

# Bad Move

*Written by "Ina Izumi"*

It has been ten long years since Zira has started searching for who she believes to be her mother, Regina. She was given birth and put up for adoption many years ago, so life has been very hard on Zira, even though she has always wanted to know what happened to her parents. When she grew up, after finding a decent but not as well-paid job as she would like, as a librarian in a public library, she had all the time she needed to start re-searching her possible origins and find out who her parents were. After the first few years Zira discovered that her father was a DEA agent who died in Nevada years ago in a shootout while her mother, Regina, was a woman who had an affair with her father, only to give her up for adoption after her father's death and, a few years later, disappear from the system completely, without any notification of her death, she just disappeared from the map.

This whole situation raises a lot of doubts for Zira, even though she still hopes to find her mother alive, as she thinks that her mother has probably disappeared from the system somehow because she does not want to be found. The last time she was heard from, she was taking care of the daughter of a cousin of hers, who was in a coma and married to an agent of a government intelligence agency. Zira thinks that surely for some reason her mother does not want to be found as perhaps she became some sort of protected government witness after the coup that Markuz, Regina's cousin's husband, tried to provoke, even though she has no evidence to indicate that this is what happened.

However, it is very difficult for Zira to afford the research as it costs a lot of money to hire a private investigator to obtain all the missing information. She has been hiring Shia, a blonde investigator about her age, around 30, for some time, but her savings have run out over the years and the librarian job doesn't pay enough to keep paying Shia. However, in those years Shia and Zira became friends, yet still Shia did not accept to work without pay, yet she came up with an excellent idea with the little savings Zira still has left, bet it all at the casino.

Shia, a compulsive gambler, has heard about the myths of people who become millionaires by gambling in casinos, so she thinks it would be worth gambling the rest of Zira's savings. Anyway, what little Zira has left in her savings is not much, and if she loses, it won't make much difference, if she doesn't gamble the rest of her savings will only pay for two or three more days for Shia to continue the investigation. Zira, a little annoyed with the whole situation, accepts thinking that at least, if they don't win anything, she will have had a lot of fun in the process with her friend.

The next day Zira and Shia finally start playing poker with a strange woman with black hair and intense red eyes. This woman had already lost several games, even though she seems carefree, so Zira and Shia thought that she would surely be an easy prey and invited her to play with them. However, this woman proposes that whoever loses the Poker game will be the winner's slave, to which the pair of friends, very confident of their victory, accept.

After several minutes of intense play, Zira and Shia are finally about to inevitably lose the game, so they stay pensive, trying to extend the time as long as possible. Besides, it's not like it's legal for them to become slaves of that mysterious, red-eyed woman anyway, is it? Meanwhile, the red-eyed woman, bored of waiting, and making use of powers that are unknown to Zira and Shia, finally decides to make her victory clear by claiming her prize: both friends turned into cards, and thus becoming the property of the red-eyed woman, as if they were slaves, a rather clever interpretation of the bet.



Both women are suddenly absorbed by a blinding flash of fuchsia light, unable to do anything else after that. By the time they both regained consciousness, they seemed to be locked in... the cards? As if they had been vacuum-sealed inside a small layer of plastic inside the letter, as if they were now part of the letter itself. At the same time both lay on the table, waiting for their new owner to pick them up.



After several hours of Ina playing with the cards, accidentally stroking them during each game, she finally considers it time to put them away, tucking each card one on top of the other in her player deck, as each card, which somehow vibrate or move awkwardly, pink against each other.



Months later Zira and Shia ended up being sold along with the rest of the red-eyed woman's deck, since they seemed to be very special cards, the store that bought the deck decided to sell them as souvenirs and souvenirs inside the casino. Will this be the end of the pair of friends?

