to be my husband, locked in such an act with another woman? The scene stirred something deeper—a twisted familiarity that both enraged and unsettled me.

I fled back to my room, my mind racing. Who was I? Why was I here? What kind of life had I fallen into?

Hours later, I drifted into uneasy sleep, only to be startled awake by the sensation of lips on my neck, hands roaming over my body. I jolted upright to find Wens beside me in the bed, his eyes unreadable in the darkness.

“Let go of me!” I shouted, shoving him away.

His voice was calm, almost chillingly so. “Why? You’re my wife. Why shouldn’t I touch you?”

“I’m not your wife! I saw you... with her... doing that! You disgust me!”

He stiffened. “You saw us?”

“Yes, and I want nothing to do with you! I want to leave—tomorrow!”

“No,” he said, his voice tightening with a dangerous edge. “You can’t leave.”

“I insist! You and that woman—this is vile!”

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For a moment, he said nothing, then grabbed me with startling force, pulling me close. In the darkness, I couldn't see his face, but his grip was unyielding, his tone unshakable.

"You're mine, Reece. You're not going anywhere."

With that, he released me and stormed out, leaving me trembling in the silence.

In the days that followed, thoughts of escape consumed me. I tried countless times, but I never got farther than the ground floor. Wens seemed to be watching over the house constantly, as though he could sense every movement I made. Each time I descended the stairs, he was there to stop me.

At first, he would calmly urge me to return to my room. But as the days wore on, his patience thinned. Eventually, his methods became harsher—grabbing my hair, and dragging me back upstairs with an unrelenting grip.

And so, three months passed in this oppressive cycle.

This morning, Saul came to check on me, bringing tea and food. She returned again in the afternoon, her care meticulous, though my body felt sluggish, heavy with fatigue. I hadn't touched a bite of what she brought, and the thought of eating was unappealing.

Now it was evening, and Saul came back, carrying a polished silver tray. On it sat a bowl of fish soup, fragrant and warm, a dish she knew was my favorite.

"Mrs. Moore," she said softly, "it's dinnertime. Are you feeling better?"

I replied, "A little better, but... I'll eat later."

Saul nodded, her expression unreadable, and left the room, locking the door behind her as always.

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Rain began to fall, tapping gently against the windowpane. Exhaustion weighed on me, and I lay down, quickly sinking into a dream.

In the dream, a voice called out to me, familiar and haunting: “If you weren’t you, and I wasn’t me, where would we go?”

I turned to see the speaker, but just as I did, the dream shattered. I awoke to the violent howling of a storm outside. The wind rattled the windows, and the oppressive stillness of the room settled over me again—a place that had confined me for six suffocating months.

I sat up and looked around. My mind drifted to the countless failed escape attempts, each ending in disaster. Yet tonight felt different. The house below was eerily silent, and something told me I might have a chance.

I tiptoed to the door and picked the lock with ease, using the hairpins I had hidden away. The lock clicked open—a sound that sent a thrill through me—and I stepped into the dark hallway.

The corridor stretched ahead, and I moved quickly but quietly. Wens’ room was just ahead, and the door stood ajar. From within, I heard faint noises. Curiosity outweighed caution, and I crept closer, peeking inside.

The dim light revealed a shocking scene. Wens was with a woman—a middle-aged blonde I recognized instantly. It was Lunes, the same woman I’d seen with him on the green sofa before. She was naked, tangled with him in an embrace, their laughter low and intimate.

Disgust and fury churned within me. “What a revolting pair,” I muttered under my breath, my fists clenching.

Lunes’s voice cut through the air, sweet yet anxious. “What about your crazy wife?” she asked, holding Wens’ hand.

“She’s... fine,” Wens replied, his expression grim and detached. “She remembers nothing.”

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“Well, that’s convenient.” Lunes shifted, sitting up in bed. “Are you going to divorce her like you said you would?”

Silence hung heavy in the room.

“Have you changed your mind?” she pressed. “Do you love me?”

“No...” Wens’ voice was strained, his tone severe. “I’ll handle it.”

“Say it,” Lunes demanded. “Say you love me, or I’m leaving.”

“Fine,” Wens said, exasperated. “Yes, I love you. Happy now?”

Lunes smiled, and the two resumed their whispered conversation.

I couldn’t bear to watch it any longer. That I was the “crazy wife” they spoke of—Wens’ prisoner—was unbearable. But I refused to accept the identity he imposed on me.

“I need to get out of here,” I whispered to myself, stepping away from the doorway.

