

Chapter 1

“Lucian, I’ve been married to you for three years, but you’ve never once touched me. I’ll give my blessing to you and your first crush by giving up on our marriage. Tomorrow, you’re free to go after her. But for now, just make it up to me for my feelings for you all these years, please?”

With that said, Roxanne Jarvis leaned down and pressed her lips to the man before her as though she was a moth drawn to fire. Her action was both frenzied and desperate.

She knew this was a despicable move, but she had loved him for too long.

All the while, she had suffered greatly, and now, all she wanted was a little consolation.

“Roxanne, how dare you!”

Lucian Farwell clenched his jaw as his fury sprang to life. His handsome face was as black as thunder.

He wanted to push her away, but the mounting desire in his body was too overpowering. It threatened to burn away all his capacity for reason.

How dare she scheme against me?

“I’m afraid of nothing...”

A lone drop of tear slipped out of the corner of Roxanne’s eye. Her kisses grew rapid as her inexperienced hands fumbled around his body hastily.

All she wanted was to own him entirely for once.

A wave of fury crashed through Lucian.

Alas, things weren’t under his control.

Soon, his instincts took over. As his body burned up, he lost his rationale completely.

The next day, Roxanne woke up at dawn.

Tamping down on her discomfort, she got out of bed and put on her clothes. After that, she pulled out the divorce agreement she had prepared from the drawer and placed it on the bedside table. Before leaving, she gazed at the man in the bed.

“Lucian, I’ll set you free. From today onward, we shall go on separate ways. We will have nothing to do with each other anymore,” Roxanne murmured.

She averted her gaze and turned to leave.

Her heart was full of bitterness and anguish as she stepped out of the Farwell residence.

Roxanne had loved Lucian for seven years.

She had a crush on him from her teenage years until her university days, so her biggest wish was to be his wife.

Alas, Lucian despised her the moment she married into his family.

Back then, his grandfather was critically ill and needed a joyous occasion to hopefully ward off the bad luck. As luck would have it, she was selected to be Lucian's wife.

Her greedy father and stepmother immediately agreed to the marriage.

She could still remember how delighted she was as she waited for the night of her wedding.

Yet, when Lucian showed up, he bore a disgusted expression. "Roxanne, I'll have you know that the person I want to marry is Aubree Pearson. I never wanted to marry you! Only Aubree has the right to be my wife. You're not good enough for me," he declared.

Roxanne knew that Lucian wasn't obliged to love her.

However, she still held on to the hope that the man would warm up to her one day.

In the past three years of their marriage, she did her best to be a good and caring wife.

Every night, she'd prepare dinner so he could come home to freshly cooked meals.

No matter how late it was, she would only go to bed in peace after his return.

If he got drunk at social events, she would take care of him meticulously instead of leaving him in someone else's hands.

Whenever he got ill or hurt, she would be more worried than anyone else.

Every winter, she would switch on the heater and fill the bathtub with hot water for him. In the morning, she'd wake up earlier than usual to warm his clothes up so he wouldn't feel the cold.

Nevertheless, he never loved her, and he never would.

The day before yesterday was Roxanne's birthday, but Lucian went to the hospital to keep Aubree company.

It was then that Roxanne finally understood that her one-sided feelings would never be reciprocated.

She would never make Lucian fall for her, for his heart belonged to another woman.

Thus, Roxanne decided to give up.

Lucian only roused by ten in the morning.

The first thing he wanted to do after getting up was to choke Roxanne to her death.

Lucian was the CEO of Farwell Group, known for his acuteness. No one in the corporate world was his match. Thus, he had never fallen for someone else's trap.

Never in his wildest dreams did he expect to fall for that woman's trap!

Simmering with anger, he glanced around the room but didn't see Roxanne anywhere. Out of the corner of his eye, he spotted the document on the bedside table. noveldrama

"What is that?"

Lucian's brows furrowed as he picked up the document with the words "Divorce Agreement" printed in bold text on the front page.

His gaze narrowed dangerously.

First, she resorted to that despicable trick to force me to have sex with her, and now she wants a divorce. Ha! How many tricks does she have up her sleeves?

Lucian refused to believe that Roxanne wanted to divorce him for real.

Getting to his feet, he put on his clothes and strode downstairs furiously. "Did you see Roxanne?" he asked the butler, Lance.

Taken aback, Lance replied swiftly, "Mr. Farwell, Mrs. Farwell left home with her luggage before dawn."

Hearing that, Lucian halted in his tracks in surprise.

Six years later, at VR Medical Research Institute, Yartran.

Roxanne had just stepped out of her laboratory when her assistant, Linda, told her, “Dr. Jarvis, Professor Lambert needs to talk to you. He wants to see you in his office.”

After staying up the entire night, Roxanne was feeling drowsy. However, upon hearing Linda’s words, she snapped out of her daze as her mind cleared.

“Did he say anything? Don’t tell me my little rascals destroyed the research results again?”

“Apparently,” came Linda’s answer.

She shot Roxanne a sympathetic look.

Roxanne was an efficient and capable woman. At a young age, she became the mentee of Harvey Lambert, the best professor in the medical world. With her outstanding capabilities, she was never reprimanded for her work.

Nevertheless, that didn’t stop her from being the scapegoat for her naughty sons.

Linda comforted her, “You spent three days in the laboratory, so Archie and Benny were worried about you. They spent their days bumbling around in Professor Lambert’s office. I think he got a few new white strands of hair from the trouble they caused.”

Hearing that, Roxanne felt an incoming headache. She couldn’t help but find the situation funny, too.

Six years ago, she left the Farwell residence and headed overseas without hesitation.

Initially, she wanted to further her studies but soon discovered she was pregnant.

Back then, she was caught in a dilemma on whether she should abort her children. When she arrived at the hospital, she changed her mind, for she couldn’t bear to part with her children.

In the end, she kept her children.

Roxanne was pregnant with triplets—two boys and a girl.

During her delivery, her baby girl was born without any signs of life due to a lack of oxygen, and only the boys survived. She nicknamed her sons Archie and Benny.

The thought of her genius sons gave Roxanne utter bliss.

However, she slumped her shoulders when she recalled she was about to get reprimanded, thanks to their actions.

Chapter 2

Roxanne hurried to Harvey's office.

After pushing the door open, she spotted the little rascals inside. They were sitting on the couch in the office and swinging their legs nonchalantly.

The boys lit up at the sight of Roxanne. Scrambling off the couch, they ran toward her excitedly. "Mommy, you're finally done! I thought you'd be staying in the laboratory forever!"

"Mommy, you've worked hard! Are you tired? Sit down. I'll give you a massage."

They led Roxanne to the couch so she could take a seat.

As Roxanne took in their concern, she suddenly felt it was worth it to get yelled at.

"Look at how obedient you are. You weren't like this when you hacked into my computer earlier!" Harvey huffed angrily behind his desk.

Archie declared, "It was all your fault, Professor Lambert! You kept asking Mommy to work overtime. Look, she's getting malnourished!"

"That's right! Mommy's an ordinary human being. How could you ask her to work day and night?" Benny chimed in as he kneaded Roxanne's shoulder.

His temper spiking, Harvey gave a bark of laughter and responded, "You're too overprotective of her! Everyone in the research institute does the same!"

With that said, he shook his head and turned to Roxanne. "How did your research go?"

Roxanne shot him a grin. "It went smoothly. I'll send the data to you later."

She paused before asking, "Have you restored the data in your computer?"

Harvey ran a hand through his hair in frustration. "It has been an hour, but I still can't restore anything."

Amused, Roxanne patted Benny's hand. "Benny, go restore Professor Lambert's computer. Don't be naughty. What if he loses some important data?"

Benny immediately replied, "That won't happen. I prepare a backup and various security levels every time. He won't lose a thing!"

As he said that, he trotted over to Harvey and restored the latter's computer.

The little boy's fingers typed on the keyboard furiously and produced lines of codes.

A few minutes later, the computer screen blinked and returned to normal.

Harvey took one look at his computer in admiration. He had to admit his mentee's sons were geniuses.

At a young age, Archie was already a medical genius. He was capable of differentiating thousands of herbs and showcased his talent in medicine. He also had a sharp eye for investments.

Benny, on the other hand, was interested in programming. He was now a little hacker who was very sensitive to numbers. Like his brother, he also did great in investments.

Besides, both of them were adorable, mature, and cheeky.

Thus, he couldn't bring himself to yell at them whenever they kicked up a fuss. Instead, he could only vent his frustrations on Roxanne.

Roxanne immediately offered an apology. "I'm sorry, Professor Lambert. Please don't blame the kids for their naughty acts."

Please don't yell at me, too. I can't always be their scapegoat, can I?

Harvey chuckled at her reaction. "Don't worry. I didn't summon you here to yell at you. I have a task for you. Listen, I've been planning on setting up a research institute back in the country. It will be focusing on traditional medicine. However, I'm still busy here and can't leave for now. After careful consideration, I've decided to send you back!"

Roxanne had no idea he would say that. She froze and hesitated.

Go back home?

She never thought of going back to that place again after leaving six years ago.

After all, she didn't have a family or someone she cared about back there.

Besides, she had grown to love Yartran.

Her first reaction was to reject the offer. "Professor Lambert, I—"

Harvey interjected, "Roxanne, I know you don't want to head back, but I hope you'll consider my suggestion. You've been my student for years, so I believe you know how wide and profound traditional medicine is. There aren't enough herbs here for you to research. In Chanaea, you'll have all the herbs you want. You can use and research them freely. Most importantly, many hidden and prestigious families are in possession of ancient medical skills in Chanaea. I remember you're interested in that, right? That was why I made the suggestion for you to return to Chanaea. You have a bright future ahead of you. Besides, you're different now. No matter what happens, or who you run into, I believe you can handle everything calmly, right?"

At his words, Roxanne fell silent.

He's right. I've changed into a completely different person now. I can face all obstacles without fear. Besides, it has been six years. Perhaps that man is already married to his first crush. Why am I afraid?

With that thought in mind, Roxanne took a deep breath and nodded solemnly. "All right, then. Professor Lambert, I'll listen to you and return to Chanaea."

Harvey beamed. "I'm glad you made up your mind quickly. Don't worry. I'll ask Linda to come with you. I'll also arrange a team to help you out there."

"Great. Thank you, Professor Lambert!" Roxanne gave a curt nod.

As they were conversing, Archie and Benny shared a look. They could sense each other's excitement.

Mommy's finally returning to Chanaea!

In fact, the two of them had been dying to head back for ages. After all, their father was back there. They wanted to see him in person. Of course, they also wanted to teach him a lesson for deserting his wife and children.

Two days later, Roxanne and the boys landed at the international airport in Horington.

Roxanne was finally back in Chanaea after six years.

After disembarking the plane, they walked out of the hallway. Just then, Benny squeezed his legs together and tugged at the corner of Roxanne's skirt.

"Mommy, I need to pee now."

Roxanne and Archie giggled at the sight of his urgent expression. "Okay. Let's go, then."

She reached out to ruffled Benny's hair.

At once, Benny trembled violently. "Stop it, Mommy. I'm going to pee my pants!"

With a chuckle, Roxanne led him to the restroom.

Archie then brought him into the restroom while Roxanne waited outside with their luggage. She didn't forget to send her professor a text to inform him about their arrival.

Suddenly, a familiar voice rang out.

"Idiots! How could so many of you fail to keep an eye on a little girl? What use are you if you can't even complete such a simple task?"

There was a hint of fury in the man's melodious, deep, and rich voice. It was pleasing to the ears.

Roxanne's hands, which were initially typing out a message on her phone, froze instantly.

Six years had passed since she last heard this voice, but she still found it eerily familiar.

Looking up, Roxanne spotted the tall figure some distance away.

Standing not far off was a tall man. His black suit accentuated his long legs and added a touch of elegance to his figure. Even in the crowd, he was eye-catching.

Roxanne could see his perfect side profile from her line of sight.

His tall nose and sculpted features were the envy of many. In fact, he looked so handsome that other men paled in comparison to him.

Lucian Farwell!

Roxanne's heart clenched at the sight of him.

She had no idea she'd run into him on the day of her arrival.

The feelings she had buried deep in her heart emerged temporarily, but she quickly put a lid on them.

Her gaze turned frosty.

She could finally appear calm before him.

Right then, the boys emerged from the restroom. "Mommy, we're done!" they declared cheerfully.

Roxanne snapped out of her reverie and nearly had a heart attack.

The first thought that popped up in her mind was that she needed to leave right away. I can't let Archie and Benny see him. They bear a resemblance to him. If they bump into each other, he'll definitely realize something's wrong!

Roxanne refused to get involved with him yet again.

Flustered, she urged, "You're done? Come, let's go. You don't want your godmother to wait, do you?"

Without waiting for a reply, she dragged her luggage away.

Halfway through his phone call, Lucian heard a familiar voice and turned at his shoulder.

From the corner of his eye, he spotted a familiar female figure.

Roxanne Jarvis? Is that her? She's back?

Lucian ran after her immediately, but her figure had already disappeared into the crowd.

As his gaze turned dark, Lucian was about to explode with rage.

She left the country so resolutely and even Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 2 abandoned the kid. There's no way she's back! novelgram

Chapter 3

Roxanne's heart lurched to her throat and remained there as she hurried out of the airport. She kept turning at her shoulder to confirm he didn't come after them.

Fortunately, his figure remained nowhere to be seen even after they exited the airport.

Roxanne could finally heave a sigh of relief.

The kids found it strange that she kept turning her head to glance behind them.

As Roxanne seemed anxious, they knew it wasn't the time to ask questions. Without a word, they allowed her to drag them out obediently.

"Roxanne! Archie! Benny!" A woman called from afar.

The three of them lifted their heads and saw a lady dressed in a suit, waving at them happily as she made their way to them.

Roxanne relaxed gradually at the sight of the woman. Flashing a smile, she said, "Madilyn, it's been so long!"

Madilyn Xander was her best friend back in university and was currently working as a doctor in her own family's hospital.

Shortly after, Madilyn came to a stop before them and flung her arms around Roxanne. "You're finally back home. I've missed you so much!" she said in a friendly manner.

Roxanne chuckled and replied, "I've missed you, too."

They've been in touch over the years online but rarely got the chance to meet each other in real life.

After giving her a hug, Madilyn squatted down and pulled the boys into a hug. "My babies, do you miss me?"

Archie and Benny giggled adorably before answering in unison, "Of course we do! Aunt Madilyn, we even dreamed of you. You're still as pretty as ever!"

"How sweet of you!" Madilyn beamed happily after hearing their praise.

Roxanne's guard was still up. She glanced at the gate of the airport and said calmly, "Let's go. We can talk back home."

Madilyn gave the boys a peck each on their cheeks before getting to her feet. After placing the luggage in her car truck, she ushered them into her car and sped away.

At the same time, Lucian appeared at the gate of the airport.

"Cancel my schedule overseas," he told his assistant, Cayden Lawson.

Cayden gave a brief nod in acknowledgment. "Mr. Farwell, we've widened the search for Ms. Estella. She's young and can't go far. Don't worry."

Ms. Estella is Mr. Farwell's darling daughter. It's more crucial to find her. His work overseas isn't as important in this situation.

Lucian's gaze turned dark as he strode toward the Maybach parked by the road.

Soon, the car drove away.

An hour later, Madilyn's car arrived in Durwest Garden. It was a residential area full of mansions.

Roxanne had asked for Madilyn's help to rent a place, and this was the house that Madilyn had gotten her.

The four of them hopped out of the car and entered the new house under Madilyn's lead.

"The surroundings seem nice. I like this place."

Satisfied, Roxanne turned to look at Madilyn. "You're quite efficient, huh?"

Madilyn arched a brow. "I'm your neighbor. The owner of this house moved to the capital and wanted to rent this place out. I happened to stumble upon it. Whenever we're free, we can visit each other's places."

Roxanne's lips curved as she bobbed her head in agreement.

After she unpacked their stuff briefly, it was time for dinner.

Hence, Madilyn brought them out for dinner.

She had just driven into the restaurant's parking lot and was about to park her car when a little girl ran out of a dark corner.

Madilyn slammed on the brakes before her car could hit the little girl. In shock, she stared at the little girl who had collapsed to the ground.

Roxanne's heart was racing at the near accident, too. She turned to make sure her boys were fine before opening the door to get out.

There was a young girl around five years old mere inches away from the car. She sat on the ground, clearly in a state of shock.

Roxanne felt her heart soften at the sight. She made her way to the girl carefully before asking, "Hey, are you hurt?"

The young girl had a fair complexion and looked sweet with her hair braided up. She had a tall nose, huge eyes, and delicate features. Dressed in a pink fluffy dress, she hugged an expensive doll in her arms.

Hearing Roxanne's voice, the little girl regained her composure and shook her head shyly. She didn't forget to eye Roxanne warily.

Roxanne's heart stirred as she observed the little girl silently. After confirming that the little girl was unharmed, she heaved a sigh of relief inwardly and reached out to help the little girl up.

She had just stretched her hand out when the little girl cowered back in fear.

Roxanne's hand paused midair. Flashing an assuring smile, she explained, "Don't worry. I just want to help you up."

Glancing around, she asked doubtfully, "Where are your parents? Why are you alone?"

The young girl hugged her doll tightly and shook her head without uttering a word.

Roxanne's brows snapped together, for she had no idea how to communicate with the girl. noveldrama

Madilyn and the boys soon got out of the car.

Archie and Benny shared a curious look when they noticed the little girl remaining silent the entire while.

She looks cute. Why isn't she talking? Could she be a mute?

Chapter 4

The same thought popped up in Roxanne's mind. Is this little girl a mute?

Her sympathy for the little girl increased. In a gentle voice, she asked, "Can you give me your hand?"

With that, she stretched her hand outward.

Despite staring at her timidly, the little girl seemed to be less rigid after hearing her words.

Roxanne waited patiently for the little girl to accept her hand.

After a long hesitation, the little girl finally reached out to take Roxanne's hand cautiously.

Seeing that, Roxanne held her hand gently and helped her up. She didn't forget to check the little girl again for any injuries.

Because of her action, they got physically closer to each other.

The little girl felt soft and fluffy. She even smelled like milk.

Roxanne couldn't help but recall her daughter, who was a stillborn baby.

If she were to grow up well, she'd be around this little girl's age.

As that thought surfaced in her mind, Roxanne was overcome with heartache and regret.

As if sensing her emotions, the little girl stayed put and gazed at her quietly.

I know I shouldn't talk to strangers, but this lady is really pretty. Strangely, I feel the urge to get close to her.

At that moment, Madilyn remarked, "Oh, what an adorable young girl. She's as adorable as our boys!"

Roxanne nodded in agreement. "I believe she got lost. Let's send her to the police station and see if we can get in contact with her family."

Right after she said that, the young girl gave her a slight tug.

Roxanne looked down in confusion.

The little girl was shaking her head profusely, her eyes turning red. She seemed like she was about to dissolve into tears any minute.

Clearly, the little girl didn't want her to do that. noveldrama

Seeing the girl's distraught expression really tugged at Roxanne's heartstrings.

She had no other choice, though. If she didn't send the little girl to the police station in time, she might be accused of kidnapping the latter.

Roxanne was in a dilemma.

"All right. We don't have to go to the police station." She squatted down and tried to negotiate with the little girl. "Do you have your parents' phone number? I can call them so they can come here to pick you up."

The little girl stopped shaking her head, but she slumped in dejection instead.

As she didn't respond, Roxanne assumed she didn't have her parents' number. She was about to send her to the police station when the little girl moved.

Roxanne watched as she pulled out a pencil and a post-it note. She then scribbled a phone number with the word "Daddy" behind it before handing the note to Roxanne.

After taking the note from her, Roxanne punched in the number belonging to the little girl's dad.

"Oh, she's indeed mute," Archie and Benny muttered under their breaths.

Roxanne stiffened and shot her sons a warning look. "Don't be rude to her."

The boys straightened their backs and gave the little girl guilty smiles.

Glancing at them, the little girl inched nearer to Roxanne instinctively and reached out to grab the corner of Roxanne's dress.

However, Roxanne didn't notice that as she was busy double-checking the phone number before making the call.

Back in the Farwell residence, Lucian strode into the mansion angrily. "Is Essie back?"

The butler came to welcome him. Wearing a worried expression, he said, "No. I didn't see Ms. Estella around."

After saying that, he realized the temperature surrounding his employer had dropped drastically.

Lucian's lips thinned as he furrowed his brows.

I've searched everywhere I could. Where could she be? Did something happen to her?

As that possibility occurred to him, a faint gleam of malice shone in his eyes. It appeared as if he wanted nothing more than to destroy the entire world.

Right then, a lady clad in thick makeup hurried into the mansion and asked anxiously, "Lucian, I heard Essie went missing? Is it true? Did you find her?"

The lady was none other than Aubree, the one whom Lucian wanted to marry previously.

Nevertheless, Lucian kept his authoritative aura before her. "She's still missing. Now that you're here, I'd like to know what you told Essie this afternoon. Why would she run away from home for no reason?"

Aubree seemed surprised to hear his question as she stared at him incredulously. "Lucian, what are you saying? Are you saying I did something to Essie?"

Seemingly hurt, she added, "I did nothing to her! Never mind if someone else misunderstands me. You've seen how I treated her dearly over the years! Even though Essie treated me coldly, I didn't mind and took good care of her. I never yelled at her. No way would I do something to make her run away from home!"

With her red-rimmed eyes and innocent expression, she was trying hard to convince Lucian that she had nothing to do with Estella's disappearance.

Deep down, she wanted nothing more than for the mute little girl to disappear forever.

Indeed, she was harsh to Estella that afternoon. She also told the little girl that she would give birth to more adorable children after she married Lucian.

By then, Lucian would no longer adore Estella.

As Estella couldn't talk, Aubree wasn't afraid that the former would complain about her behavior to Lucian.

However, she had no idea that Estella would end up running away from home.

This is great! It will be better if she can't return. That way, I won't have to see her again!

Chapter 5

Lucian glared at her silently for a few seconds.

Meanwhile, Aubree dug her nails into her palm to stop herself from revealing her real emotions.

"You'd better not be lying."

Lucian averted his gaze a while later and turned to Cayden. "Did the police get back to you?"

Cayden's voice was grim. "Not yet."

He glanced at Lucian carefully and asked, "Could someone has kidnapped Ms. Estella?" Concern was evident in his voice.

The girl was Lucian's darling daughter. She was well-adorned in the Farwell family and thus became the target of many of Lucian's rivals. Previously, she was nearly kidnapped.

Now, she was nowhere to be found, and even the police couldn't find her anywhere. Hence, Cayden couldn't help but think of the worst—someone had kidnapped her.

Lucian's gaze turned as dark as thunder. "Increase the manpower and expand the search area. I want to see her by the end of today!"

"Got it!" Cayden responded loudly.

He felt a chill go down his spine when he realized his employer was about to blow his top.

Lucian had just spun on his heels to leave when his phone rang.

Right now, he wasn't in the mood to talk on the phone. Pulling out his phone, he was about to reject the call when he realized it was from an unknown number.

Recalling Cayden's earlier words, Lucian scowled and answered the call.

A female voice rang out. "Hello."

Hearing that, Lucian narrowed his eyes suspiciously.

Why does this sound just like her voice?

The figure he spotted that afternoon at the airport flashed across his mind.

"Hello? Is anyone there?" Roxanne repeated dubiously after a while.

Lucian came back to his senses and replied curtly, "Yeah."

His answer was only one syllable, so it was too short for Roxanne to recognize his voice.

Roxanne heaved a sigh of relief after hearing his response. "Hello. I've run into a little girl who gave me your phone number. You must be her father, right? Are you free to pick her up now?"

Her voice rang in his ear clearly and resonated in his mind.

The more she spoke, the colder Lucian's gaze became.

When she stopped talking, Lucian's eyes were practically blocks of ice.

It's her! It has been years since we last met, but there's no way I'd have mistaken her for someone else! Roxanne Jarvis, you're finally back!

Gritting his teeth forcefully, Lucian lowered his voice deliberately and asked, "Where are you?"

"We're at Drunken Fairy. We'll wait here with her. Will you come to the restaurant to pick her up?" Roxanne answered at once.

"Yes. I'll head there right away."

With that said, Lucian cut the line and ordered, "Get the car. We're heading to Drunken Fairy."

Not knowing why his employer grew furious all of a sudden, Cayden replied in the affirmative hastily.

Roxanne stared at her phone as the screen dimmed. Strangely, she felt nervous for no reason.

The man's voice sounded hoarse. Why does it sound familiar?

As Roxanne couldn't figure out an answer, she stopped deliberating over the matter.

"Aren't you hungry?" Madilyn asked.

After all, they had been waiting outside for some time. She continued, "I'm starving. Let's head in for dinner. We can bring her out when her father arrives later."

Roxanne shot her a grin. "All right. Let's go in."

She squatted down again to the little girl's height to meet her gaze. "Are you hungry? Do you want me to bring you in for dinner? Your daddy should be on the way here. When he arrives, I'll bring you out. Will that do?" she asked.

The little girl stared at her for a few moments, seemingly reluctant.

"If you don't want to come in, I'll wait here with you," Roxanne added patiently.

Hearing that, Archie and Benny chimed in, "We'll wait with you too, Mommy!"

Madilyn slapped her forehead in exasperation. "Am I the only one starving here? Little girl, we're not bad people. No bad person will treat you to a meal in an expensive restaurant! You must be hungry, too. Come on in with us. There's no need to be stubborn."

Everyone's gazes fell on the young girl.

As Archie and Benny were also hungry, they stared at the little girl expectantly.

Biting her lip, the little girl came closer to Roxanne and reached out to tug at her sleeve. She then gave a careful nod.

“You don’t have to force yourself,” Roxanne told her gently, seeing through the girl’s thoughts.

The little girl shook her head yet again.

Seeing that, Roxanne patted her head affectionately. She took the little girl’s hand and led her into the restaurant.

Madilyn held the boys’ hands and watched as the little girl trotted beside Roxanne obediently. She teased, “She was wary of us just a while ago, but she’s gotten close to you now.”

With a sigh, she lamented, “Indeed, good-looking people are always favored.” noveldrama

In response, Roxanne grinned and held the little girl’s hand tightly without responding to Madilyn’s teasing words.

Chapter 6

The Drunken Fairy was one of the best private restaurants in Horington. Every dish served was exemplary, and the place only accepted the most high-profile clients. Reservations also had to be made at least one month in advance.

Madilyn had managed to book a table yesterday using her connections.

The restaurant’s interior was exquisite; a screen separated every table, each room’s entrance was made of wood, and the building didn’t have a roof. When night fell, the chandelier above gave off a very antique and quintessential vibe, and one would feel as though they were dining under the moonlight.

The small group made their way into the building and seated themselves at a corner table. noveldrama

It wasn’t long until the waitstaff arrived with their food.

Worried that the little girl would feel uncomfortable, Roxanne gave her all her attention, feeding her and wiping her mouth at every opportunity.

Archie and Benny sat next to them. Seeing Estella indulge in the food melted their hearts, and they tried their best to peel as much shrimp as they could for her.

Estella never stopped chewing as she kept her focus on the growing pile of food before her.

“Did you hear what happened? The Farwell family’s princess has gone missing! The family’s scoured the entire city for her, but they still can’t find her.”

Suddenly, a voice could be heard coming from the table next to them.

The next person to speak sounded warier. "She couldn't have been kidnapped, could she? Whoever's done it sure has nerves of steel. Who would ever dare lay their hands on her? She's Lucian Farwell's precious little girl! They must be tired of living."

Roxanne's movements slowed down visibly at the mention of Lucian's name, and she began to space out.

The conversation resumed anyway. "Right? The little princess might be mute and has never said a single word, but she still gets to live the best life. How lucky of her!"

Mute?

A look of suspicion flashed in Roxanne's eyes as she stopped moving.

Lucian's precious little girl is mute?

This child I picked up hasn't spoken a word.

Judging from her behavior and clothes, she does look like someone from the Farwells.

And that man over the phone! His voice...

At the thought of this, Roxanne suppressed her astonishment as she turned to the child on her left.

Seemingly having noticed her gaze, the girl glanced up at her with eyes full of puzzlement.

As soon as their eyes met, Roxanne felt as though she had been struck by lightning.

"This kid... She can't be Lucian's daughter, could she?"

Madilyn put down her cutlery and stared at the child for a few seconds. "That'd be too much of a coincidence, wouldn't it?" she asked hopefully.

As Roxanne's best friend, she knew everything the former had gone through for the past six years.

This girl looks like she's around five or six, which means she's about Archie and Benny's age.

If she really were Lucian's daughter, that means he would've had a child with that first crush of his right after Roxanne divorced him.

That guy just couldn't wait, huh?

Roxanne really deserves someone better than him.

Not knowing what her friend was thinking, Roxanne recalled all the events that had ensued after she met this child. The more she thought about it, the more certain she was that the little girl seated next to her was Lucian's daughter.

"I'd say we've hit the jackpot this time," she remarked with a grimace.

Seeing how sure the woman looked, Madilyn felt her heart sink as she gazed at the confused- looking child. "What should we do, then? Lucian's probably on his way now!" she whispered.

Roxanne began to panic.

A brief moment later, she handed her phone to Madilyn. "Take my phone and act like it's yours. I'll get Archie and Benny out of here. We'll be waiting for you at the parking lot."

Madilyn nodded in understanding.

Still, seeing the little girl remain perplexed made Roxanne's heart ache. "I'll leave this little one to you."

She then turned to her own two children. "Let's go."

The two boys followed her obediently without question.

Upon walking past the little girl, Roxanne felt a soft tug on her sleeve.

Looking conflicted, she turned to the child, only to see the latter gripping onto her sleeve tightly, looking extremely flustered.

Seeing the girl's distraught expression really tugged at Roxanne's heartstrings.

Regardless of whatever had happened between her and Lucian, she knew this child was never to be blamed.

Eventually, she comforted the little one, "I have to go now. This lady here will take good care of you, so wait right here, okay? Your daddy will be here soon."

With that, she forced the child's grip off of her and strode out of the private room, never looking back.

At the same time, Madilyn hastily instructed the staff to take the three used sets of plates and cutlery away.

Not long after the waitstaff had done as told, the wooden door was pushed open.

A group of bodyguards dressed in black stood in two rows, making a path in between them.

Seeing that, Madilyn instinctively straightened her back and gazed at the entrance, trying her best to appear calm.

Then, she watched as a frosty-looking Lucian made his way into the room.

Chapter 7

There were now only two people inside the room.

Lucian scanned his surroundings before his gaze fell on his daughter.

The little girl was still upset by Roxanne's sudden departure, so upon seeing her father, not only was she completely unafraid, but she even turned away with a huff.

A faint scowl appeared on Lucian's face.

Well aware that Estella was just as enigmatic and difficult to handle as her father was, this was a job for Lucian's assistant, Cayden.

"Are you okay, Ms. Estella?"

The little girl merely glanced at him before furiously turning away once more.

Cayden observed her. Noticing that she was safe and sound, he sighed with relief and turned to report to his boss.

With narrowed eyes, Lucian turned to the woman beside his daughter.

Madilyn's chest tightened as she met his gaze, and she secretly squeezed her own hands to compose herself.

"Where's Roxanne?"

Lucian's expression darkened as he took a good look at Madilyn's face.

He could actually tell it was her?

Madilyn fretted internally while at the same time feeling relieved that her best friend had left in time.

This guy's energy is so unbearable! I feel like I could suffocate.

Who knows what might happen if Roxanne were still here?

"I don't know what you're talking about! Who are you guys? You sure are rude to barge in without even knocking."

Concealing her emotions and unleashing her best acting skills, Madilyn pulled the little girl into her arms while staring cautiously at the men in front of her.

The crease between Lucian's brows deepened. "That's my daughter you're holding. Were you the one who called me?"

Madilyn stilled briefly. "Yes, it was me," she answered rigidly.

Lucian stared at her expressionlessly before scanning every detail inside the room.

She does sound like the woman over the phone.

But does she think she can fool me?

Besides, the state of this room is an obvious attempt to hide something.

Sure, there are only two sets of plates and cutlery on this table, but three of the chairs look like they've been moved.

There's no way the workers at Drunken Fairy would make such a mistake. There must've been people sitting there before I came.

Also, all this food definitely isn't meant for just a woman and a child.

After glancing around, he set his eyes on Madilyn again.

The woman suddenly had a bad feeling.

The next second, she watched as Lucian took a phone from his assistant and swiped on the screen before peering up at her.

Soon, the phone Roxanne had passed to her began to ring.

Having been caught off guard, Madilyn nearly jumped in fright, but she hurriedly composed herself and glanced at the phone for a moment before lifting it up and rejecting the call. "Since you're her father, you can take her with you," she commented, meeting the man's gaze.

Then, she caressed the little girl's head, placed her on the ground, and nudged her in Lucian's direction.

Lucian's brows furrowed slightly as he took two steps forward.

Thinking he was coming over to retrieve the child, Madilyn was about to let out a sigh when she suddenly heard the man speak to her in a skeptical tone.

"You seem to have quite the appetite, miss. To think you ordered a whole table of food just for yourself and a little girl."

The man casually stopped next to the table, his words seemingly implying something. noveldrama

Madilyn fell silent.

After holding her breath for a moment, she forced a smile. "My appetite isn't any of your concern. Besides, I ordered this much food because I've invited my friends over. They just haven't arrived yet."

Lucian raised an eyebrow. "And you've begun digging in instead of waiting for them to show up?"

As his words fell, the man glanced at every dish on the table.

Madilyn felt like she was about to die.

It took her yet another while to collect herself before flashing him another distant smile. "I'm really close with these friends, so they don't mind me eating first. They're used to it."

Not waiting for him to speak again, she took a deep breath. "Look, sir, I found your daughter and kindly informed you about it. I even made sure she didn't go hungry. It's fine if you don't thank me, but why are you interrogating me like I'm a criminal? What have I ever done to deserve this?"

Despite sounding indignant, the woman was screaming at the top of her lungs deep down.

Please stop asking me questions.

I'm going to end up spilling the truth at this rate!

Who could ever put up with this guy's presence?

Meanwhile, Roxanne waited in the parking lot, holding hands with a child on each side as unsettlement swirled within her.

She knew Lucian too well to understand that even the smallest clue would be enough to rouse his suspicions.

I wonder how long Madilyn can hang on.

If our cover gets busted...

What should I do if that happens?

The woman couldn't seem to find an answer no matter how hard she tried.

Suddenly, she pursed her lips and scoffed at herself.

What am I even scared of?

He probably never wants to see me again after what I did to him back then. Even if he saw me, he'd probably pretend not to know me or just think of me as an eyesore.

And look at me scaring myself like this before even seeing his face. Seriously?

Chapter 8

Seeing how restless their mother looked, Archie and Benny asked deliberately, "Who's Lucian, Mommy? Why are we hiding from him?"

Roxanne slowly returned to her senses and stroked their heads, smiling as if everything was fine. "He's no one important. I just have a bit of a personal grudge against him. I want you both to hide if you ever hear his name, okay?"

The two boys nodded. "Okay, Mommy."

After Roxanne looked away, they glanced at each other curiously.

What could've happened between Mommy and Daddy? It all seems like a huge misunderstanding.

As Roxanne continued to ponder over what could be happening on Madilyn's side, the boys spoke again.

"Mommy, we left in such a rush back there. If that guy becomes suspicious, he might check the surveillance cameras and find us easily," Archie reminded.

The woman tensed up instantly. "Oh, God. I totally forgot! What do I do?"

I was so focused on running away that I forgot about the cameras! Lucian might already be here.

I can't stay here. I have to take the kids home right now.

Seeing the way their mother reacted made the boys turn away to conceal their smiles, and they only consoled her after they had suppressed the smiles on their lips.

"Don't worry, Mommy. I'll handle this."

Benny took his laptop and began tapping away on the keyboard.

It only took a while for him to hack into the restaurant's surveillance cameras and wipe out every footage of them.

"I'm done!"

After deleting all the footage, the boy glanced up at his mother with twinkling eyes, eagerly waiting for her to praise him.

Heaving a long sigh of relief, Roxanne pulled the two children into an embrace. "Thank goodness I have you. You've just saved me!"

Aware that she was still nervous, the boys let her hold them a little longer.

“Are we leaving now, Mommy? Or should we wait for Aunt Madilyn to come outside?” asked Archie after Roxanne had let go.

Having calmed down, the woman gazed at the entrance of the empty parking lot. “Let’s wait a little longer.”

The boys nodded in response.

Back inside the restaurant, failing to force a confession out of Madilyn, Lucian could only quash the hostility that surged within him.

“Pardon my rudeness. Thank you for helping me find my daughter. Well, then, we’ll be off now. Enjoy your meal with your friends,” he stated coldly.

Then, he turned to the little girl. “Come, Essie.”

With a reluctant pout, Estella waved at Madilyn politely before walking toward her father.

Lucian arched his brow slightly but said nothing more, leaving with the little girl and his group of subordinates.

Upon walking out of the building, he tried to carry Estella into the car, but the child avoided him with a huff.

Seeing that, Cayden hurriedly stepped in and did the job.

The car began to move.

Seated at the back, Lucian reached out to his daughter and placed her on his lap. noveldrama

With nowhere else to run, Estella could only let herself be carried like a doll, although she continued her silent tantrum and refused to look at the man.

“Tell me, Essie, was there another lady apart from the one from just now?” the man asked gently.

The little girl glanced at him and grew more infuriated at the thought of that pretty lady having left her because of him.

Seeing her scowl deepen, Lucian pinched her cheek in amusement. “I’m not even mad at you for running away from home, but you’re here getting all mad at me? Don’t you know how worried I was? Will you tell me why you ran away?”

Yet, the child shoved his hand away and turned her head to one side again, ignoring him.

Looks like she’s really upset.

The man pursed his lips in frustration, feeling at a loss as to what to do. “You don’t have to answer me if you don’t want to, but promise me that you won’t run away from home again.”

He then turned to Cayden, who was seated in front. “Get the restaurant’s surveillance cameras.”

He clearly hasn’t given up.

“Yes, Mr. Farwell,” Cayden responded helplessly.

Chapter 9

Twenty minutes later, the car slowly stopped at the Farwell residence.

Estella did not want anyone to carry her. She quietly got down from the car by climbing down slowly.

Lucian followed right behind and did not utter a word.

The moment the father and daughter stepped into the house, they heard someone calling Estella.

“Essie!” Aubree, who was playing on her phone in the living room, exclaimed when she lifted her head and saw them entering the house.

The moment she saw the child from a distance, she ran toward her and gave her a hug. “Essie, you’re finally home! How could you run away and not tell us? I got the shock of my life when you went missing, do you know that? Are you okay? Are you injured?”

She started inspecting Estella’s body to make sure the latter was all right.

Estella froze for a bit, as she was taken aback by Aubree’s actions.

But the cold look soon returned to the little one’s gaze when Aubree’s voice kept ringing in her ear, expressing her insincere concern.

Does she not know why I ran away? I wouldn’t have run away if she hadn’t told me Daddy wouldn’t care about me anymore.

Feeling disgusted after seeing the hypocrite’s face, Estella recalled the gorgeous woman she had met today.

There was a world of difference between these two women.

Estella absolutely despised Aubree’s pretentious behavior.

She started struggling and pulled herself away from the woman.

“What’s wrong, Essie? Stay still, okay? Let me check if you’re all right.”

Aubree could feel Estella wanted to avoid her. She tightened her grip on the little girl and sighed helplessly in front of Lucian.

Estella started reacting more aggressively, as she was in pain. noveldrama

Aubree was running out of patience.

When she punished Estella in the past, the little girl would tremble in fear and not make any noises.

This was the first time she fought back!

Aubree would have acted more harshly if Lucian were not around.

But since Lucian was there to observe their interaction, she had to be more cautious not to arouse his suspicion. A hard glint flashed across her eyes, and an idea popped up in her mind. Instead of continuing with this tug of war, she decided to release Estella and fall to the ground.

Aubree then looked at Estella in disbelief. "Essie, I know you dislike me. But I'm really worried about you. How could you..."

She choked on her words as she looked at the little one with red-rimmed eyes.

Upon noticing Aubree lying on the ground after removing his coat, Lucian frowned and pulled Estella aside. "Essie, I know you're not happy, and you can take it out on Daddy. But you can't vent your anger like this to others. It's rude, do you know that?"

Estella refused to admit she was at fault, but at the same time, she felt helpless.

Daddy always sides with that evil woman!

She pulled her hand away from his grip, hugged her doll tightly, and ran upstairs.

Now that Estella was gone, Aubree gradually crawled up from the ground and said gently, "Don't be too harsh on Essie. We don't know what she had been through when she was wandering in the streets-"

Lucian interrupted her, "You should go now. Essie is still mad, and she wouldn't want to see you."

Aubree's expression turned stiff for a moment, but she responded with an awkward smile. "All right then. I'll come and visit her on another day."

She then lowered her head and walked out of the Farwell residence.

After she stepped out of the residence, Aubree's expression instantly turned grim.

How did he manage to find that little b*stard! And how dare she behave like this in front of me? Why isn't she dead! Damn it!

Meanwhile, Madilyn stayed back at Drunken Fairy even after Lucian had left.

When it was about time, she came out of the restaurant and quickly ran to the car.

“Are you all right?” Roxanne asked while opening the door for her. “He left?”

Madilyn heaved a long sigh. “Yes. If only you could see how he stared at me. It’s as if he could see through me! I nearly cracked under the pressure and gave you away.”

Roxanne smiled and expressed her gratitude. “You must have had it hard. Let’s go elsewhere and grab something to eat, shall we? My treat.”

Madilyn waved her hand and turned her down. “No, thanks. I’ve packed all the leftovers. I must enjoy all these dishes from this exquisite private restaurant.”

Chapter 10

The four of them then returned to the mansion.

Roxanne and the two children were so hungry that they gobbled up all the leftovers Madilyn brought from the restaurant.

After dinner, the children went upstairs to take a shower.

Madilyn cast a doubtful look at her best friend. “Why are you running away from him? I don’t get it. I thought you two had a divorce agreement? Why are you so afraid of him? And you didn’t tell me why you divorced him. What exactly happened in the last few years?”

After meeting her gaze, Roxanne lowered her eyes and hesitated for a moment. She decided to roughly tell Madilyn the story.

“Oh, my God! No, you didn’t!”

Never in a million years did Madilyn think Roxanne would drug Lucian and give birth to his children.

So that’s why she ran away when she heard his name!

Roxanne bit her lower lip and looked agonized. “I don’t want him to know about Benny and Archie. Besides, I’m still worried that he would still hold grudges against me for drugging him. People with an identity like his can easily take revenge against me as long as he wants to. I wouldn’t be afraid of facing the consequences if I were alone. But now that I have two kids, I have to act responsibly.”

She flashed a self-deprecating smile and continued, "Maybe it's just me overthinking. He might not even give a damn about it. I'm just a nobody anyway."

"That's what you thought!" Madilyn knitted her brows. "I think he recognized your voice. When he went in just now, he asked where you were. It seems he was coming after you!"

Roxanne was stunned for a bit upon hearing that. She felt a prickly pain in her heart. noveldrama

He must have hated me for what I did that night. I bet that's the only feeling he has for me.

Upon seeing how upset her best friend was, Madilyn consoled her. "Don't worry, Roxanne. I'm sure you won't bump into him so easily since Horington is a big city, and your jobs aren't really related either."

Roxanne nodded, hoping luck would be on her side.

"Mommy!"

Suddenly, Roxanne heard Archie's and Benny's voices from behind.

Roxanne and Madilyn immediately stopped their discussion and looked toward the stairs.

Archie and Benny had just taken their shower. There was still moisture in their hair, and their fair skin was dewy. The two little ones, who wore pajamas printed with cow spots, came downstairs.

They walked up to the women, tilted their heads upward, and gazed at them with wide eyes. "What are you two talking about?"

Madilyn squatted down and carried both cuties in her arms. "You two are so adorable! I like you so much! Come, let's go home with Aunt Madilyn!"

Archie and Benny could not utter a word as Madilyn kept squishing their cheeks.

Roxanne could not help but giggle.

She went up and rescued her two boys from Madilyn's clutches.

Suddenly, she remembered something. "Oh, before I forget. Since I came back here in haste and would be busy working, I can't take Archie and Benny with me all the time. Can you recommend me a kindergarten for these boys? And oh, I'll need to find a nanny too."

The boys did not say anything upon hearing what their mother said.

With their level of intelligence, they would not need to go to a kindergarten at all.

But since Mommy is busy, we can only try our best to lessen her burden.

Madilyn thought about it for a while. "Yes! I do have a kindergarten in mind!"

Roxanne looked at her. "Tell me about it."

Madilyn said, "There's a kindergarten for children from the elite families, and it's pretty well-known in Horington. The classes are exciting, kids will get to learn multiple languages, and the teachers are highly qualified. A lot of wealthy families would fight for a spot for their children. You won't have to worry about big bullies in that school."

Roxanne instantly responded, "Really? Let me find out more about this kindergarten on the internet. If everything goes well, I wish to enroll Archie and Benny in the school right away!"

Chapter 11

Chapter 11 In the middle of the night, Lucian tiptoed into Estella's room in the Farwell residence and tucked her in. He watched the little girl sleeping soundly in bed for quite a while before he turned and stepped out of the room. The moment he came out of the room, Cayden stepped forward to update him, "Mr. Farwell, I've dropped by the restaurant to investigate the matter. However, I didn't discover anything as the surveillance cameras there were broken." "So coincidentally?" Hearing that, Lucian knitted his brows. The moment my suspicion was piqued, the surveillance cameras were broken as well? Looking troubled, Cayden replied hesitantly, "It could be mere coincidence. After all, we haven't received any news about Mrs. Farwell- I mean, Ms. Jarvis, since she left years ago. I don't think she'd appear out of the blue in this city." Right after he said that, he noticed his boss's expression darkening.

Cayden's heart skipped a beat. He cast his head down and dared not utter anything more. noveldrama

"I got it," Lucian responded ambiguously before he turned and headed toward his room. The following morning, after breakfast, Roxanne took her two boys to the premium kindergarten recommended by Madilyn. As someone of high efficiency, Roxanne had stayed up late to sort things out after finalizing her option for the kindergarten the night before. She planned to enroll them in it

right away. As notified by Madilyn, the entry requirements for the particular kindergarten were relatively strict. All the students there were from wealthy and prominent families. On top of that, the kindergarten was stringent in screening their students' parents. Right after Roxanne reached the office of the head of the kindergarten, she was requested to provide the details of her occupation and net worth with related documentation. Fortunately, she had made the necessary preparation, as reminded by Madilyn earlier.

Even though Roxanne was neither a CEO nor a director, she had made a lot of money over the past few years with her expertise in the medical field. Thus, her net worth was a lot higher than the kindergarten's minimum requirement. After going through her documentation, the head of the kindergarten uttered courteously. "Ms. Jarvis, I'll proceed to enroll your kids now. Could you please sign here?" Roxanne placed her signature on the document as requested. Shortly after, the head of the kindergarten summoned a teacher with a pleasant look. She instructed the latter to lead the two boys to their classroom so they could familiarize themselves with the environment and their classmates. The two boys waved at Roxanne nonchalantly and walked away with the teacher. Roxanne retracted her gaze after their figures were out of sight. Then, she nodded at the head of the kindergarten and left. Unlike the other parents, she had nothing to worry about when it came to her two boys. She had started bringing them along to the research institute years ago. In other words, they were not easily shy as they had gotten used to mingling with others and could adapt to the environment well. Apart from that, the syllabus in the kindergarten was a piece of cake for the two little geniuses. Instead of being bullied by the other kids in the kindergarten, Roxanne was even more worried that her two boys would pick on the others. After all, almost all the talented members of the research institute had fallen victim to their tricks before. On the other hand, the two boys looked around curiously along the way as their teacher led them to their classroom. The moment they stepped into it, their teacher introduced them gently to the other kids. "Everyone, they're our newly joined classmates. Put your hands together to welcome them, okay?" All the other kids stared at the two boys with intrigue. Meanwhile, the duo also introduced themselves graciously. Their adorable looks and cheerfulness were indeed irresistible to the other kids. After their introduction, everyone applauded excitedly.

Benny scanned one round before someone among the kids caught his eye. Pulling the hem of Archie's shirt, he whispered to the latter, "Archie, look! Isn't that our paternal sister? She's in the same class as us!"

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 When Archie looked in the direction where Benny was staring, the little girl they met the day before came into sight. Subsequently, he furrowed his brows. In the meantime, Estella was staring at them as she clapped her hands with the other kids. When she realized Archie and Benny were fastening their gazes on her, a hint of inexplicit excitement flickered in her crystal-clear eyes. Never had she expected that she would meet them here. Even though she had only met them once, she could not fathom why she tended to take a fancy to them. Even so, Archie and Benny had retracted their gazes as she kept her eyes glued to them. "Okay! You may take your seats now. Oh, there are two empty seats over there. I'll arrange for you two to sit together, okay?" Their teacher pointed at the two empty seats next to Estella. Archie and Benny were momentarily stunned. Nevertheless, they nodded obediently and walked over to sit down without uttering any words.

Estella's eyes lit up at the two boys walking toward the empty seats next to her. She gazed at them in anticipation but was soon overcome by a wave of disappointment. They're seated right next to me, but why don't they greet me? It's as though they didn't recognize me.