I made my way downstairs, slipping past the grand living and dining rooms. The kitchen lay at the back of the house, near the rear door. As I entered, I saw two figures: Saul and the head cook, Iris. Iris was tall and impeccably dressed, slicing cucumbers with practiced precision.

Saul was preparing my nightly cocktail—a Negroni, as I often requested before bed. Her movements were deliberate as she mixed gin, Campari, and sweet vermouth, adding ice and a twist of orange peel. Then, she opened a grey glass bottle from a small cabinet and tipped a fine white powder into the drink.

“What is that?” I whispered to myself, watching in stunned silence.

At that moment, Saul began speaking with Iris.

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“Is Evie still unwell?” Saul asked.

“Yes,” Iris replied, her voice tight. “She hasn’t woken since last night.”

“Do you know what happened?”

“No...” Iris hesitated. “But Mr. Moore found her. He told me to care for her, but I’ve heard whispers... screams from the attic...”

Iris’s eyes widened. “This isn’t good. I need to check on her. Come with me.”

Saul quickly stashed the gray bottle back into the cabinet, and the two women hurried upstairs, leaving the kitchen empty.

This was my chance to escape, but curiosity drew me to the cabinet. I opened it and retrieved the mysterious bottle, pouring a little powder onto my palm. It was odorless, though its texture seemed oddly familiar. Just as I began to recall something, a tug at my sleeve startled me.

I turned sharply, expecting to be caught, but it was Wens’ younger daughter, Elise. Her small hands clutched my sleeve, her voice trembling.

“Please... save my sister,” she begged.

I couldn’t suppress my curiosity and asked, “What happened?”

Elise’s face was pale, her hands trembling slightly as she spoke. “A ghost attacked her! I saw it during the night!” Her voice wavered, filled with nervous energy.

Her words hung in the air, but doubt crept into my mind. Could it really be true? Something about her tone, or perhaps the very idea itself, made me question the reality of what she was saying.

“I don’t know how to help her,” I replied, “and I need to leave...”

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“No!” Elise’s voice grew louder, desperate. “Please, don’t go!”

Her cries echoed through the house. Heavy footsteps approached—the sound of Wens coming to investigate.

“Quiet!” I hissed at Elise, but it was too late.

Wens stormed into the kitchen, his eyes blazing with anger. Without a word, he grabbed my arm and dragged me back to my room. This time, he tied me to the bed with ropes secured to the headboard, leaving me utterly helpless.

“Why are you doing this to me?” I demanded. “What have I done to deserve this?”

“You’ve done plenty,” he said darkly, leaning over me. “And I’ll be the one to punish you.”

He began to touch me, his intentions clear, and I recoiled, tears streaming down my face.

“Please... don’t...” I begged.

“You... really don’t remember anything, do you?” Wens said, his voice softer now, almost sad.

I stared at him, confused, as tears filled his eyes. For a moment, he hesitated, then abruptly left the room, locking the door behind him.

Moments later, I heard him talking to Iris in the hallway.

“Evie is gravely ill,” Iris said. “I think only Reece can help her.”

“But... she’ll...” Wens sighed deeply, cutting himself off. “Fine. Bring her to Evie’s room tonight.”

“Yes, Mr. Moore.”

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Their words left me more bewildered than ever. What were they planning?  
What did they mean?

As I lay there, confusion and exhaustion overwhelmed me, and I slipped once  
more into a restless sleep.

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### Chapter 02.

#### It's Not Just A Stone

When I woke up, I found myself in Evie and Elise's bedroom. A sharp pain throbbed in my wrist. Looking down, I saw my hands tightly bound to the headboard. Blood trickled from a long gash on my right hand, staining the floor below. The room was eerily silent, save for the messy bed across the room that bore signs of a struggle. The door stood ajar, and I was alone.

"What happened?" I whispered, trying to recall anything. My mind was blank.

Suddenly, faint footsteps broke the silence, growing louder as they approached. Elise appeared, her face pale and tense. She stared at me, her expression distant.

"Elise?" I called softly.

Her gaze snapped into focus. She lowered her head, muttering, "I'm sorry... I didn't mean for this to happen."

I didn't respond immediately, torn between anger and pity. She was just a child, after all.

Elise hesitated before blurting, "Are you... really my mother?"

Her words struck me like a thunderclap. Mother? How could I be their mother? Wens never spoke of my past. Was it possible? I forced a calm tone. "Who told you that?"

"Dad did," Elise replied, studying me skeptically. "He said you were our mother but didn't remember us. You do look like her, but..." She trailed off, doubt clouding her face.

I pressed, "Do you believe I'm your mother?"