Down in the dumps, Estella cast her eyes down, toying with her fingers. In actuality, the two boys were observing her reaction discreetly. Sensing the latter's sheer disappointment, they could not help feeling guilty. Clenching his fists, Archie reminded himself and his brother at the same time, "Daddy abandoned us and had another child with another woman. He even bullied Mommy! We mustn't talk to her because she's his kid with another woman! Otherwise, we'll surely hurt Mommy's feelings!" Benny nodded solemnly at the former's words. "Yeah! We should ignore her!" Hence, the two boys sat upright throughout the class and did not even glance obliquely at Estella. Sensing the duo's aloofness, Estella dared not steal any glance at them again. noveldrama

After class, quite a few girls huddled over to play with the two boys. They not only gasped admiringly at the two brothers' good looks but also shared their toys willingly with them. The outgoing Benny got along well with the others, laughing cheerfully. On the contrary, Archie was polite, mature for his age, and friendly. Catching sight of the two boys' bright smiles, Estella suddenly had the courage to go over and greet them again. However, all the other kids surrounded the two boys and squeezed her out of her seat. One of the girls even grimaced as she pushed her aside and scoffed, "Little Mute, get lost! You can't even talk, so what's the point of you squeezing with us here? Don't rain on our parade, okay?" Caught off guard, Estella lost her balance and fell

backward. All the others behind her dodged immediately. None of them stretched out their hands to help her. Startled, Estella thought of balancing herself by grabbing the side of the desk next to her. Even so, she missed it and fell. The next second, she knocked her hand on the side of the desk. Ouch! It hurts! Estella ended up slumping on the floor. She knitted her brows in pain. At the same time, tears started to well up in her eyes. Meanwhile, the other kids around her only watched without taking any action. A few girls cupped their mouths to stifle their giggles. Estella had been unsociable in the class all the while. Since she was mute, she hardly had any friends. Nevertheless, she was as sweet as a doll. Even though girls disliked her, she was well-liked by most of the boys. They even treated and served her well like a princess. In fact, the boys, who were usually as agile as monkeys, tended to practice self-discipline in front of her. Needless to say, the girls were green with envy because of that. Tammy, who shoved her away moments ago, never failed to grab the chance to bully her.

Chapter 13

Chapter 13 No words could describe the pain on Estella's hand and the grievance surging from within her after the fall. She massaged her little hand instinctively, almost breaking into tears. After a while, she sniffled and got up to her feet. Then, she took out a notebook from the desk and started writing something in it. All the other kids were not surprised by that. Since Estella was mute, she usually communicated with them by writing in her notebook. However, it seldom appeared as there was scarcely anyone to play with her. A while later, she flipped her notebook toward Tammy after she finished writing. Placing her hands on her hips, the latter snorted at the word "apologize" in it and questioned sardonically, "How could you have the cheek to request me to apologize to you? Estella, you're asking for it!" With that, she advanced toward Estella with her nose in the air and stretched out her hand, thinking of giving the poor girl another shove. It never occurred to Estella that Tammy would strike at her again. Standing rooted on the spot, she was unable to react. In the meantime, Archie and Benny had been keeping their eyes on them. Nobody was aware when Tammy suddenly gave Estella a hefty shove a while ago. The realization only dawned on Archie and Benny when Estella fell to the floor. Now that Tammy was going to shove Estella again, they could not hold back any longer. "Enough of that! How could you bully her!" Archie stood in her way swiftly, glowering at her with a look of sheer grimness. Tammy was stunned at his sudden emergence in front of Estella. Archie stated sternly, "Didn't your mother teach you to apologize after making a mistake? Since you'd shoved her just now, you must apologize to her!"

Irrked by Tammy's domineeringness, the young boy exuded an imposing aura surprisingly.
noveldrama

An intimidated Tammy looked around apprehensively, hoping the other kids would back her up. Moments later, when nobody stepped forward to do so, she could only retort guiltily, "I-I..." Nevertheless, she was at a loss for words to speak up for herself. At the sight of Tammy blushing

crimson, Benny advanced toward her resignedly. "You shouldn't hurt anyone as you like. It's bad behavior! We're not supposed to fight among ourselves. Apologize to her, okay?" Benny's voice was not as authoritative as Archie's, but there was still an unmissable hint of sternness in his tone. On the verge of tears, Tammy flashed him a glance timidly. Seeing that, Benny blinked a few times and relented. "Don't cry. You'll look ugly if you cry. Bad kids tend to look ugly, too. Not to mention, only bad kids hurt others. If you don't wish to be one of them, apologize to her sincerely. You'll automatically be a good kid again after she forgives you!" Tammy sniffled hard, restraining herself from bursting into tears. No way! I don't want to be an ugly girl! But bad kids tend to look ugly... After much hesitation, she snuffled and apologized to Estella, "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have pushed you just now. Could you please forgive me?" Estella looked at Tammy for quite a while before nodding. Benny grinned blissfully. "That's right! We're all classmates and should get along well with each other!" Tammy nodded awkwardly at Estella's willingness to forgive her. The other kids shared the same sentiments as Benny and echoed his words. Meanwhile, Archie turned to look at Estella. "Are you all right? Did you get hurt just now?" Hiding her injured hand behind her back, Estella put up a front and shook her head. The next moment, Benny leaned closer and stared at her suspiciously. "I saw you knock onto the desk just now. How's it possible that you're not hurt at all? Let me have a look!" Without any waste of time, he grabbed hold of Estella's injured hand. The latter shrunk away, trying to pull her hand out. Nevertheless, the tiny red patch on the back of her hand was utterly visible against her fair skin.

When the unsightly redness came into view, Archie questioned her again, "Do you really not feel any pain?" Wearing a look of earnestness, Estella shook her head. Even so, her eyes were red-rimmed. Archie and Benny furrowed their brows in unison. The part of her skin has turned relatively red! How's it possible that it's not painful? It has even started to swell. There might be a bruise later! "We'll bring you to see our teacher now and let the school nurse attend to it." Archie sounded determined. Estella wanted to withdraw her hand, but Benny gripped it. He dragged her and went after Archie, heading straight for the staffroom. At the sight of the wound on Estella's hand, their teacher asked about the event that had transpired earlier before leading them to the school nurse's room in a hurry. Estella's injury was not severe, but the school nurse did not dare to dawdle. After spraying some medicine onto her wound, she massaged it for a while gently. When it was done, she looked at the two boys waiting aside. Impressed by their good looks, she asked their teacher, "Are these two boys your new students? I've never seen them before. Look at how adorable they are! I bet girls will fall head over heels for them when they grow up! Look, this little girl resembles them too. Could they be siblings?" Hearing that, Archie and Benny exchanged gazes intuitively and turned to look at Estella alongside them simultaneously. The duo was not surprised. After all, Estella was their paternal sister. It was nothing unusual for paternal siblings to look alike. Furthermore, people tended to comment that their eyes did not resemble their mother's. Estella also gazed at the two boys and could not help wondering, Do we look alike? After the school nurse attended to Estella's injury, their teacher left together with them. Back in the classroom, Estella followed behind Archie and Benny closely like a small tail attached to their backs. Soon, they walked back to their seats and sat down.

Initially, Archie and Benny thought that their mission was accomplished. It never came to them that Estella would tag along with them wherever they went during class activities. My goodness! We can't seem to shrug her off! She even keeps stealing glances at us during class! After a few

times, Archie could not take it any longer. Furrowing his brows, he looked intently into Estella's eyes. "Why are you following us so closely?" His tone was not harsh, but he sounded emotionless and aloof. Intimidated by his abrupt query, Estella looked away hastily. Even so, she cast a look in his direction again seconds later. Archie's forehead creased into a frown. Undeniably, he had a soft spot for the adorable Estella. How nice would it be if she's not related to Daddy! If so, Benny and I would treat her like a little princess and protect her well. However, this Little Mute is Daddy's daughter with another woman. If we treat her well, we'll be betraying Mommy! He wanted to get a grip of himself to pay no heed to the girl, but he was speechless when he saw the latter staring at them pitifully. Just when he was about to ask Estella to stay away from them, he noticed that the latter started writing something in her notebook again. This round, she wrote: I want to be friends with both of you. Shortly after, she lifted her notebook, covering the lower half of her face and only revealing her bright eyes.

Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Roxanne was clueless about the incident at the kindergarten. After leaving the kindergarten, she headed straight to the research institute set up in the country by her professor. The moment she stepped into the building, she saw a charming man dressed in a suit approaching her. "Welcome back, Roxanne. I'm excited to be your colleague again." Colby Galloway stood before her and extended his hand. Roxanne nodded and shook his hand, quickly retracting it. Previously, Colby was abroad. He was also in Harvey's team and was involved in many types of research and development. During that time, Colby had been her assistant. After all, he was a graduate of a famous school, and his capabilities were acknowledged by Roxanne and Harvey.

Though Roxanne's attitude was impassive, Colby did not mind it. He smiled and offered, "Come on. I'll bring you to the office."

With that, he turned around and led the way, introducing the structure of the research institute and the key personnel along the way. Upon reaching the office, Colby grinned at Roxanne, saying, "I've specially instructed someone to decorate this place. It's based on your preferences in the past. Linda's workplace is right outside." Roxanne studied the area and responded with a satisfied nod. "That's really thoughtful of you. Thank you so much." Colby was momentarily stunned. He then put on a gentle smile. Even his voice sounded warm. "It's nothing much. You don't have to be so polite with me." As he was saying that, he could not conceal his liking for her that poured out from his gaze. Despite knowing she was a mother of two, it did not decrease his adoration for her. After all, Roxanne was an excellent woman in every aspect. In fact, she was so excellent that her novel drama

qualities could cover up her shortcomings. However, Roxanne did not notice the gaze he was giving her. After briefly scanning the office, she said to Colby, "My purpose for coming here today is to understand the operations of the research institute. Could you bring me around the facility?" Colby was still smiling brightly. "Okay." Roxanne nodded slightly and gestured for him to lead the way. When Colby returned to his position in front of her, his smile turned bitter. It was true that he liked Roxanne. Sadly, she only viewed him as an ordinary subordinate. This is so... frustrating! Soon, both of them left the office area and went straight to the main region of the research institute. They arrived at the testing area. Several researchers wearing laboratory coats and masks could be seen busy working at their respective workbenches. Roxanne did not want to disturb them. Hence, she asked Colby to briefly introduce all the projects and their progress. By the afternoon, Roxanne already had a clear idea of the research institute's situation. At the same time, she discovered an important problem. When they were visiting the testing area earlier, there was a foundation work area where no work was being carried out. Roxanne asked the researchers about it, only to find that the drugs they needed were finished, and they were still waiting for the research institute to distribute them. Many other areas were facing the same situation. Due to the delay in the distribution of drugs, the research of several projects had no choice but to be put on hold temporarily, leading to an increase in cost and time needed for the projects. Gradually, it led to a major loss to the research institute. After stepping out of the testing area, Roxanne frowned and gave Colby a stern look. "The delay of drug distribution has caused many types of research to be put on hold. What's going on here? Didn't you find a way to solve this?"

Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Hearing her words, Colby stopped smiling and answered seriously, "I'm already looking for a solution for this problem." Roxanne frowned as she looked at him, waiting for his next sentence. "Recently, I've met with a medicinal ingredients supplier and have talked to them about a long-term collaboration. All that's left is to sign the contract. The agreed time to sign the contract would be tomorrow afternoon. The reason things did not go smoothly previously is that the research institute was still in the construction phase. Many complicated and miscellaneous affairs had to be dealt with, and the employees were still getting used to the system. It was only recently that they had begun to adjust themselves. Moreover, Horington's medicinal ingredients are mostly monopolized by a few major suppliers, and the supply was not enough to cover their demand. On top of that, our research institute is fairly new to the industry, causing many suppliers to intentionally increase their prices. It cost us a lot of time to negotiate for a lower price. That was why things were delayed until now." Colby gave her a brief summary of what had happened. Though it sounded simple, he was just a researcher. Hence, he suffered a lot when

he negotiated with the cunning suppliers. Even if he did not reveal much detail, Roxanne could imagine how difficult things were. As the person in charge of the research institute, he naturally had to manage everything. It was normal to face challenges everywhere. In fact, she encountered some herself when she was abroad. After she listened to Colby's explanation, Roxanne's expression relaxed. "Things must've been very difficult for you."

The corners of Colby's lips lifted. "Not really. It's my job, anyway."

"What's the name of this medicinal ingredients supplier?" Roxanne brought the conversation back to the topic of business again. "If it's possible, I'd like to go with you to the signing of the contract. Since I'm going to take over the future matters of the research institute, I think I should go over and have a few conversations with them." Colby simply responded, "Sure. You could come along tomorrow." Roxanne nodded. After that, both of them returned to Roxanne's office. When she saw the person behind her had no intentions of leaving, she was perplexed. "Is there anything else?" Colby smiled politely. "Actually, I have something to ask you. Are you free tonight? It's your first day at work, and I've arranged a dinner to welcome you. At the same time, you can get to know the people in the institute." Hearing that, Roxanne relaxed her brows. "Thank you. Tonight's dinner is on me, then. We're going to be working closely together in the future. I should show my sincerity as the person in charge." Seeing that she had agreed to come, Colby did not haggle over such details. He nodded with a smile. "Okay. See you after work, then." With that, he turned around, intending to leave. Right then, Roxanne called out, "Could you please bring over all the documents I need to deal with later? I've got no urgent matters, anyway. I can use the time to take a look at them." "Sure. I'll get them now," he answered.

Soon, Colby brought all the documents to her office. After placing them down, he excused himself politely and helped her to shut the door. At last, Roxanne was the only person left in the office. She pulled out her phone and dialed Madilyn's number. "Maddy, are you free tonight? Could you help me pick Archie and Benny up? I've got something to attend to tonight, and I might be home late." Madilyn did not question further and gave her a brief reply. "Okay." After making the arrangements for the children, Roxanne started looking through the documents. It was not until Colby knocked on her door that she stopped working. It was time to get off work.

"Time goes by really fast..." Roxanne muttered, picking up her coat and walking out of the door. Colby grinned. "You're very focused when you work. It's normal to not notice time passing by." Both of them continued chatting along the way. After exiting the research institute, they got into Colby's car and went straight to the restaurant. After around ten minutes, Colby gestured for her to look ahead. "That's the one." Roxanne lifted her gaze and spotted a vintage-looking building with exquisite carvings on the exterior. Moreover, it was located in front of a river. Hence, it looked really charming. The restaurant was named The Waterfront. Colby parked the car, and they walked toward the entrance of The Waterfront. Just as they were about to enter, a Rolls-Royce stopped slowly by the roadside in the dark. Cayden got off the car and went to open the door to the passenger seat. Lucian's slender figure appeared in the dark, and his dark, narrowed eyes were fixed on the entrance of The Waterfront. When he was in the car earlier, he had distinctly seen a figure that resembled Roxanne's.novelgram!

Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Lucian furrowed his brows, and a look of annoyance flashed through his eyes. Am I seeing things again? I wouldn't bother about it if it's just once or twice, but this has been going on for two days straight. I've been seeing her figure in different places. But the silhouette only flashes past my eyes without leaving any traces behind. He could not help but snort coldly before retracting his gaze. I must be going mad. That's why I'm thinking of her again. Meanwhile, Cayden had been waiting by the side for some time. Seeing Lucian not moving his feet, he asked carefully, "Mr. Farwell, our client has been waiting for a long time. Aren't we going in?" Lucian shut his eyes for a while and recollected himself before replying calmly, "Let's go." With that, he strode into the building with his long legs. Cayden followed closely behind him. When Roxanne and Colby arrived in the private room, all the employees of the research institute were already there.

Colby let her sit in the main seat, while he took the one beside her. After getting themselves settled, he introduced her to the crowd, "I'm sure many of you have met Dr. Jarvis today, but I'd still like to introduce her to all of you."

Everyone turned to look at Roxanne, who nodded as a form of greeting. "This is Roxanne Jarvis. You may address her as Dr. Jarvis. Perhaps you might not be familiar with this name, but I'm sure everyone is familiar with the name she used abroad. She's Professor Lambert's greatest student, Janet." Everyone in the room was stunned to hear the name. It took them a while to come back to their senses, and their eyes were instantly filled with respect. Janet was a name everyone in the medical industry was aware of. In fact, it would be safe to say that her name was well known abroad.

After all, she possessed great medical skills from a young age. Rumor had it that she inherited eighty percent of Harvey's skills. She was basically a role model for the younger generation. All that while, the employees thought Janet was a serious-looking, bespectacled academician with short hair. To their surprise, she was a beautiful woman. After returning to their senses, some of her admirers quickly stood up. "Are you really Janet? I really admire you. I've read every thesis you wrote when you were abroad. You're really my idol!" "It's our honor to be colleagues with you, Janet!" The crowd started giving compliments, all of them looking extremely sincere. After exchanging glances with everyone, Roxanne smiled. "Thank you for the compliments, everyone. Here's to a fruitful collaboration." With that, she raised her glass. The others, too, raised theirs and downed their drinks in one go. Roxanne acted extremely friendly without any arrogance, causing all the employees to admire her even more. It was a pleasant and cheerful meal. Many of them toasted Roxanne, and she accepted them all. She had a high alcohol tolerance, but there were too many people who approached her for a toast. Before she knew it, she was

already feeling tipsy. Seeing the dinner was about to end, Roxanne excused herself to the toilet to wash her face and freshen up. As she walked out of the restroom and was on the way back to the private room, her phone vibrated. Roxanne glanced at her phone to find a message from her children, asking her when was she going home. Seeing the text put a heartwarming smile on her face. When she was about to stop in her tracks to novel drama

reply to their text, someone bumped into her shoulder harshly, and her phone almost flew out of her hands. Roxanne gripped her phone tightly and apologized to the other person. "I'm sorry—" Before she could even finish, the man questioned angrily, "Are you blind? D*mn it. What a mood killer for such a night!" As he spoke, a stench of alcohol entered her nostrils. Roxanne knitted her brows and backed away discreetly, putting some distance between them. When the drunkard saw her face clearly, he stopped scolding her and gaped at her beautiful face.

Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Roxanne put up her guard when she realized the man was a drunkard. Hoping to avoid unnecessary trouble, she apologized again, "I'm really sorry. Are you okay?" When she finished speaking, the man in front of her suddenly smiled maliciously. Even his voice sounded excited. "Hello, pretty babe... I'm fine. You'll find out after having a few drinks with me. I'll forgive you for today's matters once you make me happy." Roxanne frowned. She knew the person in front of her had lost all sense of rationality due to his drunkenness. Hence, she ignored him and lowered her head, wanting to walk past him. Just as she arrived beside the drunkard, his voice rang out again. "Don't leave, pretty babe. I'm really rich. If you agree to be with me, I promise you'll live comfortably for the rest of your life." He then let out a perverted laugh, scanning Roxanne from head to toe. This beauty has such a pretty and delicate face. And her body has all the right curves. She's so fair that even her skin glows under the light. I bet she must be satisfying to touch! The more he looked at her, the more excited he got. He reached out, wanting to touch her face. Seeing his hand nearing her, Roxanne put on a cold expression, took one step backward, and kicked him in the stomach. Since it was her first day at the research institute, she was dressed formally. Thanks to her heels, the kick was even more powerful. The person was so drunk that he was already swaying on his feet and was rather woozy. Before he could even react, he had already been given a hard kick in his stomach. His face paled, and he clutched his stomach, staggering backward and landing heavily on the ground.

“You little b*tch! How dare you disrespect me? You should be feeling honored that I’m attracted to you. How dare you kick me?” he yelled.

After squirming on the ground for a long time, he gritted his teeth and lifted his head. His eyes were bloodshot.

Roxanne cast him a disgusted glance before making her way past him. Suddenly, he roared into a corner, “Someone, get here! That woman attacked me! Get her into the private room now! I’d like to see how she can continue putting up that attitude with me tonight.” Right after he finished speaking, two burly bodyguards dashed out from the corner. When they saw the drunkard in such a pathetic state, they hesitated for a moment. “Boss...” “Don’t bother about me! Just get her!” the drunkard roared. The bodyguards immediately walked toward Roxanne. When she heard the sound of footsteps approaching her from behind, her heart skipped a beat, and she reached into her bag to grab a bag of powder. If they get near me, I’ll let them have a taste of this medicine. As she turned around with the bag in her hand, the bodyguard that was about to touch her suddenly screamed and flew past her. In the next second, the other bodyguard disappeared from her sight in the same manner. Roxanne was dumbfounded. It was only then that she realized there was another silhouette behind her. She turned around and spotted a slender figure standing a few steps away from her. Her heart sank, and she felt as if her mind was about to explode. She spun around instantly, wanting to flee from the scene. Lucian, who wore a grim expression, was dressed in a tailored suit. His sleeves were rolled up to his forearms, and a few buttons around his collar were unbuttoned. He stood in the corridor while looking at the woman in front of him with a burning gaze. In fact, he was in the middle of a social event. He found the air rather stuffy and decided to come out to get some fresh air. Never did he expect to meet Roxanne out there. It’s really her! The longer he stared at her, the darker his gaze became. He wanted to say something before seeing the woman attempting to flee. noveldrama

Frowning, he dashed forward and grabbed her wrist. Meanwhile, Roxanne was so nervous that she could hear her heart pounding. She had no idea when he managed to catch up to her, and his grip caught her off guard. She froze on the spot, and all kinds of thoughts raced through her mind.

“Roxanne!” The man’s furious voice rang out beside her ears. “Stop hiding from me!” Roxanne finally came to her senses and struggled subconsciously. Sensing her movements, Lucian exerted more force into his grip. “Let me go!” Roxanne gave up struggling and turned around stubbornly, meeting his gaze. “Let go?” Lucian’s words sounded as if they were forced out of his gritted teeth. He stared at her intently with his dark eyes. It had been six years since they last met. Roxanne’s face had traces of maturity, yet she looked as

beautiful as ever. However, she was no longer the obedient and gentle person he remembered. Unlike in the past, when she was submissive to him, she was currently more imposing and fiercer. There was even a distant look in her eyes. Anger brewed in Lucian's heart when he realized all that. He stared coldly into Roxanne's eyes and enunciated each syllable clearly as he spoke. "Do you think I'll let you escape again?" Roxanne's heart trembled. She wanted to say something, but Lucian would not give her the chance to do so. His voice had a dangerous tone when he instructed Cayden, who stood behind him, "Get rid of all these scums!" Without giving Roxanne time to react, he grabbed her by the arm and marched into the private room beside them. Roxanne had a sense of uneasiness, but she could not break free, no matter what she did. Just like that, she was dragged into the room, stumbling along the way.

Chapter 18

Chapter 18 The private room was empty. Once Lucian entered the room, he shut the door right away. At that moment, the room fell into pin-drop silence. Only the sound of their breathing could be heard. Roxanne scanned the area. For some reason, she felt a sense of danger, and she started struggling fiercely. "What are you trying to do? Let me go!" In the next second, Lucian pinned her against the wall effortlessly. Both their bodies were pressed so tightly together that Lucian's warm breath landed on her ears. Roxanne suddenly stopped struggling and leaned against the wall, straightening her body stiffly. Without realizing it, she even slowed down her breathing. They were so close that her chest would touch the person before her if she breathed slightly harder. The room fell into dead silence.

Roxanne gritted her teeth as her mind raced.

No matter how much time had passed, the oppressive feeling he gave her was still as strong as before. However, their relationship had changed long ago. Roxanne clenched her fists and forced herself to calm down. We're already divorced. Lucian and I have absolutely nothing to do with each other now. We're people of different worlds. At that thought, Roxanne took a deep breath and said calmly, "Lucian, let me go. We can talk this out if you've got something to say." Lucian was slightly stunned to hear her calm tone. After some time, he took a step back, but he did not release her. Roxanne secretly sighed with relief, and her expression became calmer. "Do you have nothing to say to me?" Lucian narrowed his eyes upon seeing the change in her expression. Perhaps it was because Roxanne had thought things through that her heart did not tremble at his words. With anoveldrama

distant tone, she said, "Mr. Farwell, we've been divorced for six years already. I think there's nothing I have to say to you." When she ended her sentence, Lucian pinched her chin hard.

She was forced to meet his gaze. "What did you just call me?" Lucian's eyes burned with rage as if they could shoot fire at any time. Roxanne endured the pain and avoided his gaze, not uttering a single word. Lucian was even more infuriated at her act of silence. Mr. Farwell? That form of address sounds really distant! Well, it makes sense though. It's been six years, after all. Hasn't this woman always been heartless? She's so heartless that she could even leave her daughter behind and act like a stranger. I bet no one's more heartless than her. "Roxanne, why are you acting like a stranger in front of me?" Lucian gripped her chin harder. Roxanne winced, frowning as she met his eyes with a look of resistance. Lucian smirked. "Weren't you the one who shouted how much you liked and loved me back then? And now, you're acting like we're strangers? Have you forgotten what you did to me in the past? You might've forgotten, but I haven't!" Roxanne froze for a few seconds. She never expected him to bring up the matter of six years ago. It was impossible for her to forget what happened that night. That night, she had approached him like a sacrificial animal, all for a tiny moment of intimacy with him. As she thought of her emotions from that night, Roxanne's heart turned cold, and she balled her fists that were hanging by her side. Unwilling to back down, she responded, "I remember it. What's wrong? Do you feel like you'd been taken advantage of? Do you want to get back your dignity? Tell me. How should I compensate you, Mr. Farwell?" Lucian trembled with rage, causing the atmosphere in the private room to be filled with terrifying tension.

The pain in her chin was getting more intense. Still, Roxanne endured it and continued calmly, "To be honest, you weren't conscious that night, and I didn't feel anything. Now that I think about it, it was just so-so. But it's true that I drugged you. So, I won't object if you want to be compensated." Very well. Now that so many years have passed, this woman knows how to use her words to anger me. Lucian's eyes narrowed dangerously. Indeed, he was unconscious that night, and he barely remembered any details. However, any man would be angered when they heard Roxanne's words. After several seconds of silence, Lucian lifted her chin slightly and said coldly, "So-so? Since I've caused such a misunderstanding, I don't mind being at your service again." Panic flashed through Roxanne's eyes as she watched the man lean toward her. She wanted to escape, but she had nowhere to run.

Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Passionate Kiss The man's hot lips pressed against hers, and the two breathed on each other's skin. At that very second, Roxanne's mind went blank. She never thought that Lucian would take it all the way there. The man was even tightening his grip on her chin, seemingly trying to force her to open her mouth. Right then, Roxanne came back to her senses and began thrashing. "Let go of me, Lucian Farwell! Have you lost your mind? We're in a restaurant! Anyone might come in anytime!" Lucian moved a little further from her because of her struggles. When his mind registered her words, he frowned. "So what? Weren't you the one who said you were going to compensate me? I'm just taking what you owe me once, but you're already afraid?" Roxanne's eyes twitched. A wave of disgust washed over her when she thought about what she went through the other night. Perhaps it was because he had been drugged that night, Lucian was barely aware of what he was doing. Still, he had been taking action instinctively, and he had been rough. Hence, she remembered nothing but the pain from that incident.

Now that the man's scent and the faint smell of alcohol were wafting across her nose again, and after hearing what he said, Roxanne began shaking.

When Lucian saw no response from her, his eyes darkened, and he leaned over to kiss her again. It was a kiss rougher than the previous. Roxanne could not move at all under his grasp, and the panic in her heart was growing more and more intense. It had been six years, but her body still could not resist that man. If he notices my reaction, to him, I would still be the same person I was six years ago. With that thought in mind, Roxanne sobered up instantly. When she sensed the man trying to enter her, she quickly bit down hard on his lip.

The metallic tang of blood soon flooded their mouth. The man froze. In the next second, he moved with even more vigor. Roxanne could barely take in any breaths from his continuous kisses, and she was slowly losing strength in her body. The only reason she didn't slump down was that the man was still pressing down on her hand. A beat later, Lucian stopped and—with his lips still on hers—asked, "I thought you said you feel nothing toward me. Why have you gone so weak? Roxanne, your body is far more honest than your mouth is!" The man's voice was hoarse. Roxanne panted. Just as she was about to refute him, she suddenly felt a large hand wandering toward her chest. Once she sensed his action, Roxanne somehow mustered up the force to shove him away and slap him. "Lucian, weren't you the one who said you were going to marry Aubree? I've let you go, so what are you doing now? Are you taking revenge on me? If you are, then you've done it! I was foolish to have targeted you with such an extreme trick, but just as you wanted, I stopped clinging to you. I won't appear in your life anymore! So, this is the end of us." With that said, Roxanne shot him a glare and rushed out of the room,

never once looking back. Meanwhile, after Cayden cleaned up the mess, he went to the private room they were at to guard the door for Lucian. All of a sudden, he saw Lucian's ex-wife rushing out of the room. He froze for a few seconds before coming back to his senses and running into the room to check on Lucian. Right as he entered the room, he was greeted by a dim scene. His employer was standing in a nearby corner with his head tilted to the side. His cheek was a little red, and there was blood on his lips. At the same time, it seemed like he was fuming. "Mr. Farwell, are you... okay?" Cayden's heart skipped a beat as he tentatively walked over to ask a word of concern. Lucian's expression was dark. He reached up to touch his cheek before brushing his thumb across his

corner of his lip. It came back wet. That woman bit down rather hard. She's as ruthless as usual. As he looked at the blood on the tip of his thumb, Lucian gritted out, "I'm fine." At that, he turned to leave the room. Go on. Keep running, Roxanne. You're already back at Horington. I'd like to see where else you can run to! When he stepped out of the private room, he spotted the drunkard and his subordinate still crying out in misery on the ground. After a cold glance at the people on the floor, Lucian turned around to order Cayden, "Break whichever hands they used to touch her." Sensing the tense atmosphere, Cayden hung his head and replied without hesitation, "Yes, sir!" Lucian said nothing else before he left.

Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Her Relationship With That Man Roxanne had nowhere to go after fleeing the room, so she hid in the stairwell. As she leaned against the wall and panted, she reached up to touch her aching lips. It felt as if the man's warmth was still lingering on them. A moment later, Roxanne lowered her eyes self-deprecatingly. It had been many years, and she thought she had no feelings for Lucian anymore. Yet, after just one meeting with him, the man was wreaking havoc in her mind again. After a while of recomposing herself later, Roxanne returned to the room. The workers inside were still partying away, and they only became a little quieter when she entered. Noticing that her mood seemed to have changed since she left the room, Colby furrowed his brows. "Why did you leave for so long? Did something happen? It's... like something's off with you." Roxanne gave him a nonchalant smile and shook her head. "It's nothing. I gave my son a call."

With that, she took a seat, not letting Colby ask her anything else.

Roxanne had left for quite a while. Not long after she returned, most were almost done with their partying. Roxanne was not in the right mood, so she decided to end the party. They all went downstairs together, and everyone bid goodbye to Roxanne and Colby. Soon, only the two of them were left. Colby softly suggested, "I'll send you back if you don't mind. You've drunk quite a lot tonight, and I'm worried about you." Roxanne inclined her head, not disagreeing with his offer. "Thank you." She had yet to buy a car after returning to the country. It seems like I have to hurry up and get a car soon. "It's my pleasure." noveldrama

Colby opened the car door for her. After thanking him again, Roxanne went into the car. In the meantime, by the entrance of the restaurant, Cayden was fearfully looking at his employer's back.

H-How can things be so coincidental? I can't believe we're watching Roxanne entering another man's car. As Cayden watched the car slowly drive off, he cautiously raised his head to observe his employer's expression. Lucian had a grimace on his face as he fixed his gaze on that car. A beat later, he looked away and gritted out, "Check who that man is and what kind of relationship he has with her." Cayden hastily said yes to him. By the time Lucian returned to the Farwell residence, it was already nine. After sweeping his gaze across the living room, he realized Estella was nowhere to be found. A slight frown crept onto his face at that. "Where's Essie?" Catalina, who took care of Estella, was on her way down the stairs. "Mr. Farwell, Ms. Estella is done with her shower and is now in her room. Would you like to go upstairs to see her?" Lucian gave her a slight nod and began walking toward the stairs. "Mr. Farwell, there's something else I'd like to tell you about..." Catalina hesitantly continued, "When Ms. Estella came home tonight, she had a bruise on her wrist. I asked her about it, but she refused to tell me anything. I'm not sure if she has been bullied at kindergarten. I think this is something important you should look into. Lucian narrowed his eyes. "I understand. I'll go upstairs and take a look at her." With that said, he quickened his footsteps to Estella's room before knocking on the door. Soon, Estella opened it for him. She did not have much reaction after realizing that Lucian had come home. After opening the door, she turned and walked back to where she came from. Lucian followed her. Then, he saw the girl going back to her table and returning to her drawing. He did not disturb her, for he noticed how focused she was. A while of waiting by the side later—when he saw her put down her pencil—he uttered, "Catalina said that you're hurt. Let me take a look at you."

Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Estella obediently reached out her injured hand to him. When he saw the wound on her hand, he knitted his brows. "What happened? Were you bullied by the other kids?" Estella stiffened for a second before shaking her head vigorously. She wasn't bullied? Lucian was confused. "Then what happened?" Estella then picked up her pencil and slowly wrote a few letters on her book-"treeped". She then cocked her head to the side, a little dubious of what she had just written. It was too difficult for her to spell it out. Whenever she could not spell out a word, she would usually try to spell it according to how it sounded, or she would just skip the word. However, she did not often write out that word, so she was unsure if she actually spelled it right or not. "Did you trip?" Lucian asked after looking at the word she wrote.

Estella nodded. Lucian then let out a sigh of relief and gently touched the spot she hurt herself at. "Did the teacher treat your wound?"

Estella nodded again. Lucian nodded before his eyes drifted toward her fair little hands again. "This will take days to heal, and you need to treat the wound. I'll help you, okay?" Estella did not reject him. Immediately, Lucian crouched down and lifted her into his arms before going down the stairs. Once they reached the living room, he placed her on his lap and sat on the couch. At the samenoveldrama

time, he said to Catalina, "Bring the medical kit over." Catalina nodded in response. It did not take her long before she brought the kit over. Lucian then took out a spray from inside and sprayed it at her bruise. Then, he massaged the area for a while. It was quite a bad bruise. Even though it had been hours since the initial impact, it still hurt. Nevertheless, Estella did not kick up a fuss. She just pursed her lips as her brows furrowed. Lucian turned to study her expression every once in a while to see if he was hurting her. He lost himself in his thoughts when he saw her frowning face. Saw She looks a little like that woman when she's solemn. Sensing her father's gaze, Estella looked up at him, baffled. Instantly, she spotted his injured lips,— and she pointed at them with a look of confusion. It was easy to understand what she meant. She was asking him how he had gotten hurt. Lucian held her hand and replied, "It's fine. A wild kitty bit me." A wild kitty? Estella became even more confounded. She grabbed the pencil and paper on the coffee table and wrote: Where did the cat come from? Lucian's eyes darkened a little. "From overseas." That was all he was willing to say. He was afraid that he would not be able to suppress his fury around his daughter. When he noticed the perplexed look on her face, he reached out to take away the pencil and paper in her hands. "Let's not talk about this anymore. It's almost time. I'll bring you to bed now." Estella was still curious about the matter, but she decided not to prod further at her father's words. Obediently, she let her father carry her upstairs. The two

children were still awake when Roxanne went home. Madilyn was keeping them company as they watched the television.

The moment she entered, the two children looked away from the screen and ran over to her. "Mommy!" Roxanne smiled and patted their heads. "Did you drink?" Archie smelled the alcohol on her and scrunched up his nose. "I'll make a hangover remedy for you now. That way, your head won't hurt when you wake the next morning." With that said, he turned and went into the kitchen. Benny brought her all the way to the couch and made her sit before he climbed onto his mother's lap. As he solemnly massaged her temples, he asked, "I'll massage your head for you so that you won't feel that bad." Madilyn could not help but feel jealous at how sensible the children were despite their young age. "Why are my godsons so sweet?" Roxanne smiled and looked at her. "Do you like them? Have one yourself." Hearing that, Madilyn quickly shook her head. "Forget it then. The one I give birth to might not be as sensible as Archie and Benny. I just want to steal the ones from you." As Benny continued to massage his mother's temples, he consoled his godmother, "Aunt Madilyn, there's no need to steal us. If you're drunk, Archie and I will surely take care of you in this way too!" Hearing that, Madilyn wanted to carry the boy up and kiss him. However, the two boys were busy, and she could only squeeze out, "You boys are the best! I love you two to death!" Roxanne shuddered from the cheesiness. She then took the hangover remedy that Archie gave her and slowly sipped on it. By the time she was done with the concoction, it was already late at night. "All right, I'm fine now. Hurry upstairs to rest." Roxanne kissed the foreheads of her two sons. The two boys nodded and bid Madilyn good night before they went up the stairs.

Chapter 22

Chapter 22 : Once the two boys were upstairs, the smile on Roxanne's face slowly faded. Madilyn turned off the television and inched over to ask in concern, "What's the matter? Something on your mind?" After a moment of hesitation, Roxanne told Madilyn a lighthearted version of what happened earlier. "I met Lucian when I was having dinner just now." There was no one but Madilyn who Roxanne could talk to about what happened six years ago. Upon hearing that, Madilyn froze. Then, she whispered, "What kind of fate is tying you both together? Horington is such a big city, and I thought the chances of the two of you meeting would be close to zero if you're not actively seeking each other out." Roxanne lowered her eyes, seemingly deep in her thoughts. "So, what are you thinking about after meeting him?" Madilyn continued querying. The corners of Roxanne's lip turned down. "What can

possibly be on my mind? My relationship with him has ended six years ago. We're nothing but strangers now. I won't be affected by him anymore. All I want to do for the rest of my days is to take care of Archie and Benny and have a good life with them." It seemed like she had thought things through. Madilyn sighed in relief before patting her good friend's shoulders. "That's good. You're an excellent woman, and there are plenty of people courting you. Take your time to make your pick. Let's leave that douchebag in the past."

Roxanne gave her a slight nod, not wanting to continue with the topic. She then said, "By the way, I haven't had the chance to buy a car after coming back here. I had to get rides from my coworkers for the welcome party today, and it seems rather inconvenient. Are you free next morning to pick a car with me?"

Madilyn's attention was shifted to the next topic, but she was confused as to why Roxanne wanted to buy a car. "Why do you want to buy a car? I have a few in the garage. Just pick one." Roxanne chuckled as she arched a brow. "Are you really that generous?" After sharing a look, Madilyn wrapped her arm around Roxanne's neck and uttered, "Of course. After all, you're my godsons' mother! What's mine is yours!" "Thank you, then," Roxanne said to her. The two chatted away for a while longer. When they glanced at the time again, it was already quite late. It was then Madilyn reluctantly went back to the house next door. After Roxanne washed up, she lay on the bed. However, she could not sleep. It took her a long while of tossing and turning before she entered the dreamlands. In her dream, she returned to the empty room at The Waterfront. In the room. Lucian was pinning her against the wall. He was narrowing his eyes and coming closer and closer to her. Just as their lips were about to touch, Roxanne jolted awake, completely drenched in sweat. After waking from that dream, she could no longer sleep. Thus, the next morning, Roxanne had obvious dark eye circles as she sat by her children's side at the dining table while they were having breakfast. "Mommy, did you not sleep well last night?" Archie asked in concern as he stared at his mother's dark circles. Roxanne tensed up a little as she thought about that dream. A few seconds later, she flashed them a leisure smile. "Yes. I lost track of time reading documents last night." Her children were observant individuals, and Roxanne was afraid that they would prod her for more information. Hence, she quickly lowered her head and pretended to focus on eating breakfast. At that, the two boys exchanged a look but asked nothing else. All they said was, "Don't tire yourself out too much, Mommy. You have to take good care of yourself." Roxanne's lips curved as she bobbed her head in agreement. After breakfast, she brought the boys to Madilyn's place again. noveldrama

“Choose anything you like. Don’t worry about anything.” Madilyn brought them to her garage as she held onto the whole bunch of car keys in her hands. The boys were young, but they could recognize quite an amount of luxury cars. Therefore, once they laid eyes on the cars in the garage, they applauded and cried out, “Aunt Madilyn, you’re amazing!” After walking around the garage, Roxanne chose a mid-ranged priced Mercedes-Benz that was worth over a million. Madilyn gave her the keys without any trace of hesitance. Once Roxanne got the car, she drove the two to their kindergarten. “Bye, Mommy! Don’t overwork yourself!” the two said to her after they went down from the car. Roxanne ruffled their hair. “You too. Be good at school. I’ll come and pick you up at night.” The two boys nodded obediently and walked into the kindergarten together. Roxanne only left after watching the two disappear from her line of sight. She then started the car and slowly drove away from the kindergarten’s gate. Two minutes later, a Rolls-Royce rolled up in front of the kindergarten’s entrance. Cayden came down from the car before opening the door to the backseat. Then, he carefully carried Estella down. Once Estella’s feet were on the ground, she turned to wave at her father. “Go in now,” Lucian softly said to her as he patted her head. Estella nodded in response before turning to leave. Suspicion crept into Lucian’s eyes as he watched Estella leave the car. Estella seemed much happier than usual. Maybe she’s letting down her guard after interacting with the kids in the kindergarten. It seems like the psychiatrist was right. Her autistic symptoms will improve if I let her interact more with her peers.

Chapter 23

Chapter 23 Lucian only took his gaze off Estella after the teacher picked her up. He then said to Cayden, “Let’s go.” Cayden bobbed his head and drove toward Farwell Group’s office. Once Lucian arrived at his destination, he hurriedly went to join the executive meeting. By the time the meeting was over, more than an hour had passed. Lucian went straight back to his office. “Lucian, you’re back.” Just as he stepped into the room, he was greeted by Aubree’s voice. Hearing her made him knit his brows. Then, he saw that Aubree, who was in a black suit, was standing in front of his office desk with a smile. It seemed like she had been waiting for a while.

“When did you come?” noveldrama

Lucian strode to the other side of his desk before letting his eyes drift past the documents on the table. Finally, he landed his gaze on Aubree’s face. Aubree sat down when she saw him sit, the smile on her face never once wavered. “Not long ago. I heard from Cayden that you were in a meeting.” he Just then,

she spotted the scab by the corner of Lucian's lips, and her heart lurched. "Did you... hurt your lips?" A flash of displeasure danced across Lucian's eyes at the reminder of the incident the night before, and his tone turned colder. "I accidentally bit it. There's no need for you to freak out over it." Aubree nodded with slight hesitation. She consoled herself by telling herself that there were no other women around Lucian but her for all those years. Therefore, her suspicion was just paranoia.

With that thought in mind, she finally felt a little more at ease. "So why are you here?" Lucian asked in a flat tone. Hearing that, Aubree recomposed herself and smiled again. "I have some work matters. The project our families were working on is only missing the last step of signing the contract. So I've come to ask if there are any other terms. Also, my parents were asking if they can invite you for a meal tonight. Your parents will be there too, so I was wondering if you're free for that." They invited my parents too. Without a doubt, they must want to urge us to hurry up with our wedding. Lucian glanced at her before muttering icily, "Please tell your parents that I need to meet someone tonight, so I won't be free." The smile on Aubree's face froze. For a moment, she did not know how to respond to him. Indeed, their aim for the dinner was to urge them to quicken their marriage. WAS It was something that should have been done a few years ago. She finally managed to hold out until Roxanne was gone, but Lucian kept delaying the matter with work matters. After that, he used Estella as an excuse to delay the wedding further. By then, six years had already passed. SN Aubree had been waiting for so long, but the conclusion had yet to come. How could she possibly not feel anxious? Even now, Lucian was still postponing the matter. The corners of Aubree's lips tilted downward as she looked bitterly at the man in front of her. "Lucian, I've been waiting for six years. How many six years can a woman have? I don't mind waiting for you, of course, but if it's fated that the two of us will be together, why do you still not want to do the wedding? At the very least, the elders in our families will feel reassured. As she spoke, Aubree carefully watched Lucian's expression. When she noticed that he seemed

unfazed, she steeled herself and added, "We've been planning for the wedding since the start, so why..." "I did make a promise to wed you," Lucian coldly interrupted her. "But you, of all people, should know why I ended up promising you that." Fear pulsed through Aubree when she registered his expression. "I think the Farwell family has made more than enough compensation to the Pearson family throughout all these years. As a matter of fact, the compensation made has far exceeded the worth of this engagement. Even if we did not proceed with this engagement, no one will say anything

about it.” Lucian’s voice was neutral the entire time. Evidently, it was a speech he had long prepared.

When Aubree heard that, she widened her eyes in disbelief as fresh terror reared up within her. Clearly, Lucian wanted to break off the engagement.

Chapter 24

Chapter 24 After Lucian said those words, he looked away from Aubree’s face. He had decided to marry Aubree back then to repay the favor her grandfather had done for them. That was why he interacted with the Pearson family so closely. That was also why he had agreed to marry Aubree when the elders of the families suggested it. In fact, for a while, Lucian was sure that Aubree was his first crush. That lasted until six years ago when that woman left without saying anything. It was then he realized that the feeling he had for Aubree was not love as he initially assumed. After that, the elders of both families kept urging him to marry her, but he had found all kinds of excuses to delay the wedding. In those six years, he had also done everything he could to assist the Pearson family and agreed to all kinds of business requests they made to repay them for the kindness back then.

Now, it seemed like he had done more than enough to repay them for that favor back then.

At the very least, it was enough for him not to proceed with the wedding. “Lucian...” Aubree’s voice trembled as she looked at his expressionless face. She wanted to find out if her guesses were right. Lucian lifted his hand to massage the bridge of his nose. Then, he cut her off, “Put down the file. I’ll look at it later. I still have work to do, so if there isn’t anything else, you can leave.” Aubree bit her lip and stared at him for a moment. When she realized that he was not going to change his mind, her eyes slowly reddened. Still, she forced the upset and sorrow down her throat, put down the file, and left. Aubree’s mood was grim as she exited the Farwell Group’s office. She had been waiting for six years, but Lucian never once gave her a proper answer. Now, he was telling her that he was planning to call off the wedding.

Fortunately, Aubree was certain that there were no other women around Lucian. In other words, she still had a chance with him. With that thought in mind, Aubree’s grave expression lightened up a little. Yes, I still have a chance. The wedding is only unsalvageable if I make Lucian frustrated with me. I have to stay calm. As Aubree consoled herself, she entered the car. “Are you heading back to the company?” Her assistant, Charles Lampton, was tentative as he spoke to his employer, for he noticed the look on her face.

Aubree glanced at him. “No, I’ll be having lunch outside. Haven’t we agreed to meet VR Research Institute to sign the contract in the afternoon? We’re going back only after signing the contract.” Charles nodded. At two in the afternoon, Roxanne and Colby departed from the research institute to the destination where they had agreed to meet the crude drug supplier. On their way there, Roxanne abruptly recalled that she had yet to find out the details about their business partner. Thus, she asked Colby, “Can you tell me the details about the crude drug supplier that we’re about to sign with?” She was the person in charge of the research institute. If she knew nothing about the crude drug supplier, the other party might think that she was not serious enough about the deal when they met later. In that case, her ignorance might affect their collaboration. Knowing what was on Roxanne’s mind, Colby explained in detail, “This crude drug supplier is massive in Horington. Their family established itself by running crude drug businesses. Moreover, the prices that this crude drug supplier has are reasonable. Furthermore, after they found out that our research institute has a certain level of influence in the market abroad, they became interested to work with us. They seem sincere, so don’t worry about that.” Hearing that, Roxanne inclined her head in understanding. Simultaneously, she breathed out an inaudible sigh of relief. “I know the few major crude drug suppliers in Horington. According to your

explanation, the one we’re signing with should be one of them. I wonder which one is the one we’re about to meet with.” Colby replied, “The Pearson family.” noveldrama

Chapter 25

Chapter 25 Roxanne stiffened immediately. The Pearson family? As far as she knew, there was only one Pearson family in Horington who was in the crude drug industry. Coincidentally, that was the family she had some issues with. At that thought, Roxanne creased her forehead and prayed that she would not be unfortunate enough to encounter the one she did not want to meet the most. Soon, they arrived at their destination—a café. The people from the crude drug supplier had yet to arrive. Colby and Roxanne took a seat first. They then ordered two cups of coffee and waited for the other party to arrive. Dozens of minutes later, someone knocked on the door of the private room.

Colby straightened up and said to Roxanne, “They’re here.” noveldrama

Roxanne gave him a quick nod. Rising to her feet, she then said, “Please come in.” Soon, someone pushed the door open, and a male voice traveled into their ears. “Sorry that we’re late.” The moment Roxanne lifted her head,

she locked eyes with Aubree. Instantly, Roxanne sighed in her mind. Speak of the devil. Unlike her, Aubree widened her eyes in shock. As she was overwhelmed by surprise, she screeched out, "You— Roxanne? Why is it you?" Didn't you disappear a long time ago? Why are you here now? Colby and Charles were baffled by Aubree's response. Colby then asked in a curious but friendly tone, "Ms. Pearson, do you know Dr. Jarvis?" Aubree's eyes flitted toward Colby. "Dr. Jarvis?" "Roxanne Jarvis is the person in charge of our research institute. When she found out that we're signing a contract with you, she has asked to come along as a sign of our sincerity," Colby introduced

However, Aubree's expression only turned even darker. All she wanted to know was when Roxanne had returned. It's Lucian's first time telling me that he's thinking of calling off the wedding this morning. Is this because of Roxanne? Has he... found out that Roxanne's back? Have they met each other? The more Aubree dwelled on it, the more anxious she became: As she stared at Roxanne, her expression darkened and paled. On the other hand, Roxanne was much calmer. It was as if it was her first time seeing Aubree. She glanced at her and frowned before straightforwardly asking, "Ms. Pearson, are you not planning to continue with our collaboration?" Hearing her, Aubree swiftly tucked away her emotions and looked at her for a moment. As her expression turned icy, the look in her eyes changed into an amused one as well. "Of course I'm planning to continue. Dr. Galloway has been working on this contract for such a long time. I won't let his efforts go to waste." With that, she summoned the waiter and ordered another four cups of coffee. While they were waiting for the coffee, Aubree's darkened gaze lingered on Roxanne. Despite her unwillingness to admit it, Roxanne had changed a lot after six years. In the past, she had a cautious demeanor, but now, all she needed to do was sit there, and anyone could feel how intimidating she was. Her looks and presence were overpowering Aubree. On the other hand, six years had gone by, and Aubree had never changed. The man she nearly had was now getting further and further away from her. When she realized that, Aubree's hands under the table tightened into fists as jealousy coursed through her veins. "I truly wish to work with your institute, but I don't think the price we negotiated previously is a suitable one. Since Dr. Jarvis is here, I think we can discuss the price again." Even though Aubree had a professional smile on her face, the look in her eyes was a glacial one. Upon hearing her, Colby parted his lips, about to speak, but Roxanne stopped him. She calmly asked,

"Ms. Pearson, what you mean..." "I hope we can have an increment of two percent of the original price," Aubree uttered.

Chapter 26

Chapter 26 “An increment of two percent?” Colby stiffened. “Ms. Pearson, haven’t we come to an agreement the other time? We’re now about to sign the contract, so why are you increasing the price all of a sudden;” At his shocked response, Aubree folded her legs and replied, “Indeed, we’ve agreed on it, but almost everything in the crude drug market has risen in price this year. If we were to sign the contract with the price we previously agreed on, we’ll be suffering a loss too great. Dr. Galloway, please forgive us.” She made it seem so rational. Colby’s expression tensed. Just as he frowned and was about to say something else, Roxanne stopped him again. “Ms. Pearson, you must want to suddenly raise the price because you saw me. I know the prices in the crude drug market well. We can have a negotiation if you want to increase prices, but raising it by two percent right here and now is far too unreasonable.” Roxanne wanted to be professional, but clearly, Aubree did not. Hence, there was no need for her to endure her antics.

Aubree knitted her brows in displeasure. She then coldly asked, “Regardless of what the reason is, that is our current price. If you don’t think that’s suitable, we won’t mind letting this business deal go.”

Roxanne agreed to it. “In that case, let’s take this as time wasted. A company that doesn’t stick to its words isn’t a company we’ll be at ease working with.” With that said, Roxanne stood up and said to Colby, “Let’s go.” Colby nodded, and the two exited the café. “Is there something between you and Aubree?” Colby could not help but ask when they left the place. He could sense Aubree’s clear hostility toward Roxanne during their meeting earlier.
noveldrama

Not wanting to dwell on what happened back then, Roxanne simply said, “In a way.” Noticing that she did not want to talk much about the topic, Colby did not prod her for more. Instead, he began talking about

the crude drug supplier matter. “If we’re not going to work with Pearson Group, we’ll have to find another crude drug supplier.” Roxanne bobbed her head. “Then that’s what we’re going to do. Horington is a big place. I’m sure there are other crude drug suppliers who will work with us.”

“Okay,” Colby answered with a nod. He would rather deal with the trouble of looking for a new crude drug supplier than to see Roxanne targeted by someone. Meanwhile, in the café, once Roxanne was gone, a cold look crept onto Aubree’s face. She ordered Charles, “Tell all of the crude drug suppliers in Horington that, if they dare to work with VR Research Institute, they’ll be

enemies of Pearson Group!” Charles did not know what happened between his employer and the doctor earlier, but he could sense that his employer was in an exceptionally foul mood after meeting Roxanne. A shudder wracked his body upon hearing Aubree’s tone. Without daring to delay any further, he replied, “Of course. I’ll work on it right away.” With that said, he stood up and left. Soon, Aubree was the only one left in the café. When she thought about the attitude Lucian had earlier in the morning and the frightening demeanor Roxanne had a while ago, Aubree panicked. Regardless of whether or not Lucian had rejected her because of Roxanne, it was a fact that Roxanne and Lucian were married in the past. Aubree could not be certain what Lucian thought about Roxanne. If things continued to be delayed, she dared not imagine what else would happen. I can’t wait any longer. Meanwhile, at Farwell Group... “Mr. Farwell, I’ve found out information about the man Ms. Jarvis was with last night.” Cayden entered the room and stood in front of Lucian.

Chapter 27

Chapter 27 Lucian immediately put away his work and asked worriedly, “Who is he?” Images of Roxanne leaving with a stranger last night started flashing before his eyes. “The man’s name is Colby, and he’s the person in charge of the VR Research Institute. Previously, Mr. Farwell went to him for medical treatment.” Cayden instinctively picked up the sudden change of ambiance in the room, and he became extremely wary with his words. “Besides, I also found out that Colby is still single. But by the look of things, Ms. Jarvis is not in any way related to him. The other possibility is that they knew each other when they were studying medicine in the same university.” Being made aware of the possibility, Lucian’s facial expression softened. “Besides this, did you manage to find out about anything else?” Cayden appeared to be in a dilemma. “This is the extent of my investigation. Regarding Ms. Jarvis, we only know that she returned to the country recently. As to what she did and where she was overseas, we have not been able to find anything at the moment.” Lucian furrowed his brows, displeased by the answer. However, knowing that it would be futile to pry further, he decided to change the topic of the conversation. “How is Old Mr. Queen now?” Cayden was about to apologize for his incompetence but heaved a sigh of relief when Lucian started asking about Old Mr. Queen. “It doesn’t look good for him. They’ve consulted all the famous doctors from inside and outside of the country, but they were helpless.”

Lucian nodded slightly. "Reschedule my agenda planned for tomorrow night. I want to pay a visit to Old Mr. Queen." noveldrama

"Understood," replied Cayden. Cayden, upon being certain that there were no further instructions, left after waiting for a while. When they just arrived at the research institute, Roxanne and Colby sprang into action and hurriedly contacted all the medical ingredient suppliers in Horington.

Due to the lack of supplies, many projects in the research institute had to be held in abeyance. If this were to continue, the losses would spiral out of control. Hence, time was of the essence for them to collaborate with a medical ingredient supplier. Before this, Colby tried contacting the suppliers in Horington, but his proposal was rejected instantly. However, since they ran out of options, they were forced to test their luck once again. "VR Research Institute? I thought we had this conversation before? Your asking price is too low! We are not interested to collaborate with you!". Just as Roxanne mentioned the name of the research institute, the rejection from the other end of the phone call was instantaneous. Roxanne gritted her teeth. "We can increase the price from our original offer. What about an increase of half a decimal point? Let's try to work out a feasible plan, and there's always room for negotiations-" The person interjected and said, "It's still too low. We need to increase at least 3 decimal points, or else there's no room for negotiation." Hearing such bold demand, Roxanne hung up promptly. Meanwhile, Colby's expression didn't look pleasant either. "I'm so sorry, Dr. Galloway. All of our supplies have been booked by someone else. We do not have any extra at the moment. The answer was obviously an excuse, which indicated the other person's unwillingness to collaborate. Colby simply responded, "All right, I understand." He then hung up the phone after that. After an entire day of cold-calling, there was no positive news even until the next afternoon. Though the suppliers responded differently, some courteous and the others impatient, the conclusion that resulted from the phone calls was that none of the suppliers were willing to collaborate. Even worse, one of the suppliers made it expressly clear to Roxanne that they would never

collaborate with the VR Research Institute. But the reason for that was not disclosed. It was clear as daylight that they were sabotaged by someone in the dark. As such, the culprit could be none other than Aubree.

Chapter 28

Chapter 28 Roxanne couldn't help but feel irritated. Ultimately, she was being sabotaged and the projects in the research institute could not proceed

because of this. She never expected that Aubree's vengeance toward her persisted even after 6 years. Even worse. Aubree resorted to such atrocious tactics to get back at her! However, it was not the time for her to be bothered by emotions. Roxanne clenched her fists in an attempt to calm herself down. She then looked toward Colby and said, "It's okay. If Horington is not the solution to our problem, then we can try other cities. Surely, someone must be willing to collaborate with us." Be that as it may, it also meant that the costs and time needed to achieve it would be higher. While Roxanne did not mention it, she was very much aware of the consequences. She too hoped to find a suitable partner in Horington. However, the prospect of doing so seemed quite bleak. "No, there's no need to head to other cities," Colby uttered.

He appeared to have thought of something, and his tone relaxed.

Roxanne arched a brow. "Are you saying that there's someone in Horington that is willing to collaborate with us? The small suppliers are definitely out of the picture, and we need someone with larger operations..." Colby nodded. "I know. However, this might require you to personally attend to it." Roxanne was perplexed. Colby then said, "I heard it from you actually. But first things first, have you heard of the Queen family?" Colby continued, "The Queen family supplies medicine and built an empire out of it. The Queen family is a prominent family in Horington, and Old Mr. Queen has a good reputation in the community. However, his health has been deteriorating lately. Because of this, the Queen family

has been looking for doctors to cure him, but to no avail. They invited me to try out, but I couldn't do much. However, you might stand a chance in this." "Is that so?" Roxanne replied. She understood what he meant but was nevertheless hesitant. "The Queen family are in the big leagues. When it comes to the pricing, it will not necessarily be lower than what we are being offered right now." Colby replied, "Before this, the Queen family offered expensive medicines as a reward for whoever can cure Old Mr. Queen of his condition. In the future, they can also come up with an arrangement to supply medicine at half the price!" . Roxanne's eyes glistened with hope and she felt the boulder being lifted off her shoulders. "Why didn't you say this earlier? That's a great thing!" Colby beamed. "I thought about it, but admittedly I'm not good enough. Besides, you were not here back then. Hence, I gave up and never thought about it until now. Perhaps you can give it a try. What do you think?" "Of course! Not a problem at all!" Roxanne confidently stood up to urge him. "Please help me contact the Queen family and help me make an appointment with them." Looking at Roxanne's passion for matters that concerned the research institute, Colby's heart surged with a sense of relief.

He smiled and said, "I'll do that now. Wait for me here." Then, he exited the office and pulled out his phone. Meanwhile, Roxanne sat quietly in the office and waited. Irrespective of how complex the treatment would be, Roxanne was determined to cure old Mr. Queen. Soon after, Colby returned. "How did it go?" Roxanne eagerly asked. Colby nodded. "We still have a chance. the Queen family has yet to find a doctor that can cure Old Mr. Queen's condition. Knowing that I have someone to recommend, they agreed to let you visit without any hesitation." "When are we heading there?" Roxanne continued asking. "Tonight," replied Colby. Roxanne agreed immediately. The timing was perfect, as she too wanted to go there as soon as possible. "I need your help. Please let me know all the symptoms that Old Mr. Queen has. I will need to make the necessary preparations." Roxanne became serious the moment she spoke about medicine. Colby obliged.novelgram

Chapter 29

Chapter 29 Alfred's condition was quite complicated. It was why the famous doctors weren't sure what to do. Just describing his illness alone took Colby a long while to finish. At six in the evening, after Roxanne got off work, she went to the Queen residence alone according to the address given to her by Colby. The person who opened the door was a middle-aged man dressed in a butler's outfit. He looked at Roxanne and politely asked, "Greetings. May I ask who are you?" Roxanne smiled. "Hello, I'm the doctor who's here to treat Old Mr. Queen. I called during the afternoon," The butler scrutinized her suspiciously because she looked pretty young. Is someone as young as her that capable? Still, he didn't show his doubts on his face. After two seconds, he invited, "Since you're a doctor, please follow me inside."

He turned and guided Roxanne in. noveldrama

She didn't mind that he doubted her. One of her principles was that before she treated a patient, she would accept any form of distrust. She followed the butler into the courtyard. The structure and decor of the courtyard looked elegant. It clearly showed the Queen family was a family that cared a lot about appearances. After they entered the mansion, the butler gestured for her to take a seat on the couch. "A visitor came by earlier, and Mr. Queen is accompanying them to meet Old Mr. Queen. I'll let them know you've arrived. Please wait here." Roxanne nodded. "All right." She then sat on the couch. Soon after, a housekeeper served coffee to her.

A few minutes passed, and she heard footsteps descending the stairs. She put her cup down and turned to the staircase. A young couple strolled down

the stairs. At first glance, both of them looked quite familiar. The man was handsome, and the woman was beautiful. It was likely they were a pair of siblings. As they walked, they were speaking to someone behind them.

It must be the visitor the butler mentioned earlier. Roxanne's line of sight followed them until she could see the visitor. It was a tall, handsome man. In his embrace was a child. He was currently talking to the siblings in front of him with a relaxed expression. The man slowly turned his sight toward her, as though he noticed she was staring. Her heart thumped uncontrollably when their eyes met.

Lucian! I didn't expect to see him here! Memories of what happened that night rushed into her mind. Roxanne's eyes trembled as she almost couldn't bear to look straight at him. She only calmed down after clenching her fists forcefully. Upon taking in a deep breath, she pretended as though nothing happened and stared at the siblings. On the stairs, Lucian paused and narrowed his eyes at the woman sitting on the couch. His gaze was fixed on her face as though he was trying to confirm something. When she looked away, his gaze darkened. It really is Roxanne! I thought she was someone else. Why is she here? He was a little puzzled, but he didn't show it on his face. "What's wrong, Lucian?" The man in front of him turned back to ask when he stopped moving. Lucian looked away upon hearing that and answered emotionlessly, "It's nothing. Let's go." The man in front nodded puzzledly as the trio continued to descend the stairs.

Chapter 30

Chapter 30 Soon, the trio arrived in front of Roxanne. In Lucian's arms, Estella stared at the beautiful lady in front of her. A rare expression of joy appeared on her face. Roxanne wasn't sure how to react to being stared at by the father and daughter duo. Thankfully, the man in front of Lucian spoke first to break the silence. "Are you the doctor recommended by Dr. Galloway to treat Old Mr. Queen?" Roxanne adjusted her expression and smiled. "Yes. My name's Roxanne Jarvis." noveldrama

"Dr. Jarvis." The man stretched his hand out. "I'm Jonathan Queen. This here is my sister, Frieda Queen."

When he finished, he turned to Lucian. "This is... Well, we regard him as our elder brother. His last name is Farwell." Roxanne tried to nod calmly and greeted, "Mr. Queen, Ms. Queen, Mr. Farwell." The moment she finished speaking, Lucian's crisp and meaningful chuckle rang out. There was a mocking tone in the laughter. Roxanne lowered her head to hide the emotions

in her eyes. Frieda studied her briefly before furrowing her eyebrows. She questioned, "You're the one who said you can treat my grandpa's condition, right? You look about as young as us, though. I doubt you have been working as a doctor for long. Are you sure you can do it?" Her attitude mirrored the one the butler had earlier.

However, since it came from the patient's family member, Roxanne didn't mind her doubt. Before she could explain, Jonathan smiled apologetically. "I'm sorry. My grandpa's condition has been getting quite serious. We've hired all sorts of famous doctors in and out of the country, yet none of them could do anything. Our sister is simply worried that our grandfather will suffer – even further. After all, a lot of doctors had given us false hope. It has happened enough times that we can't help but be cautious. I hope you don't mind, Dr. Jarvis." He then shot a glare at Frieda. "Dr. Jarvis is here to treat Grandpa. How can you be so rude toward her?"

Apologize to her right now." Frieda unwillingly looked away and muttered in a small voice, "I'm sorry."

Roxanne didn't mind that at all. When she heard the apology, she smiled. "It's fine. After all, you two are his family members. I understand that you have concerns. However, I assure you I'm capable. I may be young and, I might not look like a doctor with years of experience under my belt, but I've researched many complicated diseases abroad. My experience isn't as plenty as doctors who had been in the profession for decades, but I'm

confident in my abilities." When she finished, she pulled out a document from her bag and handed it to Jonathan. "This contains my achievements over the years. You can take a look yourself before deciding if I'm qualified to treat Old Mr. Queen." Jonathan didn't expect she would be that prepared. When he reprimanded Frieda earlier, he himself didn't trust Roxanne that much either. However, after seeing how confident she appeared and spoke, it was enough to convince him that she was capable even without looking at her credentials. Still, his responsibility for taking care of Alfred and curiosity about Roxanne compelled him to grab the documents to take a look. Before he could touch the document, a chiseled hand suddenly reached out and snatched the document away.

Chapter 31

Chapter 31 Everyone present was taken aback. As Roxanne stared at the big hand grabbing her credentials, she panicked. Ever since she saw Lucian, she had been trying to avoid looking at him at all. Since he had suddenly taken away her credentials, she had no choice but to focus on

him. I wonder what he's trying to do. Lucian held the document and glanced at Roxanne before commenting, "A lot of people nowadays will fake their credentials to make themselves look better. Old Mr. Queen's condition is already in a critical stage, so you two mustn't let people like that fool you." As he spoke, he casually flipped through the credentials and read them extremely slowly. It looked as though he was really trying to discern if it was fake or not.

All details about her life, including the school she went to and the place she was working at, was absorbed by his eyes. noveldrama

The life she had lived over the past years started to take form in his mind. As she said, her achievements during her time abroad were quite impressive. Each of those credentials was so excellent that it would make people widen their eyes. Roxanne stared anxiously at him reading through her credentials. She saw that the more Lucian read, the more obvious the hint of mockery at the corners of his lips. Since she had no idea what he was thinking, all she could do was wring her fingers tightly and hope for the best. After a long while, Lucian slowly closed the cover of her credentials. At that moment, her body tensed up. "This looks... real enough." He coldly swept his gaze past her and suggested, "However, I think you better double check her info on the internet, Jonathan. It's best to make sure if she really is who she claims to be. After all, these credentials could be bought."

Roxanne couldn't hold back anymore. He's messing with me on purpose and trying to make them doubt my medical skills! On a normal day, she might have been able to tolerate it. However, because this had to do with the research institute, she had to obtain the chance to treat Alfred. Thinking of this, she stared at him seriously and answered coldly, "Yes, those can be bought, but you can't buy medical skills! If I'm not capable, then you'll know when I treat Old Mr. Queen, Mr. Farwell." Things were getting pretty tense between them. It was as though a conflict was brewing. Jonathan found the situation quite odd. Do they know each other? They have to, right? Why else would he say things like that to her? "Do you two know each other?" Frieda asked. Roxanne didn't hesitate at all before denying it. "Nope! How can I possibly know someone as mighty as Mr. Farwell?" Then she turned to Jonathan. "I'm here to treat Old Mr. Queen, Mr. Queen. If you don't mind, will you let me take a look at him?" She was trying to avoid interacting with Lucian directly. Her change of topic was so sudden that Jonathan's reaction couldn't catch up with it. Roxanne's expression turned even more serious. "I am a doctor, and I'm just here to understand Old Mr. Queen's condition. Even if I can't treat him, he won't get hurt. Please let me take a look at him. If I can treat him, then he'll have a chance to survive. If not, I'll leave right away and won't disturb you any longer!"

Chapter 32

Chapter 32 Jonathan was somewhat moved by Roxanne's determination, but he still turned to see what Lucian thought. Lucian was merely staring at her coldly and silently. Upon seeing that, Jonathan nodded at her. "Then I'll take you to my grandfather. Please follow me." She secretly let out a sigh of relief and tried her best to ignore Lucian's gaze. She passed by his side as she followed Jonathan. Frieda was still worried after seeing her brother bringing

the young doctor upstairs, so she followed them too. The three of them soon vanished at the corner of the stairs. When Estella saw Roxanne leaving, she pulled her father's collar to gesture for him to follow the woman.

Lucian looked away from the staircase and stared at the child in his arms. His lips twitched before he headed upstairs too.

Roxanne almost had a heart attack when she saw him suddenly appearing as she arrived at Alfred's room. "We've arrived," Jonathan announced. She quickly forced herself to calm down and followed him into the room. Upon entering the room, a strong smell of medicine rushed into her nose. She swept a glance across the room and saw a big bed sitting in the middle of it. Standing next to the bed were a couple of people in white outfits. It would appear that they were the medical team specially prepared for Alfred. The room was likely a dedicated medical room to treat the old man. Just as the rumors suggested, the Queen family cared a lot about Alfred's condition. noveldrama

Jonathan brought her straight to Alfred's bed. "Dr. Jarvis, if you will." Roxanne lowered her head and examined the patient on the bed. Alfred looked pretty weak on the bed. He was so thin that he was almost just bones, and his cheeks were sunken. If he wasn't lying down in a medical room, people would've thought he was a corpse. The look in Roxanne's eyes turned stern as her eyebrows furrowed tightly. His condition is as severe as Colby described. She examined him without delay. First, she held the old man's wrist to check his pulse. Jonathan was taken aback when he saw that. If she's doing that, it means she practices traditional medicine. It's hard to believe she's using such a simple diagnostic method on him. The Queen family had hired medical practitioners of all kinds to treat Alfred's condition, so he had personally seen different medical techniques being applied to Alfred. That was the reason he was shocked by Roxanne's action. It was a very simple technique to diagnose Alfred's condition. Still, he didn't say anything. She sat next to the bed, holding Alfred's wrist. Her eyes were lowered as she focused entirely on the activities of his pulse. The more she observed his pulse, the more she was shocked. She thought his condition was severe enough when Colby described it. However, Alfred's actual condition turned out to be even worse. During her diagnosis, she noticed Alfred's breathing was so weak that any breath could be his last. After a while, Roxanne let go of the old man's hand with a heavy expression and approached Jonathan "What's the result, Dr. Jarvis? How's my grandpa's condition? Can you treat him?" Hope glimmered in Jonathan's eyes. However, Roxanne furrowed her eyebrows and questioned, "Why wasn't Old Mr. Queen sent to the hospital, even though

he's in such a critical condition? Why is he being kept inside the house even though he's on the verge of dying?"

Chapter 33

Chapter 33 The expression on the Queen siblings' faces instantly changed. "What are you saying?" Frieda glared at Roxanne furiously. "Can you treat him or not? If you can't, then just say so! Don't curse my grandpa like that!" Roxanne stared at her coldly. "I'm already putting things very mildly. After the delay and not getting his treatment in time, your grandfather is suffering malfunctions in many of his organs. His immune system is rapidly deteriorating. Normally, cases like this require the patient's body to be taken care of in a timely, healthy manner. However, the medical team you hired didn't care about the patient's health condition and just pumped his body full of drugs! This isn't treating his condition; it's killing him even quicker!" The leader of the medical team was pretty unhappy at the accusation. He approached them and justified his actions in front of Roxanne. "If you don't understand the situation, then don't spit out nonsensical judgments, miss. Old Mr. Queen's condition was getting pretty serious. If we hadn't given him the medicine in time back then, he wouldn't have survived! Please don't question our professionalism. Besides, we're hired by Ms. Pearson. Why would we hurt him?" noveldrama

Roxanne instantly caught the name of his employer.

Ms. Pearson? Does he mean Aubree? I can't believe she hired this medical team. Where the hell did she find this team of buffoons? Not only do they suck, but they're also arrogantly confident. Heh, does he think I'll be afraid just because she's the one who hired them? Roxanne's expression was getting pretty cold as she retorted, "Professionalism? Forgive me for being candid, but I cannot see a shred of professionalism in this team! If you have even the tiniest bit of professionalism, the patient's condition wouldn't have become this severe!" The doctor was stumped. When he thought about how sick Alfred looked at that moment, his eyebrows furrowed tightly. No words came out of his mouth. When she saw how the doctor was getting lambasted, Frieda's expression changed as she stepped forward. "Since you're acting so high-and-mighty, does this mean you're certain you can cure my

grandpa? If not, stop wasting time and talking nonsense here. Aubree had introduced many good doctors over the years to help treat my grandfather. Lucian is doing the same as well. But now you're saying their years of hard work amounts to nothing?" Roxanne furrowed her eyebrows and glanced at Lucian's emotionless face. She then looked away and replied resolutely, "I'm simply speaking the truth. It's not my place to say if their hard work has gone to waste. I just think everyone should know about the truth." "You!" Frieda didn't expect her to be that sharp-tongued. Seeing how a fight was about to erupt, Jonathan glared at his sister. Frieda unwillingly shut up upon meeting his eyes. He spoke sincerely after reprimanding his sister. "I apologize on my behalf for my sister. However, right now, I don't care about how the treatment was handled before. I just want to know if you're confident that you can treat my grandfather's condition. If you do, then please hurry. As you said, my grandpa's condition is so severe that we can't afford any delays anymore." Frieda spat out sarcastically as well, "Yeah, aren't you so good? Quickly treat our grandfather. then. I want to see how capable you are." Roxanne ignored her attempt at

provocation and returned to the bed. "I'm going to treat him now. Please help me take off Old Mr. Queen's clothing."

Chapter 34

Chapter 34 When they heard that, they were shocked. They had met many famous doctors who attempted to treat Alfred, yet that was the first time they heard someone asking them to take off Alfred's clothes. Jonathan was the first to react as he asked cautiously, "Is it necessary?" Roxanne glanced at him weirdly. "I'm about to treat Old Mr. Queen, and his shirt will prevent me from treating him more easily. Can someone help? Please do it quickly." Everyone in the room, including the medical team, exchanged looks with each other. They had no idea why it was necessary to take the patient's shirt off for the treatment. Jonathan hesitated before gritting his teeth and stepping forward. Seeing that her brother had relented, Frieda was panicking, "What kind of treatment is this? Why

Before she could finish, she saw Roxanne pulling out a quaint wooden box from her medical kit. There was a scroll-like item inside.

After she unrolled it, hundreds of big and small silver needles could be seen arranged neatly inside. Frieda was shocked by what she saw and swallowed her words. Roxanne focused on taking out the needles she needed before disinfecting them with alcohol. She didn't at all pay attention to what Frieda was saying. In front of her, Jonathan was pulling Alfred toward himself with great difficulty. One of his hands was stabilizing the old man's body while the other was taking off the shirt. Since Alfred was completely unconscious at that moment, he wasn't going to cooperate. It made Jonathan's actions even more difficult. Lucian stared at Roxanne's actions as the look in his eyes darkened. When he saw how much Jonathan was struggling, he put Estella on the ground and ordered, "I'll be helping Jonathan out. Stay here and don't move, okay?" She nodded obediently as she watched her father walk through the crowd and stood next to the bed. He then silently helped Jonathan remove Alfred's shirt.

"Thanks, Lucian." Jonathan stared at him gratefully. noveldrama

Lucian nodded silently, When Roxanne noticed Lucian was there, her eyelashes quivered, though she quickly returned to her calm self as she focused on the needles. Soon, Alfred's shirt was removed, and everyone was able to see how thin his body was. Roxanne had expected that. She asked the two men to hold the old man steadily. "Stabilize him. I'm going to start the

treatment now.” Jonathan nodded with a serious expression. Then she looked at Lucian, who didn’t react at all. She took in a deep breath and began to poke the needles onto Alfred’s body. After the first needle was placed, an exclamation rang out. “What are you doing? How could you stab that acupuncture point?” Frieda was the one speaking. While she had a medical background, she wasn’t familiar with acupuncture. Despite that, she could tell what Roxanne was doing was very dangerous. It was possible even for normal people to die because of what Roxanne was doing, so the risk was greater for the sickly Alfred. Frieda’s expression tensed up as rage and panic filled her eyes. “If you don’t know how to do it, then don’t do it! What are you doing? Are you trying to kill my grandfather?” When she finished speaking, she violently pushed Roxanne away. Roxanne heard her doubts, but she ignored them as she planned where to place the second needle. That was why she didn’t expect Frieda would suddenly push her. She was caught off guard being pushed like that, and so she lost her center of gravity for a moment. It almost caused her to fall to her side and into Lucian’s arms.

Chapter 35

Chapter 35 Before Roxanne could react to the situation, Lucian supported her by the waist and stabilized her body. When she raised her head, she saw his dark eyes. As their gazes met, Roxanne’s body stiffened. Then she quickly looked away before standing back up by propping her hand on the bed and supporting herself. He had grabbed her subconsciously when she fell. However, when he saw her avoiding him like the plague, the look in his eyes darkened. And so, he quickly withdrew the hand from her waist. “How dare you say you researched complicated diseases before! Is this the result of your research? I think those credentials of yours were bought!” Frieda didn’t notice what was going on between the two of them and was still angry at Roxanne. She stared at Jonathan furiously. “I think she’s a liar, Jonathan! We need to kick her out right now!” When Roxanne heard that, she quickly snapped back to her senses and mocked, “No wonder Old Mr. Queen’s condition became so severe. It seems like someone’s been interfering with his treatment. Since you insist I’m wrong, I’m leaving right now.”

She then started to put the needles back into her bag.

No one expected she would back off so easily after she displayed a steeled determination to treat Alfred earlier. Jonathan was stunned for a few seconds before snapping out of his daze and apologizing, “I’m really sorry, Dr. Jarvis. To be honest, our family consists of many doctors, so we know a little bit about acupuncture. My sister is angry probably because she thinks it’s

dangerous for you to jab a needle at that acupuncture point and is worried about our grandpa. Please forgive her.” Roxanne ignored him and continued to pack her things. “I don’t need to stay here and get scolded by someone who doesn’t know what I’m doing. I came here because I genuinely wanted to help Old Mr. Queen, but since Ms. Queen doesn’t believe me, forget about it!” The moment she finished speaking, she picked up her medical kit and headed to the door. noveldrama

In a panic, Jonathan carefully put Alfred down before chasing after her. “We can talk things out, Dr. Jarvis. My sister did go too far with her words, so I’ll ask her to apologize to you right now. Please continue your treatment on my grandfather.” “There’s no need for that. I can’t accept Ms. Queen’s apology.” Roxanne’s tone was cold. Lucian’s eyebrows were furrowed tightly as he stood at the side of the bed, staring at the back of her figure with a heavy expression. He could tell she was really angry. On the side, Estella was also able to tell Roxanne was angry. Panic filled her eyes. I didn’t even get the chance to say hello to Ms. Jarvis yet, but now she’s leaving because she got angry... Thinking of that. Estella got angry as well. To express her fury, she walked over to Frieda, wrote a word in her notebook, and then showed it to Frieda. Many people’s attention was shifted to her sudden appearance and the word written in her book. which was “Apologize!” Estella stared at Frieda with wide eyes. Frieda was too embarrassed to back down then. Her line of sight casually shifted away from the notebook, and she pretended to not see Estella. Then she turned to her brother. “If it doesn’t work out, we can just find another doctor. I really can’t trust this person.” When she saw how Frieda was still acting stubbornly, Roxanne’s expression turned colder as she mocked, “Then I hope you can find a doctor you like before Old Mr. Queen takes his last breath, Ms. Queen.” She turned around and stepped out. The moment she did that, however, someone grabbed her wrist. Her eyebrows furrowed as she turned back unhappily to see who it was. Lucian’s expressionless, handsome face appeared in front of her. Shock filled her heart. What is he... What is the meaning of this?

Chapter 36

Chapter 36 Lucian glanced at Roxanne and turned her around by pulling her wrist. Then he stared at Frieda coldly. “Apologize.” Frieda was flabbergasted when she heard that. “W-What did you say, Lucian?” Lucian looked at her loftily, radiating an intimidating aura. “Old Mr. Queen’s condition is extremely severe right now. If there anyone could save him, that person would’ve shown up by now since you’d invited every famous doctor from inside and outside of

the country. But no, that person has never shown up.” Stunned by his fierce aura, Frieda lowered her head in a panic. “This...” Lucian paused, glanced at Roxanne, and continued, “Ms. Jarvis has no relation to the Queen family. She’s only here to treat Old Mr. Queen. It’s fine if you don’t believe her, but there’s no reason for you to hurt her. Did the Queen family teach you manners like this? Apologize to her now!”

Jonathan was a little shocked too as he stared at Lucian in disbelief.

I can’t believe it. Lucian is defending a stranger he doesn’t know? He’s not wrong, though. After all, Frieda had been trying to chase Dr. Jarvis away and even hit her. Why is she acting so rashly today? Since Lucian had lectured Frieda, Jonathan also added, “Lucian’s right, Frieda. Apologize to Dr. Jarvis immediately! As worried as you may be, you shouldn’t have treated her like that! You’re too rash!” Frieda gritted her teeth and stared at everyone. Lucian’s protecting that woman behind him and making me apologize. Not only that, my brother’s defending her, too. Even Essie is demanding I apologize! There’s no other way out for me! She hesitated for a long while before lowering her head unwillingly. “I’m sorry, Dr. Jarvis. I was acting too rashly. My apologies. I shouldn’t have hit you.” Her tone was very rigid and insincere. Roxanne didn’t want to care about what was going on, but at the same time, she was staring at Lucian absentmindedly.

What is he thinking? Why is he helping me again? Before I started the treatment, he was the one who was trying to stop me from advancing. But when I was treating Old Mr. Queen, he helped out, and now he’s even defending me. His intentions are so unclear... “Frieda has admitted her mistake, but I don’t expect you to forgive her that quickly, Dr. Jarvis. However, as you said, my grandpa’s condition is worsening. Can you please treat him first. We can discuss how we can make up for my sister’s misdeed in the future.” Jonathan’s voice rang in her ears. Roxanne was still pretty upset, but when she thought about the research institute, she suppressed her displeasure. Besides, Jonathan was right. Alfred did need a doctor quickly, and he was innocent. When she thought about that, she calmed down and swept her gaze past the crowd in the room before ordering coldly, “I hope unrelated persons will leave this room before I restart my treatment.” Frieda was about to say she was family before Roxanne added, “That includes Ms. Queen.” Frieda’s expression darkened, but Jonathan agreed and asked everyone else to leave. The only people left were Jonathan, Lucian, and a clingy Estella. Roxanne sat next to the bed and prepared her treatment.novelgram

Chapter 37

Chapter 37 With no one disturbing her, Roxanne's treatment went much more smoothly. After a while, a dozen of silver needles were poked onto Alfred's chest. Throughout the entire process, Roxanne focused all her attention on treating him calmly and steadily. In fact, she was so focused that she didn't realize Lucian was staring at her the whole time. When they were downstairs, he had already read through her credentials. It was absolutely flawless. That was enough for him to imagine how exciting her life had been for the past six years. However, it was his first time seeing this side of her. When she was doing her job, she was absolutely focused and didn't reflect any hesitation in her movements. It was something Lucian had never seen in Roxanne before. An indescribable feeling surfaced in his heart when he saw that.

At the side, Jonathan had been observing her poking the needles on his grandfather and her expression as she was doing so.

After a dozen needles were poked onto Alfred's body, he joyously found out that perhaps she would be able to save Alfred. Like everyone else, he thought it was ridiculous when she stabbed her first silver needle. However, recalling her expression as she was doing so, he somehow felt as though he could trust her. So, he insisted that she stayed. The more he watched her administer the needles skillfully and composedly, the more he was certain she was capable of treating his grandfather. He also noticed that the spots she stabbed with the needles were very dangerous acupuncture points. If she made even the tiniest mistake, not only would her effort be for nothing, but Alfred might also lose his life. It was his belief that Roxanne wouldn't risk Alfred's life unless she was confident. noveldrama

It looks like her research on acupuncture and acupuncture points had indeed reached the level of a master's! Thinking of that, Jonathan felt joyful and respected her from the bottom of his heart. Even though she looks younger than me, she's already much more capable than I am. Indeed, one shouldn't judge a book by its cover. The room remained silent for nearly twenty minutes before Roxanne stabbed one last needle onto Alfred. Her expression relaxed as she lifted her sweaty forehead. "All right, that will be enough. He'll be much better after I remove the needles an hour later." She glanced at the two men beside the bed. Jonathan let out a long sigh of relief and carefully approached Alfred. Then he asked, "When will he wake up?" "He should wake up when I remove the needles." Roxanne stood up and attempted to grab tissue papers to wipe her forehead. Just as she was about to do that, someone tugged the hem of her shirt. She paused and lowered her head in confusion. That was when she met up with Estella's sparkling eyes. Even though she knew it was

a child Lucian had with another woman, she still couldn't steel her heart in front of such an angelic and cute face. Seeing how she was looking at her, Estella pulled out a neatly folded handkerchief and stood on her toes. Then she handed the handkerchief to Roxanne with anticipation in her eyes. Roxanne hesitated for a few seconds before smiling, "Thank you." Sec Then she accepted the handkerchief and wiped her forehead with it. acc Estella smiled brightly and left to pour her a cup of water. Lucian stared silently at how Estella was walking around excitedly. His eyes turned dark. This is the first time she's taking the initiative to get closer to someone. Although... I suppose it's only

natural, considering their relationship. Jonathan didn't know that, so he was surprised. "Looks like Essie likes you, Dr. Jarvis! It's my first time seeing her being willing to get close to another person!"

Chapter 38

Chapter 38 Roxanne was slightly stunned before she turned to Lucian with a worried expression She hadn't been honest with him the incident when Estella was lost back then. I doubt I can hide it from him, though: And so, she hesitantly explained, "It's probably because I found her when she got lost last time." Jonathan didn't know that happened. His line of sight shifted between Estella and Roxanne. "I guess you two are destined to meet each other, then." Destined? Roxanne thought about Estella's identity and pursed her lip self-deprecatingly before replying plainly, "I suppose so." Jonathan didn't notice anything strange about her, so he stood up and suggested, "Since my grandpa still needs an hour, we should wait downstairs and drink some water. Thanks for your help, Dr. Jarvis."

Roxanne secretly sigh with relief when he changed the topic and quickly agreed to his suggestion. noveldrama

Lucian walked away from his side of the bed, responding to the invitation through his actions. When he tried to hug Estella, the girl wasn't at all interested. After Estella handed the handkerchief to Roxanne, she had been staying at the latter's side. Upon hearing that they were heading downstairs, she immediately reached her hand out and grabbed Roxanne's hand, much like how they did it last time. Right before her hand touched Roxanne's, a phone rang. Roxanne promptly turned around to take the phone in her bag, and her fingertips brushed past the little girl's. It wasn't easy for Estella to build up the courage to hold Roxanne's hand, yet she failed at the last second. She blinked slowly as disappointment colored her expression, and

she started fiddling with her fingers. Lucian saw how they almost held each other's hand. His eyes darkened in response. Roxanne picked up the phone and saw it was a call from Madilyn. Vas She handed her kids to Madilyn tonight because of her appointment at the Queen residence.

So, when she saw the call, she thought something happened to the children and speedily answered. As her finger swiped across the screen, she accidentally pressed the speaker icon. "Hello?" Roxanne spoke without noticing her mistake. In the next second, she heard two cute voices ringing through the air. "When are you coming back, Mommy?" It shocked her and she quickly turned off the speaker mode.. The children's voices vanished in an instant. Despite that, she could feel her heart beating like crazy. She worriedly and subconsciously shot a side glance at Lucian. Her first reaction was that she was afraid he would learn of her children's existence. Lucian's face was currently as dark as the sky before a thunderstorm. There was an icy look in his eyes. I heard the voices coming from the phone. It was a boy's voice calling her "Mommy." Did she get married again? When he realized that, rage flooded into his mind and heart. He gritted his teeth and forced himself to calm down. That was the only way he could resist the urge to pin her to the wall and question her. Jonathan didn't detect anything wrong between the both of them and smiled. "Are you married, Dr. Jarvis?" Roxanne's mind was in so much chaos that she just nodded. When Jonathan saw that, he smiled. "I couldn't tell you already have kids." Say She apologized, "I'm sorry. Please excuse me while I take a call."

Chapter 39

Chapter 39 When Roxanne walked out of the room, she lowered her voice and spoke to the children. "I'm still treating a patient right now, so I'll be back much later. Go play with Aunt Madilyn first." The children were used to her returning home late, so they agreed. Concurrently, inside the room, Lucian's expression was so cold that it was reaching the freezing point. Rage was boiling in his heart. Estella's attempt to reach Roxanne's hand and the "Mommy" he heard on the phone kept echoing in his mind. No wonder she acts so coldly toward Estella. It turns out she had already married someone else and given birth to new children! That's why she abandoned Estella back then! He stared at his daughter, who was still standing in her original spot. was noveldrama

Despite her obvious disappointment, she still stared at the door, waiting for Roxanne to return.

Watching her like that made his heart ache. So what if she has returned? She still doesn't want to take care of her child! The look on Lucian's face was terrifyingly dark as he approached Estella and carried her into his arms. The girl stared at him with confusion and tugged his collar, indicating that she didn't want to be carried. Of course, he didn't notice it as he coldly announced, "It's getting late, so I'll be taking Essie back home now. If Old Mr. Queen wakes up, give me a call. I'll stop by another day." Before Jonathan could reply, he left with Estella. Roxanne had just ended her call and was about to head back in. When she arrived at the doorway, she saw Lucian walking out expressionlessly.

Her heart clenched, but just as she wondered what to do, he walked past her and left without glancing at her. She was a little stunned at his sudden departure, though when she returned to her senses, she laughed self-deprecatingly in her mind. It seems like he didn't care about the call at all. Six years ago, he didn't care about me either, not to mention I did that sort of thing to him when I left. Of course, he won't care about me now, nor would he care about the two children. To him, we're all strangers. Roxanne knew they lived in different worlds. She thought about the emotional roller-coaster she had just gone through earlier and felt like a joke. She stood outside the door for a long while before sighing gently. Upon tidying up her thoughts, she entered the room. Only Jonathan was left in the room. He had witnessed their interaction earlier. For some reason, I feel like their relationship isn't as simple as it seems. Lucian, especially, seems weird. It's the first time he showed so many emotions toward a woman. He was really curious about their history, but because it was their private matter, he didn't inquire further about it. Instead, he started talking about Alfred's condition with her. Estella was panicking as Lucian brought her out of the mansion and into the car. She quickly wrote a sentence in her notebook and tugged the hem of his shirt before showing it to him. The sentence read: I haven't talked to Ms. Jarvis yet. Can we stay a little longer? Seeing that, Lucian felt a surge of mixed feelings, and his eyebrows furrowed. Estella noticed her father looked kind of down, and a caring look appeared in her eyes. She then wrote two more sentences: What's wrong, Daddy? Why aren't you happy?

Chapter 40

Chapter 40 Lucian's expression turned grim when he saw what happened. "What's there to talk to her about? Pretend that you don't know her the next time you see her and don't ever interact with her again." Since she has no intention of acknowledging her daughter, I might as well go along with her

wishes. Taken aback by Lucian's tone, Estella was briefly stunned before she pouted and wrote in her notebook: Why? Before he could reply, she quickly wrote: I like her very much, and she is kind and gentle to me. I want to be together with her! Despite Lucian's sympathy for her when he saw how much she liked Roxanne, they had no choice but to face reality. He replied indifferently, "That's because she has children of her own and doesn't need another child." Estella was confused by his reply. I know that the two boys are her sons, but she has still been very nice to me. However, Daddy seems to hate her.

Estella couldn't help but feel disappointed.

When he saw her fall silent, Lucian instructed his assistant to drive. After leaving the Queen residence, he felt a tug on his sleeve, causing him to look over at Estella with knitted brows. She wrote: In that case, where is my mommy? She gave him a pitiful look, while her eyes were filled with confusion. As the pretty lady is the boys' mommy, I cannot be with her. In that case, where's my mommy? Her question tore into Lucian's heart. Recovering his gaze painfully, he had no idea how to respond to her. She's asking me where her mommy is, and I do know the answer. However, how am I going to explain the cruel truth to her? That woman has a new family now. Even with her own daughter standing right before her eyes, she had no intention of acknowledging her. The more he thought about it, the gloomier he became. Consequently, a long silence was his only response to her. noveldrama

When she didn't obtain an answer. Estella continued to stare blankly at him, yearning for an answer. Finally, Lucian replied through gritted teeth, "I don't know. I don't know where she is, and don't ever ask me this question again! Just having me is enough. There's no need for you to have a mommy at all!" After looking at him in shock, Estella gradually put her notebook away before hanging her head in silence. For the rest of the journey home, neither father nor daughter spoke another word. Back at the Queen residence, Roxanne felt out of sorts after Lucian was gone. Jonathan could sense that she was unsettled but didn't bring it up. Instead, he led her downstairs where they made idle chatter over coffee. From the outside, both of them seemed to be getting along very well. After Frieda was chased out, she returned to her room. Subsequently, she came out to see for herself what the situation was. When she saw her elder brother sitting with Roxanne on the couch, she let out an inaudible snort. From the very beginning, she never believed in Roxanne's capability, and her opinion of the latter hadn't changed. Despite noticing Frieda's contemptuous expression, Roxanne didn't hold it against her and just pretended to be oblivious of the former. One hour later, Roxanne changed the subject. "It's time. We can remove the needles now." She got up and headed

upstairs with Jonathan following closely behind. At the same time, Frieda, too, got up skeptically and went along with them. Even though she didn't have faith in Roxanne, she was still concerned about her grandfather. Furthermore, she intended to see for herself whether Roxanne was as capable as she claimed to be.

Chapter 41

Compared to inserting needles, removing them was a lot easier.

All the needles on Alfred's body were cleared in less than ten minutes.

After checking his condition, Roxanne began to pack her things.

In the meantime, Jonathan and Frieda stood anxiously by the bedside.

Previously, all the famous doctors they had sought failed to produce any results.

Therefore, they weren't sure if Alfred was able to wake up this time.

Under their attentive gaze, Alfred's fingers began to curl slightly.

In the next second, his eyes gradually opened, and he began to grimace while coughing weakly.

"Grandpa!"

As Jonathan sat down to help Alfred regain his breath, the former's eyes were filled with both shock and delight.

Frieda, too, was so stunned that she was at a loss for words.

Despite her lack of faith in Roxanne, her grandfather had woken up due to Roxanne's treatment.

"Grandpa, how do you feel?" Jonathan asked with concern once Alfred had stopped coughing.

Alfred nodded slightly and replied in an extremely hoarse voice, "How long have I been asleep for?"

Just when Jonathan was about to answer, Roxanne walked over after she was done packing. "It would be better if Old Mr. Queen doesn't speak too much now, for he needs a lot more rest."

Nodding in response, Jonathan carefully helped Alfred lay back down.

After that, he got to his feet and expressed his gratitude. “Dr. Jarvis, I couldn’t thank you enough. Also, I would like to apologize for our ignorance over doubting you previously. The mistake was ours, as you’re clearly an extraordinary doctor.”

After accepting his gratitude and apology, Roxanne reminded, “Even though Old Mr. Queen has woken up, his prognosis still looks bleak. He needs at least six to seven more treatments before he can truly turn the corner.”

Jonathan nodded repeatedly.

“Also, I’ll prescribe some medicine for him to supplement his health, as it will help with the treatment. After all, the damage that Old Mr. Queen’s body has suffered is significant. As future treatments require him to be strong enough, I’m worried that he might not be able to withstand it,” Roxanne continued.

Jonathan naturally had no objections as he nodded in agreement. “Don’t worry. We will comply with all your instructions regarding Grandpa’s treatment.” noveldrama

Nodding slightly, Roxanne retrieved a bottle of pills from her bag. “Here, take two pills three times a day after meals.”

Subsequently, she took out a piece of paper and wrote a prescription for him. “Based on the quantity I’ve written here, get ten batches of them. Every day, add them into a soup for Old Mr. Queen to drink. This way, it will hasten his recovery.”

Jonathan acknowledged, “All right. We’ll follow your instructions.”

After going into the details a little more, Roxanne realized it was getting late when she checked the time.

Thinking of her two sons waiting for her at home, she got up to leave. “I think it’s time for me to go, but I’ll be coming back tomorrow. In the meantime, call me if Old Mr. Queen has any problems.”

With that, she headed to the door with her medical bag in hand.

Glancing at Roxanne’s leaving silhouette, Jonathan called out to her, “Dr. Jarvis, other than treating Grandpa, I’m sure you have some other reason for being here.”

Stopping abruptly in her tracks, Roxanne suddenly remembered her objective for coming over.

But Old Mr. Queen hasn’t recovered fully yet. So, Jonathan...

When Jonathan saw her stop, he softened his tone. “Don’t you want to talk about it first before leaving?”

Chapter 42

Jonathan’s intentions couldn’t be more obvious.

Even though she didn’t bring up the matter of medicine supply, he was cognizant of her agenda. In fact, he was also interested in exploring the matter with her.

However, Roxanne hesitated at being rewarded for a task she had yet to complete.

After all, the Queen family had initially declared that they would only supply medicine at half price to whoever that cured Alfred.

When she didn’t say a word, Jonathan simply stared at her with a grin.

Roxanne smiled back. “To be honest, I did come here to treat Old Mr. Queen after a friend told me that your family was willing to sell medicine at half price to whoever cured him. But now that he has only just awakened and his condition hasn’t stabilized, I don’t think it’s appropriate to talk about the reward. At the very least, we can wait till his situation makes a turn for the better.”

Jonathan’s smile broadened upon hearing Roxanne’s answer. He then replied with even greater sincerity, “Dr. Jarvis, the fact that Grandpa is awake is already a miracle to us. As for his follow-up treatment, we have the utmost confidence in you. Consequently, you have earned the right for us to discuss your reward.”

Surprised at how much faith he had in her, Roxanne was briefly stunned. When she finally regained her senses, she took a seat on the couch.

“You were recommended by Dr. Galloway. When he came to see Grandpa back then, he did bring up the situation at the research institute. However, since he was unable to help Grandpa, the matter ended up in limbo.”

Jonathan explained further, “Now that he has sent you here, I’m sure it has something to do with the research institute. Is my guess spot on?”

Roxanne nodded slightly before relating the research institute’s situation to him.

“The research institute is currently working on a few projects. Unfortunately, progress is being held back by the lack of medicines. As a result, we’ve been searching for a medicine supplier whom we can work with. Unfortunately, we ended up being rejected by everyone in Horington. With no other choice, Colby thought of the Queen family and figured that I should give it a try.”

Looking at Jonathan, Roxanne explained earnestly, “Of course, even without the reward, I would still do my best to treat Old Mr. Queen. The reward is nothing more than a bonus to me.” noveldrama

When Roxanne’s serious expression earned Jonathan’s further respect, he repeated, “I would like to apologize again for the doubt I’ve shown you earlier. You truly are an exceptional doctor.”

Acknowledging his praise, Roxanne stared intently at Jonathan while waiting for him to discuss the medicine supply.

With no time to waste, Jonathan jumped right into it after gaining an understanding of the situation,

“Now that Grandpa has awoken after receiving your treatment, we hope that you will continue taking good care of him. As for the reward promised by our family, I have the authority to make a decision. As a start, I will provide the research institute with its first batch of medicine free of charge as a sign of our gratitude. Subsequently, our family will sign a long-term contract with the institute to supply medicine at half price.”

Roxanne gradually understood the situation.

After watching Alfred regain consciousness from her treatment, Jonathan was thoroughly convinced that she could cure him.

As for the first batch of free medicine, it was both a gift and also an effort to reassure her.

After all, that batch would solve the urgent shortage at the research institute, allowing her to concentrate on curing Alfred without any distractions.

Needless to say, Jonathan’s proposal was extremely tempting.

“All right. Please rest assured that I will do my best to cure Old Mr. Queen.”

Chapter 43

Upon hearing her promise, Jonathan replied with a smile, “Your words have put my mind at ease.

Anyway, I'll get the contract drafted tomorrow. When the time comes, all you need to do is sign it." Roxanne nodded in acknowledgment. With the matter of the reward settled, Jonathan personally escorted her to the door and watched her drive away. Only when her car disappeared from sight did he return to the house and give Lucian a call.

"How is Old Mr. Queen?" The moment the call connected, Lucian's voice rang out with the sound of water flowing in the background. Jonathan answered with a grin, "He's already awake. Dr. Jarvis is amazing."

Recalling how awkward Lucian and Roxanne behaved earlier, he asked curiously, "Lucian, are you acquainted with Dr. Jarvis prior to this? I just feel as if something is amiss between both of you. Furthermore, I've never seen you behave that way with another woman before."

Even though he made things difficult for her, he stood up for her at the same time.

In the beginning, Jonathan really thought that Lucian didn't take Roxanne seriously. However, after watching Lucian help her and even insisting that Frieda apologize to her, he had no idea what to think.

His hunch told him that both of them knew each other, but it was impossible for him to guess what sort of relationship they had. Lucian's concern for Alfred was the only reason why he took Jonathan's call. Hence, the question caused his expression to darken.

"I don't know her. If I did, I would already have gotten her to treat Old Mr. Queen." Before Jonathan could reply, Lucian hung up, triggering the former's curiosity,

Somehow, Lucian's tone just now was really awkward. Do they really not know one another? By the time Roxanne reached home, it was already late at night. Madilyn was playing Lego with the boys in the living room. The moment the three of them saw Roxanne, they dropped the Lego in their hands and welcomed her home together.

"Mommy!" The two boys threw themselves into her arms and asked in a concerned tone, "Why did you come back so late? All of us are already sleepy."

Both of them yawned with their eyes about to close. Roxanne tousled their hair. "I'm sorry for letting all of you wait that long." Raising her gaze, she wanted to thank Madilyn. Sensing what she was about to say, Madilyn waved her hands.

“Don’t worry about it. Both of them are my godsons after all. As for you, have you had your dinner yet? It’s already so late!” Roxanne shook her head. “I didn’t manage to eat, as I was caught up with work.” She had lost track of time while treating Alfred and discussing the supply of medicine with Jonathan. However, now that Roxanne had reminded her of it, she began to feel her stomach growling. Madilyn gave her an annoyed look.

“I knew this would happen whenever you’re busy. Therefore, I set aside a portion of dinner. You should quickly have some.” The boys, too, urged her to eat as they herded her to the dining table.noveldrama

Warmed by their gesture, Roxanne took a few bites while Madilyn and the kids stayed by her side. When she saw that Roxanne was almost done with her food, Madilyn inquired, “Considering how late you came back today, is the patient’s condition serious? How is the progress?” Roxanne nodded with a smile. “It is. Nonetheless, I’m confident of curing him still.”

On top of that, I’ll also be able to solve the supply issue at the research institute. With that thought in mind, Roxanne’s mood improved dramatically. Madilyn, too, had just as much faith. “Since you’re confident in doing so, I trust that you’ll definitely be able to cure him!”

Chapter 44

After some idle chatter, Madilyn took her leave as it was already late.

In the meantime, the boys followed Roxanne around.

After tidying up the room for a bit, she finally had time for them.

“Did you enjoy yourselves at kindergarten today? Did you get into fights with your friends?”

After recalling the events of the day, the boys responded with a forceful nod. “We had a good time. When school was over, they even gave us a lot of snacks!”

Roxanne couldn’t help but smile. “It seems both of you are really popular.”

Benny nodded earnestly before glancing in Archie’s direction. “In fact, there’s a girl today who declared that she wants to marry Archie when she grows up!”

“Really?” Roxanne gave her son an amused look.

Briefly stunned, Archie threw his brother a glance before blushing all the way to his ears. “Yes, but I didn’t agree to it.”

Pinching his ear, Benny made a face at Archie.

When she saw how the boys were fooling around, Roxanne beamed with satisfaction.

Even though it was already late, the boys clung to her and related to her everything that happened in kindergarten.

Most of the time, Benny would have a whole lot to say while Archie would summarize his words. noveldrama

As for Roxanne, she would listen intently and let out the occasional laugh when she saw how cute they were.

When she finally checked the time, it was almost ten.

"Time for bed. You still have school tomorrow," she coaxed the children, putting on a serious expression

Complying obediently, both of them went upstairs to sleep.

The next morning, Roxanne dropped them off at the kindergarten before heading to the research institute

Once the morning meeting was over, she came out of the conference room together with Colby.

"How did it go yesterday? Did you manage to treat Old Mr. Queen's sickness?" Colby inquired.

Roxanne nodded slightly. Although his condition appears to be serious and complex treatment is needed, it's still possible to cure him but it will take quite a bit of time. As I'll be going over often the next few days, you'll have to hold the fort around here for the time being."

Filled with admiration, Colby teased, "I'm amazed you're able to treat a sickness that has baffled all the famous doctors sought out by the Queen family. Dr. Jarvis, your words make us feel ashamed of ourselves!"

Even though he was joking, there was truth to his words. After all, he was one of the doctors who was also stumped by Alfred's condition.

Roxanne downplayed the matter with a smile. "It just happens to fall into my area of specialty."

When he saw the nonchalant look on her face, Colby's heart throbbed.

"By the way, even though Old Mr. Queen hasn't fully recovered, the Queen family has agreed to supply us with the medicine, and we'll likely be able to sign the contract today. In fact, the first batch is provided free of charge. This

not only solves our urgent shortage, but we will also not have to worry about supply anymore.”

Roxanne’s face lit up at the thought of having secured the supply of medicine.

Colby cocked his brow in surprise. “Really? The Queen family are actually willing to sign a contract with us even though Old Mr. Queen has just regained consciousness?”

Roxanne nodded with a grin.

Upon her confirmation, Colby praised, “It’s clear that they have been blown away by your medical skills. You truly are amazing.”

Roxanne chuckled casually. “I’m just doing what I can. Hopefully, there will not be any untoward developments when it comes to Old Mr. Queen’s condition.”

“With you running the show, I’m sure everything will be fine,” Colby answered with conviction.

Chapter 45

Chapter 45 Cognizant that Madilyn had helped her pick up the boys two days in a row, Roxanne planned to pick them up herself that day. Thus, she headed to the Queen residence in the afternoon after finishing her work in the morning. After she arrived, she examined Alfred to make sure there weren’t any complications before continuing his treatment by inserting needles. While waiting for the time to remove the needles, Jonathan approached with a document in hand. “Dr. Jarvis, here’s the contract I’ve prepared. If you’re fine with the terms, you can just sign on it.” Roxanne wasn’t surprised, as that was what they discussed the night before. After going through the document in detail, she placed her signature at the bottom. With the contract signed, Jonathan’s attitude toward her grew warmer. “From now on, we have become partners. Nevertheless, we’ll still need your help with regards to Grandpa’s condition.” Roxanne nodded in acknowledgment. “That’s the least I can do.” After a brief chat, Roxanne looked at the time and extracted the needles from Alfred’s body.

Even though she had tried her best to rush, school had already ended for the boys by the time she finished packing. noveldrama

Taking her leave quickly, Roxanne drove to pick them up. Along the way, she wondered if they would be worried since she didn’t inform them that she would be late. By the time she arrived, all the students were gone, leaving behind an empty kindergarten. Upon scanning the surroundings, Roxanne saw the two

boys sitting on a small bench in the field, but there was no sign of any teachers at all. As a result, she hurried up to them anxiously. “Mommy!” the boys ran in her direction the instant they saw her, Hugging them, she knelt down to stroke their faces. “I’m sorry. I was busy and lost track of time.” Archie gave her an understanding shake of his head. “It’s all right. We’re safe in the kindergarten. Plus, there’s a teacher here with us. There’s no need for you to be worried.”

Benny, too, gave a corresponding nod. Roxanne gave them a confused look. “A teacher?” Archie pointed at the corner of the field. Trailing the trajectory of his finger, Roxanne saw a teacher by the slide. With a warm smile on her face, she was kneeling on the ground while speaking to a little girl. Looking adorable in her kindergarten uniform, the girl had her hands tensely placed on her knees while sitting in an upright position. At the same time, she was staring intently in their direction. The moment she recognized the girl, Roxanne was stunned. If memory serves me right, that’s clearly Lucian’s daughter. Is she studying here too? Initially, Estella was just watching Archie and Benny. However, the moment she saw Roxanne, her eyes lit up. Realizing that Roxanne was looking at her, her lips curled up in delight as she attempted to greet the former. But the very next second, Roxanne looked away, causing Estella’s smile to fade as she gave them a dejected stare. She obviously recognizes me but chooses to ignore me. “Mommy, what’s wrong? Are you tired from work?” Archie shook Roxanne’s hand when he noticed her looking distracted. Regaining her senses, Roxanne replied with a grin, “Not at all.” With that, Benny happily grabbed her hands and exclaimed, “In that case, let’s go home!”

Chapter 46

Chapter 46 Roxanne gave him a noncommittal nod, before leading the boys over to greet the teacher. Just before she left, her gaze subconsciously fell upon Estella again. When she saw that the three of them were about to go, Estella stood up anxiously while staring intently at them. Worried that she would fall, the teacher quickly held onto her. After a brief hesitation, Roxanne couldn’t help inquiring out of concern. “Is she” Well aware of what she was about to ask, the boys answered right away, “Mommy, she’s a student here too. In fact, she’s in the same class as we are. Since her daddy and mommy have yet to pick her up, she was waiting together with us.”

Nodding in acknowledgment, Roxanne’s heart melted slightly at the sight of Estella. noveldrama

Nevertheless, she didn't intend to stay, for it will either be Lucian or Aubree who would be picking Estella up soon, neither of whom she had any intention of seeing again. However, Estella was visibly reluctant to see her go. Not wanting to disappoint her, Roxanne stroked Estella's head with a smile. "Your parents will be here soon. As I need to go first, you must obey the teacher and wait together with her, all right?" Just as Roxanne was about to leave, Estella grabbed her sleeve tightly. Halted by Estella's reaction, Roxanne lowered her gaze and saw the former shaking her head with slightly reddened eyes. The look on Estella's face caused Roxanne to feel so heavy-hearted that she couldn't bring herself to move. When the teacher saw Estella refusing to let Roxanne leave, she sighed in resignation before approaching the latter to explain, "Estella has recently been very close to Archie and Benny. Due to her autistic character, very few students are willing to play with her. But the very first day the brothers came to class, they ended up protecting her. That's why she has grown to rely on both of

them. And now, she's probably scared that they're leaving." After hearing about Estella's situation, Roxanne could feel the discomfort within her intensify. Not only is the little girl mute, but she's also autistic. No wonder the teacher let the boys wait by the side. Unfortunately, the thought of running into Lucian and Aubree caused Roxanne to feel hesitant about staying behind. Despite the teacher's coaxing, Estella refused to let Roxanne go no matter what. After a while, the teacher appealed, "Ms. Jarvis, are you rushing for time? If not, shall we chat a little? Ever since Archie and Benny came to school, I have yet to speak to you about their progress." It was clear to Roxanne that the teacher was just getting her to wait with Estella under the pretext of discussing the boys' performance in school. At the same time, Estella, too, threw her a hopeful gaze. Faced with the look in Estella's eyes, Roxanne, who was about to decline, couldn't bring herself to say it. In the end, she swallowed her words and nodded at the teacher. In response, Estella's eyes glistened as she discreetly leaned into Roxanne while holding the latter's sleeve. From afar, it looked as if she was leaning in Roxanne's arms. Sensing the slight movement, Roxanne didn't stop her nor show her any attention. Instead, she discussed the boys' affairs with the teacher as if she didn't realize anything.

Chapter 47

Chapter 47 "I remember that you came back from overseas together with Archie and Benny. Considering that they grew up overseas, I'm surprised at how well they speak Chanaean." Since the chat was just an excuse, the

teacher talked about trivial matters, as Archie and Benny's performances in class were so impressive that there was nothing to complain about. Roxanne nodded with a smile. "That's because there were still many Chanaeans around to converse with them." Meanwhile, the boys didn't say a word and merely smiled obediently. They would simply nod at whatever their mother said. Seeing how well-behaved they were, the teacher couldn't help but gush in admiration. "Other than Chanaean and Ustranasion, they seem to be able to speak Ferropenian too, don't they?" "Mmm-hmm, they probably picked it up from my colleagues overseas." Roxanne caressed the boys' hair. Impressed, the teacher exclaimed, "I must say, they are exceptionally smart to not only have mastered three languages at such a young age but also the elementary school curriculum too. Coupled with their exquisite features, you really do have exceptional children!"

Roxanne beamed with pride at the praise. "You flatter us. They're just ordinary children who enjoy learning."

While they were chatting, Roxanne continued to be vigilant about whether someone was coming to pick Estella up. Upon checking the time, she realized that a long while had passed. Filled with sudden concern, she asked, "By the way, when will the girl's parents arrive?" The teacher looked at her watch and answered, "Probably soon." After nodding in response, Roxanne lowered her gaze at Estella. The latter was still standing beside her while maintaining her grip on Roxanne's sleeve as if she was fearful of Roxanne leaving.

Resigning herself to the fact that she couldn't leave, Roxanne turned to the boys. "Can you boys go to the car first and wait for me there?" Nodding obediently, noveldrama

both of them walked to the kindergarten's entrance. Once she saw them get into the car, Roxanne recovered her gaze.

It was prudent to keep the boys out of the way since she couldn't avoid meeting those two. At the kindergarten entrance, Archie and Benny got into the car one after another before looking out the window. "Why do you think Mommy asked us to come out here?" Benny wondered while holding his chin. Archie put their schoolbags away before joining his brother at the window. "Because Daddy is about to arrive." For some strange reason, Mommy doesn't want us to meet Daddy. However, she isn't aware that we have discovered Daddy's true identity and even know what he looks like. As the boys continued to stare outside, a Rolls-Royce dramatically pulled up by the street. A towering man in a long-sleeved shirt and pants alighted from it. Ever since the car appeared, Benny monitored it closely. When the man came out of the car, he locked his gaze on the man and gave Archie a nudge. "Archie,

look. Can that be Daddy?" After turning his head to glance at the man, Archie nodded with conviction. Without a doubt, that's the man I saw on the internet! W Upon receiving Archie's confirmation, Benny couldn't help but praise aloud, "Daddy looks a lot more dashing in real life compared to the picture." Just as he spoke, Archie shot him a glare. "Didn't I tell you that you're not allowed to like him?" With a sullen expression, Archie glared at the man outside as if he was their mortal enemy. This is the man who abandoned Mommy and us! man who After being admonished by his brother, Benny zipped his mouth sheepishly.

Chapter 48

Chapter 48 Meanwhile. Lucian didn't notice the boys in the car as he strode into the kindergarten, well aware that he was late. The moment he stepped in, he saw two figures by the slide together with Estella, who had squeezed herself into Roxanne's arms by then. "Mr. Farwell, you're here!" the teacher greeted respectfully when she saw Lucian. Lucian nodded in acknowledgment as he walked up to them. After throwing his daughter a glance, he stared coldly at Roxanne. "Why are you here?" Sensing his hostility, Roxanne knitted her brows in confusion. The teacher then looked at them in surprise, "Do you know each other?" Just a while ago, she had assumed that Roxanne didn't know Estella. noveldrama

However, considering how dependent Estella was on Roxanne, she figured that it wasn't such a surprise at all.

After nodding at the teacher without answering the question, Roxanne shifted her attention toward Lucian. "I came here to pick my boys up. It was your daughter who refused to let go of my clothes, forcing me to stay here with her." The moment he heard the words "your daughter" roll off her tongue, Lucian's expression darkened. How can she say such a thing in front of her own daughter? What a heartless woman! Unaware of what she had said wrong, Roxanne saw a sudden change in Lucian's expression as he turned his attention to Estella. "Come here." Lucian reached out his hand grimly. After glancing at Lucian's outstretched hand, Estella raised her gaze and gave Roxanne a reluctant and pitiful look. Just when I finally got the chance to be with her, why does Daddy have to be so fierce? As the seconds ticked by, Lucian's expression turned darker when Estella refused to let go of Roxanne.

In the end, Roxanne lowered her gaze and tousled Estella's hair before reassuring her, "Your daddy is here to pick you up, and I have to go too. So, you should go home with him now." After that, Roxanne stood back up,

planning to leave the instant Estella released her grip. In spite of that, Estella adamantly refused regardless of how gloomy Lucian looked. Instead, she continued to give Roxanne a pleading look. For some inexplicable reason, she loved staying by Roxanne's side, to the extent of wanting to follow the latter home. As the tension in the air began to build, the teacher felt the need to defuse the situation. Before she could, she saw Lucian making his move all of a sudden. Walking up to Estella, Lucian asserted in an authoritative voice, "Estella Farwell, let go and come home with me." Shaken by his tone, the little girl ended up tightening her grip on Roxanne and leaning closer to her by reflex. As she was already standing by the edge of the slide, she lost her balance while shifting her legs without looking. With her heart skipping a beat, Roxanne managed to stop Estella from falling by reaching out to catch her. Subsequently, Estella refused to let Roxanne go, leaving the latter with no choice but to hug her in case she fell again. Having calmed her down, Roxanne couldn't help but frown. "Lucian, if you're upset with me, you should just vent your frustrations at me instead of the child." Even though Lucian had seen the same event unfold, he didn't manage to get to Estella in time. Therefore, he retorted upon hearing Roxanne's comments, "How is the way I treat my daughter any of your business? Don't think that just because she likes you, it gives you the right to get involved." The tension between them felt as if it could explode at any moment. In response to his mocking tone, Roxanne's expression darkened as an inexplicable sense of anger swelled within her.

Chapter 49

Chapter 49 After Roxanne's anger receded, she realized how funny the situation was. Indeed, I don't have any rights. In his eyes, I never had any. She dropped her gaze to the floor, concealing the self-deprecation in them. Without saying anything, she forced herself to remove Estella's grip from her sleeve. Estella's little fingers wanted to reach for her again, but Roxanne grabbed it mid-air. "Archie and Benny are still waiting for me in the car. I have to go to them. Be a good girl and go with your dad." Roxanne ruffled Estella's head gently and released the latter's hand. With a hurried farewell to the teacher, Roxanne turned on her heels and rushed out the front door without another glance back. Back in the car, Archie and Benny were sitting upright. When they saw Roxanne getting in the car, they asked innocently, "Mommy, what's wrong?" Roxanne sucked in a deep breath before plastering a forced smile. "Nothing. Let's go home."

She started up the car and pulled away from the kindergarten. noveldrama

Meanwhile, Lucian was still rooted in place. Shooting a sharp gaze at the teacher, he asked, "Are her sons attending here too?" The teacher didn't know what went on between the two parents but could sense the tension coming off of Lucian. Feeling the pressure, the teacher answered hesitantly, "Yeah. Ms. Jarvis' twins attend our kindergarten-" Before the teacher could finish, he interrupted coldly, "When did they start?" "Just... a few days ago," the teacher replied carefully. "Inform the head of the kindergarten to remove the boys from the list. If you don't do as I ask, Farwell Group won't be investing in this kindergarten anymore." Lucian's expression turned hostile. Not allowing the teacher the time to digest his words, he carried Estella into his arms and strode to

the front door. Upon arriving at the parking lot, Lucian noticed the car parked beside his was already gone. Withdrawing his gaze, he carried Estella into the car without a pause in his step. The minute he got into the car, Estella struggled violently in his arms. Lucian loosened his grip on her, letting her crawl to the other side of the seat. Estella took out her notebook angrily and scribbled something on it with force. A while later, her hand stopped. Estella was furious this time as she turned her notebook around and sat there glaring at Lucian instead of crawling over to him to yank on his sleeve for his attention. Lucian sighed silently and turned his head over to peer at Estella with a frown. The entire length of the paper only had one sentence scribbled across it: Why are you not letting Archie and Benny come to kindergarten? Seeing Lucian finally turn his attention to her, Estella angrily shoved the notebook closer to his face. The crease between Lucian's brows deepened at her actions. He withdrew his gaze and said, "No particular reason. I did it because I could and wanted to. That's the answer I can give if you insist on one." Upon finishing his sentence, he heard movement coming from the seat beside him. He turned and saw Estella angrily throw her notebook to the side and clung to the door. She even leaned her head out of the window. Despite not saying anything, her whole body was exuding an "I- don't-want-to-look-at-you" vibe. Lucian arched his brow at her body language. "You getting mad isn't going to change my mind." Estella furiously snapped her head to him and shot him a death glare. Daddy is the worst! I hate Daddy the most! I like the beautiful Ms. Jarvis and Archie and Benny. Why did Daddy have to fight with her and even forbade Archie and Benny to attend kindergarten? Estella was crestfallen at the thought of never being able to see Archie and Benny at the kindergarten anymore. Daddy is too unreasonable! I don't want to like him anymore!

Chapter 50

Chapter 50 Estella sulked the whole way back. She ignored Lucian who was trailing after her and dashed up the stairs to her room without one glance back at him. After slamming the door, she even locked the door angrily. Catalina was standing at the door when the father and daughter arrived, so she noticed Estella's angry mood. When she shifted her gaze to the expressionless Lucian walking behind Estella, she knew they were once again at odds with each other. "Mr. Farwell, what is Ms. Estella angry about?" Hearing the loud slamming from the door upstairs, Catalina turned to Lucian with a concerned look. Recalling the reason Estella got mad at him, Lucian answered impassively, "Nothing. She's just throwing a tantrum. Look after her." Catalina nodded habitually, "Yes, sir."

I wonder why Ms. Estella would lose her temper with Mr. Farwell when she was rarely expressive. Moreover, Mr. Farwell isn't good at coaxing others. All in all, we need a lady of the house.

Estella was only mad at Lucian, so she obediently opened her door when Catalina knocked on it. "Ms. Estella, come and have something to eat." Catalina carried a tray of Estella's favorite food into her room. Alas, Estella didn't have an appetite. After taking two bites of the food, she pushed the plate away and sat gloomily by the desk. Catalina's heart ached for the little girl. However, she knew this was something between father and daughter, so she wasn't in any position to give any advice. She took the food back to the kitchen and came back to help Estella shower after a few hours later. After cleaning up the bathroom, Catalina saw Estella lying on her stomach on her bed, staring at the novel drama

laptop in front of her with a hardened look. She wondered what the little girl was doing tapping on the keyboard so seriously. However, Catalina was used to Estella tapping away on the keyboard, so she silently left the room after cleaning up without asking anything. Meanwhile, Roxanne was stuck in a traffic jam on her way back with Archie and Benny. Archie and Benny silently sat in the back seat, occasionally exchanging glances with each other, all the while studying their mom's expression through the rearview mirror. They didn't know what happened at the kindergarten earlier. Even though Roxanne didn't tell them anything, they noticed that she was in a bad mood. "Mommy, we made some cards at the kindergarten today! The teacher had us make it for the people we love, so Archie and I made one for you!" Benny secretly cast a glance at Archie, hinting at him to cheer their mother up. Archie nodded with understanding. "Mommy, do you want to know what we wrote?" Roxanne knew they were trying to lift her mood, so she nodded with a smile. "Sure. What did you guys write?" Sounds of someone shuffling through the bag came from the back, then Benny's emotional voice read loudly, "The person I

love the most is Mommy! My mommy is an amazing doctor! Even though she's always busy with work, my brother and I know she loves us the most! We think Mommy is a great person for saving lives every day. Sometimes, we would feel bad for her and wish she won't get too busy and tire herself out. I hope Mommy will stay beautiful forever!" Roxanne couldn't keep her giggle in. "It's so long. It was no wonder your teacher would tell me you guys excelled in Chanaean. What about you, Archie?" Archie sat up straight and began reading aloud, "My mommy is an amazing doctor. Saving lives is a difficult job, and so is taking care of my brother and me. I want to be like her when I grow up. I wish I can grow up quickly and earn money for my family, so Mommy doesn't have to be so tired all the time." Roxanne's heart melted into a puddle at their heartfelt confessions. She had thrown out everything that happened at the kindergarten earlier out of her mind. "Thank you, boys." The kids exchanged glances and released a relieved breath simultaneously when they noticed her mood had brightened.

Chapter 51

Chapter 51 The next day was a weekend, so the kids didn't have to go to kindergarten. Roxanne planned to take the boys to the research institute with her. Right after she packed everything and was about to head out the door, she heard the doorbell ring. Thinking it was a visit from Madilyn, Roxanne got up and went to get the door. Her brows furrowed with confusion when she saw the person standing at the door. "Essie? What are you doing here?" Roxanne instinctively swept her gaze at the surrounding, thinking Lucian would be standing and waiting somewhere within sight. Yet, shockingly, she didn't see anyone else but Estella outside her door. Roxanne decided to focus her attention back on Estella. She bent down to the little girl's eye level and asked, "Estella, tell me how you got here? Did your daddy send you?" Judging from Lucian's attitude at the kindergarten yesterday, I highly doubt he'll let Essie meet me, but there's no other possibility for now.

Estella was wearing a white dress and carried a small backpack on her back. It was the one she brought to kindergarten the day before. Hearing Roxanne's question, Estella reached for the notebook in her backpack, flipped it open, then started writing something. noveldrama

She wrote: I came here myself. Roxanne was stunned. "Yourself? How did you find your way here?" Estella scribbled across the page: I took a cab here. Roxanne was still suspicious, but after checking her surroundings a few times, she finally believed Estella's words. So Lucian's daughter took the cab in the

early morning all by herself to my house. This situation is giving me a headache. She suppressed the mix of feelings in her heart and asked tenderly, "Is there a reason you're

looking for me?" The girl answered in writing: I wanted to be friends with Archie and Benny, so I came to play with them. Is that okay? Estella raised her notebook and gazed at Roxanne with anticipation. Just for this reason? Roxanne didn't know how to answer her at that moment. Yesterday, the boys' teacher did tell me Estella liked following the boys around. However, I never thought she'll be bold enough to take a cab to my house alone just so she can play with them. Moreover, she can't speak. If she met some bad people on the way here... Roxanne didn't dare to think about what would happen.

"Mommy?" Archie and Benny had been waiting inside for a while and didn't see Roxanne come back in, so they came out to have a look. When they saw the little girl at their front door, they had the same reaction as Roxanne. "What ... are you doing here?" Estella was about to scribble in her notebook when Roxanne explained on her behalf, "Essie just wanted to play with you guys." Archie looked around at Roxanne's explanation, thinking he would see his dad, but there wasn't an adult man anywhere. "How did she get here?" Archie flitted his gaze to Roxanne. Roxanne replied resignedly, "She took a cab here alone." Even I have a hard time believing the words that just came out of my mouth. However, the two boys accepted the truth readily.

Benny looked at Estella with a puzzled look. "You came here yourself? Did you run away from home again?" If I remember it correctly, the first time we met Essie was when she ran away from home. On the contrary, Estella didn't think her behavior was strange and nodded. Seeing her calm demeanor, the boys exchanged a look speechlessly.

Why does this daughter that Daddy raised keep running away from home? More importantly, why is she always coming to our house? At the same time, Lucian was working in the Farwell Group CEO's office when suddenly his private phone started ringing. The second the call connected, the butler's voice came through the phone urgently. "Mr. Farwell, Ms. Estella is missing again."

Chapter 52

Chapter 52 Lucian's hands paused. "I'm coming back now." Hanging up the phone, he drove back to the Farwell residence. "What happened? There's so many of you watching her, so how can she go missing?" Lucian questioned once he stepped foot in the mansion. In the living room, all the household staff

stood nervously. Lucian's anger was burning so brightly that they didn't dare to lift their heads. The butler answered cautiously, "We're not sure. Ms. Estella had gone back to her room after having breakfast this morning. When Catalina went upstairs a few hours later, she couldn't find Ms. Estella anywhere." Lucian's brows furrowed with displeasure. "What about the surveillance cameras?" The butler responded with a defeated look on his face, "Mr. Farwell, the surveillance cameras... we're not sure when they turned off. Coincidentally, there's no recording of this morning." Hearing that, Lucian's expression had darkened tremendously. The living room fell into dead silence. noveldrama

The staff all bowed their heads with dread, hunching their shoulders, making themselves as small as possible. They even hoped they could hide within the crack of the tiles. Who could've thought we would lose Ms. Estella twice in such a short period. Furthermore, she slipped away right under our noses. If anything happens to Ms. Estella, Mr. Farwell will fire us. Lucian looked up and saw the bodyguards he sent to protect Estella were among the staff. The sight just fueled his rage. "What are you guys standing there for? Get moving and search for her! If you can't find her, then all of you are fired." The bodyguards immediately obliged and strode out of the mansion urgently without a backward glance. Distress filled Roxanne as she looked at the little girl in front of her. It's getting late. I should be taking the boys to the research institute, but Estella's sudden

appearance has messed up my plan. Furthermore, she took a cab here by herself. I can't exactly send her back on her own. After a short silence, Roxanne huffed out a resigned sigh as she stood to let Estella into the house. "Come on in." Estella's eyes sparkled as she nodded fervently and followed Roxanne into the mansion. "Have you had breakfast?" Roxanne asked. Estella sat on the couch and nodded obediently. Roxanne and the boys took a seat beside Estella. After a brief hesitation, Roxanne asked. "Can you tell me if you're really here to play with Archie and Benny? Or are you running away from home like last time? Does your family know you're here?" Estella tilted her head to the side and scribbled on the notebook. Archie's and Benny's faces were staid. "Do you know someone can kidnap you if you meet a bad person when you take the cab? Didn't our teacher teach us not to leave the house alone?" By the time they finished speaking, Estella had already done writing and showed the notebook to them. She wrote a sentence across the blank page: I want to meet Ms. Jarvis, Archie, and Benny. Roxanne frowned. "You... you ran away from home because of us?" Estella nodded her head firmly before she started to write in her notebook again. She scribbled: Like. Roxanne was confused this time. Like? Like what? "You like us?" Archie

guessed. Estella nodded again. Roxanne's heart softened at Estella's admission. This little girl is so sweet. Honestly, I really like her. Even though she is Lucian's child with another woman, I can't bring myself to hate such an obedient child after getting to know her for the past few days. However, it's still too dangerous for her to do what she did.

"Thank you for liking us, but it's wrong for a child to run away from home. Your dad must be worried sick. Is it okay if I inform him?" After contemplating, Roxanne asked for Estella's opinion softly. Even though I really don't want to have any contact with Lucian, it's a fact that his child is with me. As a parent, I knew he must be terribly worried. Estella cast her eyes downward, hiding the unwillingness that rose within her. Daddy is a big meanie. The beautiful Ms. Jarvis, Archie, and Benny are all so good to me, but Daddy doesn't let me talk to them. What am I going to do? Ms. Jarvis' voice is so gentle. A few seconds later, Estella finally nodded obediently.

Chapter 53

Roxanne looked up Lucian's number from her contact list.

She had saved it only because she didn't want to miss his call back when Estella had wandered off from home.

It was now that the woman remembered she had saved his contact name as just "A."

After changing it to his actual name, Roxanne dialed the number.

Lucian was about to head out and look for Estella on his own when his phone rang.

Seeing the name on his screen, his eyes narrowed as he answered the call.

"It's me." Roxanne's voice came from across the line.

Lucian scoffed internally at the thought of how she had escaped his previous antics. "What do you want?" he asked in the same frigid tone the woman used.

Roxanne glanced at the little girl beside her. What's with that tone? I would've hung up right away if it weren't for the child!

"Essie came looking for me first thing in the morning. Come and get her if you're free. Or you can tell me your address, and I'll take her there."

Upon hearing that, Lucian furrowed his brows slightly. "Give me your address."

"32, Durwest Garden."

The man hung up right after that.

Roxanne breathed an internal sigh of relief as she watched her screen turn black. She turned toward the little girl standing beside her, saying, "Your daddy's coming over to pick you up. Be a good girl and go home with him, okay?"

Estella nodded but secretly began pondering over her next move.

She had finally gotten the chance to be with this pretty lady and didn't want to have to leave so soon.

But Daddy's on his way here. What should I do to be able to stay

Unfortunately, Archie saw through her intentions immediately and crossed his arms. "Your daddy hates my mommy, so he's definitely not going to let you stay. I suggest you give up on the idea."

Estella's gaze darkened as she heard that.

It's true. Daddy doesn't like her. He even argues with her in front of me.

But I like Ms. Jarvis!

The girl had left home early this morning just to see Roxanne.

She didn't know why, but she just liked this woman so much.

The two hadn't spent much time together, but Estella adored Roxanne so much more compared to Catalina, her everyday caretaker.

That's right! The child's eyes lit up again.

She had brought gifts for Roxanne and the two boys when she left home this morning.
noveldrama

Remembering that, she swiftly jumped off the couch and rummaged through her little backpack. Then, she took out a tiny yet exquisite crystal ball and held it in front of Roxanne with two hands.

The woman stared at her in puzzlement.

Estella took another step forward while continuing to hold the gift, her eyes full of anticipation.

Roxanne slowly took the crystal ball from her. "Is this... for me?"

Estella nodded and wrote in her notebook: For you. I like you!

Roxanne couldn't help but laugh. "Thank you, Essie. I like you a lot too," she responded, caressing the girl's head.

Archie and Benny hadn't expected the little girl to bring gifts, and they, too, jumped off the couch. "You gave Mommy a gift? What about us? Do we get any too?"

Estella nodded with a smile and dug around in her backpack again. Soon, she took out two racecar figurines and trotted over to the boys.

Archie's and Benny's eyes twinkled instantly.

They had always enjoyed playing with these since they were young, and Roxanne would often buy such toys for them.

In fact, they had had their eyes on these two particular car models for a while now, but they hadn't come up with a good reason to ask their mother to buy them. These figurines were also a little expensive.

And yet, Estella had bought them.

The boys could easily confirm that these figurines were genuine.

Chapter 54

Given how well-raised the boys were, they shook their heads despite liking the toys, knowing how expensive these things were. "We can't accept these. They're too expensive."

Estella tilted her head in confusion before placing the toys next to them and scribbling on her notebook again: For you. Thank. Help.

Benny peered at her writing in bewilderment.

She can't write a complete sentence. What is she trying to say?

Archie was initially perplexed as well, but realization quickly dawned on him. "Are you trying to say you're thanking us for our help that day?"

Nodding fervently, Estella put the book down and held the car figurines in front of them once more.

Roxanne thought back to what her sons' kindergarten teacher had told her about Archie and Benny having protected Estella.

I remember the teacher mentioning it. What on earth could've happened between mere children, though?

But judging from Essie's behavior, whatever Archie and Benny did for her seems like a really big deal to her. noveldrama

"What happened that day?" Roxanne couldn't help but ask.

"Essie got hurt after another student pushed her," explained Archie. "Benny and I got that student to apologize to Essie, and then we took Essie to the school nurse."

Roxanne nodded in enlightenment.

"Can we accept these gifts, Mommy?" Archie felt sorry to see the little girl continue to hold the toys in her hand.

Roxanne chuckled. "Okay. Give her something of yours in return."

The boys finally took the toy cars from Estella, not forgetting to express their gratitude. "Thanks, Essie! Wait for us here, okay? We'll get you some gifts too!"

Then, they scurried upstairs and began searching their room for something they could give the little girl in return.

Now, only Roxanne and Estella remained inside the living room.

Seeing how obedient the girl looked. Roxanne couldn't resist showing her concern. "Does your hand still hurt?"

Upon hearing that, Estella walked toward Roxanne and raised her hand, showing the injury she had received that day.

There was a visible bruise on the girl's pale-colored hand, and that tugged at Roxanne's heartstrings.

The woman felt relieved only after examining the bruise closely and making sure there were no internal injuries. "Did you use any ointment?"

Estella stilled for a few seconds. Then, she shook her head innocently after seeing how worried Roxanne looked.

That made Roxanne's heart ache even more.

There's no way Lucian would've missed such an obvious bruise, but he didn't give her any ointment?

Then, the woman thought of how Estella would run away from home every now and then.

Lucian, you're a terrible excuse for a father!

Not aware that she had inadvertently made her father look bad, Estella stared at the woman before her eagerly.

If I told her I haven't used any ointment, would she help me?

Noticing the child's gaze, Roxanne returned to her senses and ran her fingers over the bruise. "Wait for me here. I'll be back with a medical kit," she cooed.

Estella nodded excitedly, her eyes sparkling.

Roxanne's heart melted at the sight, and she got up to retrieve a medical kit before carefully treating the girl's bruise.

The woman was a doctor, after all, so she would naturally be more careful and gentler.

"Does it hurt?" she asked, rubbing some ointment on the girl while glancing at her in concern.

Shaking her head, Estella gazed down at her hand, observing how Roxanne tended to her.

Ms. Jarvis' hands are so pretty too.

And she's so much gentler than Daddy. I don't feel any pain at all.

I like her even more now!

Chapter 55

After Roxanne was done tending to Estella, Archie and Benny returned downstairs while carrying Estella's gifts.

They each had a strange-looking stuffed toy in their hands and walked up to the little girl. "We bought these with our pocket money. You can have them."

The dolls looked adorable yet hideous at the same time and didn't seem to suit Estella at all.

However, this was the girl's first time receiving gifts from peers her age whom she liked very much. Thus, she joyously accepted the stuffed toys and hugged them more tightly than she did her previous doll.

After a long while, Estella finally put the toys down and scribbled a massive word of thanks on her notebook, showing her writing to Archie and Benny.

This was the boys' first time seeing her beam like that.

They used to avoid her because she was a child their father had with another woman.

But after they saw how adorable she looked, their hearts skipped a beat as they exchanged glances and scratched their heads sheepishly.

She's such a cute half-sister!

I don't want to hate her anymore.

Meanwhile, Roxanne's heart softened as she saw the three children interacting with each other. "Why don't you play with Essie for a while?" she suggested to her sons while stroking Estella's

head. "I have to call the research institute and let them know I'll only be heading over a bit later. I just applied some ointment on Essie's hand, so be careful."

The boys nodded obediently.

Then, Roxanne went upstairs to make the phone call.

"Shall we play some Lego?" The boys didn't know what girls enjoyed playing, so they could only invite her to play with their usual toys.

Even so, a bright-eyed Estella readily nodded in agreement.

I was right to come here today. I got to have Ms. Jarvis tend to my wound, and Archie and Benny are now asking me to play with them!

Both Archie and Benny's intelligence far exceeded that of a normal child, so Roxanne would buy them Legos for adults, which could usually be stacked into huge models. Their current project was about halfway done.

"If you don't know how to do this, you can watch us first," Archie said kindly.

Estella nodded and solemnly watched them connect several Lego bricks. It wasn't long until she

picked up a few pieces and began doing the same. noveldrama

Seeing that, Archie and Benny stopped and prepared to guide her, only to realize that the girl seemed to be catching on quickly,

Soon, she began to match their speed – at a high level of accuracy too:

The boys were dumbfounded momentarily.

Their mother had bought them these because they were highly intelligent, but now, Estella was doing as well as they were.

Is it because we share the same father?

Just as astonishment filled them, the doorbell to the mansion suddenly rang.

The boys glanced at one another as they thought of the same person.

“I’ll go get the door. Keep Essie company,” Archie instructed while getting up and heading toward the entrance.

He then opened the door to see a tall man dressed in an elegant suit – the man who was his father in name.

“Hello,” Archie greeted politely, albeit with a hint of detachment.

A frosty-looking Lucian had thought it was Roxanne who would open the door for him, and he frowned upon realizing it was a child.

He must be Roxanne’s kid.

For some reason, the boy seemed to harbor some feelings of enmity toward him.

“Estella’s here with us. Come on in.” Archie shot the man a glance before turning around and walking back into the house coolly

Chapter 56

Lucian gathered his thoughts and followed Archie into the mansion.

As soon as he entered, he spotted Estella sitting on the carpet with her full attention on the Lego bricks before her. There was also a little boy next to her who looked just like the one who had opened the door for him.

Twins, huh?

With a darkened gaze, Lucian looked away from the boys and scanned the rest of the living room instead.

Roxanne was nowhere to be found.

Vas

“Your daddy’s here,” Archie called out to Estella coldly after walking back in, his once-friendly demeanor having vanished completely.

Upon hearing that, Estella stopped whatever she was doing and glanced up at Lucian who stood not far from her.

But right after seeing him, she retracted her gaze and began to write something in her notebook.

Lucian and the boys stared at her.

Both Archie and Benny were reluctant to see her leave, but now that her father had arrived, there was no reason for them to let her stay.

Lucian's browed knitted. He knew what the little girl was about to tell him.

Soon, Estella raised her notebook.

I don't want to go home yet.

As he had expected.

The crease between Lucian's brows deepened as his voice soon became laced with displeasure. "Estella Farwell, you left home without a word. Don't you think you ought to give me an explanation? This is the second time you've run away from home this month. Why on earth did you do it?"

Estella met his eyes stubbornly before looking down to scribble on her notebook again: I like Ms. Jarvis. I like Archie and Benny. I want to be friends with them!

A look of mockery flashed in Lucian's eyes as he read that. "You like them, but have you ever asked them if they like you? You came running to their house like this and disrupted their lives. Don't you know how rude that is?" he asked sternly.

Estella pursed her lips and turned to the two boys carefully.

She knew she would bother them by coming over early in the morning.

But she couldn't help it. She liked them so much, yet her father wouldn't let her play with them.

We've even already exchanged gifts, and they also invited me to play with them. Doesn't that mean they like me too? noveldrama

Benny's heart wavered as he saw the pleading look in Estella's eyes. "She's not bothering us," he chimed in, putting down his Lego. "In fact, we were just playing Lego together until you showed up. It was a lot of fun!"

Estella smiled upon hearing the way Benny stood up for her. Then, she turned back to her father furiously.

Lucian appeared conflicted at the boy's response.

However, Archie quickly leaned over and gave his brother a nudge.

Benny turned to the other boy in a daze, but he immediately came to a realization upon meeting the latter's warning glance.

Right! We can't show this guy how much we like Essie!

Remembering that, Benny hastily shut his mouth, using only his eyes to express his discontent.

Lucian took notice of everything the boys had just done.

Still, he didn't know what they were thinking. Assuming he had frightened them, he fell silent for a moment before softening his expression.

They might be another guy's kids, but they're still young. Lucian knew he shouldn't take his annoyance out on the children.

"In any case, the fact that Essie showed up at your door early in the morning must've caused you some trouble. Thank you for playing with her," he tried his best to state calmly.

The boys nodded icily in response.

Then, the living room fell into silence.

"Where's your mommy?" Lucian asked in frustration a while later, rubbing his temples.

Despite having a daughter, he wasn't particularly good at interacting with children.

Chapter 57

Chapter 57 The boys instantly grew wary at the mention of their mother. "Why are you asking about her?" Archie demanded, glaring at the man like a puppy that could strike anytime. He didn't have much strength, but he was still adamant about putting on a vicious front: Noticing the boys' hostility and caution, Lucian felt curious and amused at the same time but paid no attention to it. "Well, you all watched over Essie twice now, so it's only natural that I give your mother a word of thanks." Archie sighed internally as he heard that, but his expression remained tense. "There's no need for that. My mommy's in the middle of a phone call. She doesn't need your thanks anyway." Then, he dragged Benny back to the carpet and turned to Estella. "Your daddy's here now, so you should go with him. My mommy will be leaving for work soon. She won't have time to keep you company anymore."

Estella, who was initially still jubilant from how the boys backed her up, slowly returned to her senses after hearing that. Although she didn't want to leave, she eventually nodded upon learning that Roxanne had to work.

Archie remained on high alert ever since Lucian mentioned their mother. I don't want him to see Mommy. Seeing the girl agree to go home, he quickly gave Benny a tug before kneeling down to keep all their Lego bricks. Lucian said nothing more, merely watching the three put the toys away. But the more he gazed at them, the weirder it felt. They're all around the same height.

Come to think of it, they're also classmates in kindergarten.

That means they're about the same age too. But taking the timeline into consideration, even if that woman were to birth these twins right after having Essie and getting divorced, the boys shouldn't look too similar to Essie in age. Could it be... that it's because they're boys, so they grow faster?noveldrama

But she also put them in the same grade as Essie. Was that a coincidence too?

A wave of doubt swept through Lucian. Unable to come up with an answer, he shifted his gaze from the three children and observed his surroundings nonchalantly. This was a rented building, but Roxanne had evidently taken the effort to decorate the place. Then, a neat and cozy setting entered Lucian's line of sight. As he looked closer, he noticed that there were many areas adorned with photographs. With his focus now on the picture frames, the man walked over and glanced at them carefully. After a while, he frowned slightly. Every picture contained only Roxanne and the two boys. Despite the three of them smiling warmly, Lucian felt something was amiss. There's no sign of the boys' father in any of these pictures. Or was he the one who took all these pictures? But that can't be. How could he not be in a single photo? Just as Lucian fell into thought, a flurry of rapid footsteps came from the stairs. That jolted the man back to reality, and he put the picture frame down before walking back to the carpet. A panic-stricken Roxanne quickly made her way down the stairs, her expression nothing but frantic.

Chapter 58

Chapter 58 Roxanne had wanted to call the research institute just to mention that she would be heading there a little later today. Yet, the one who answered the phone was Colby, who proceeded to consult her on a project they were rushing the past two days. He had sought her help on some group data before she could even say anything As Roxanne delved into a long discussion with him, she eventually lost track of time. The woman only remembered to end the call after hearing Lucian's voice coming from downstairs. That was when she quickly drew a conclusion, hung up, and hurried down the stairs. She had nearly forgotten that Lucian was showing up soon and that her two sons were still keeping Estella company downstairs. If Lucian were to see her boys... She instantly grew flustered at the thought. noveldrama

Alas, by the time she arrived downstairs to prevent both sides from meeting each other, it was already too late.

As soon as she turned at the corner of the stairs, she saw the man standing next to the carpet, and the three children were almost done keeping their toys by now. Lucian turned around coldly after seemingly having heard her come down. Roxanne's expression stiffened as their eyes met, but she squeezed her palms in an attempt to calm down before greeting the man casually, "You're here." Lucian nodded chillingly but kept his gaze on her. No one could tell what he was thinking deep down. Thinking that he had already figured out who the two boys were, Roxanne couldn't hide her guilt. "So... are you going to take Essie home now, or..." She was terrified that Lucian might want to sit down and talk after finding out the boys' origins.

To her luck, the man merely thought she was hinting him to leave. "We'll be leaving now. Don't worry. I won't stay here much longer," he replied glacially. Then, he turned to look at Estella, who was still slowly keeping the Lego bricks. "Are you done packing up? It's time to go." Estella had deliberately tried to keep her movements slow since she didn't want to leave, but Archie and Benny were so quick that the area was now almost spotless. Upon hearing her father's prompting, the little girl stood up reluctantly and gazed at Roxanne with tears in her eyes. Povonne's chest tightened at the sight, but with Lucian here and whatever happened yesterday, no words of comfort could come out of her mouth. "Thank Ms. Jarvis, then we'll go home," Lucian instructed frigidly. Estella's expression softened more as she heard that, and she stared at Roxanne expectantly, hoping that the woman would invite her to drop by again next time. Yet, after all that waiting, she received not a single word of response. The girl looked down dejectedly. "Ms. Jarvis has to go to work. We shouldn't bother her anymore," Lucian urged. Estella finally picked up her notebook and began to write in it again. It seemed to take her a long time just to write "Thank you." Yet, when she was done scribbling, she raised her notebook at Lucian instead. Daddy, can I come to see Ms. Jarvis again next time? I want to be friends with Archie and Benny. Everyone saw what she had written. Roxanne and her two boys felt sorry for her, but they dared not say anything due to Lucian's sullen expression. Noticing their reactions and seeing how clingy his daughter was with them, Lucian gritted his teeth. "No." Estella's face fell the moment he said that. With her eyes reddening, she pursed her lips and began to cry silently.

Chapter 59

Given that it was Catalina who always tended to Estella, Lucian didn't have much experience dealing with children and thought his daughter was throwing a fit.

A look of panic flashed in the man's eyes as he saw the little girl weep, but ultimately, he glared at her sternly.

"Stop crying," he ordered, thinking he didn't sound harsh at all.

Yet, he sounded especially fierce in the child's ears.

With that, Estella began to cry harder. Tears gushed down her ashen cheeks like a river escaping a dam as she broke into an uncontrollable sob.

Lucian's brows creased at the sight. He didn't know how to react.

Meanwhile, Roxanne couldn't watch how cold the man was toward his weeping daughter any further.

"Is that how you treat a child? She's already in tears, and you're still talking to her like this? Can't you just talk to her nicely?"

Lucian froze at the woman's sudden admonition.

Roxanne quickly strode over to Estella and knelt down to pull the little girl into her arms. "There, there, Essie. Don't cry! You can come over to play whenever you like, okay? I'll give you my number, so just let me know whenever you're thinking of dropping by," she assured tenderly. "Don't cry anymore, okay? You won't look pretty if you do."

Meanwhile, Archie and Benny stood next to them with tissues in their hands. While coaxing Estella, Roxanne reached out for a piece of tissue and wiped the child's tears.

The little girl slowly stopped crying and buried herself in Roxanne's embrace.
noveldrama

Feeling her heart wrench, Roxanne held the child tightly and patted her on the back.

Archie and Benny were livid to see Estella having burst into tears like that, and they turned to Lucian indignantly.

"Why won't you let Essie be friends with us?" Archie couldn't help but question. "We've never been mean to her! For the past two times she ran away from home, my mommy's the one who took care of her really well, and we'd play with her too. She has fun playing with us, and she likes us a lot, so why can't she be friends with us? It's not like we're bad guys!"

Certainly not expecting to be reproached by two little boys, Lucian remained stone-faced, not knowing how to respond.

He didn't want Estella to be friends with them just because he was being considerate, yet they were now blaming him instead.

"Essie doesn't have many friends at school. Only Archie and I like her and let her hang around with us. When someone bullied her at school, we were the ones who helped her. If she can't be friends with us, she'll be all on her own! Is that what you want?" Even Benny couldn't refrain from lashing out at Lucian.

The man felt extremely conflicted to be questioned like that.

Seeing him remain silent, the boys grew even more frustrated, thinking they had hit the nail on the head with their words.

After holding back for a while, Archie eventually said what was on his mind, "We protect her and play with her, but you're being so skeptical about us. What kind of people do you think we are?"

Benny nodded in agreement, and the two stared at Lucian in disappointment.

This man was their father, but he had abandoned their mother before they were even born.

And now, on top of not liking them, he wouldn't even let his daughter be friends with them.

Chapter 60

Lucian was taken aback by the two little boys' angry reaction and knitted his brows.

They outright reprimanded him, yet somehow, he felt sorry for Archie and Benny. He was even overwhelmed by a pang of guilt.

Roxanne, who was carrying Estella in her arms, was dumbfounded when she heard what her two boys said. She, too, felt a prickly pain in her heart.

Thank God they don't know the man standing before them is their biological father. They might be even more upset if they knew the truth...

After keeping quiet for a while, Lucian looked away apologetically. "I'm sorry, but I don't see you two as bad guys. I feel it's inappropriate for your mommy to be in contact with her ex-husband. Your daddy might get upset if he finds out about it."

Roxanne and the two boys froze for a moment when they heard that.

Archie and Benny exchanged glances. Oh, right! Daddy doesn't know our relationship with him yet!

Benny spoke his mind. "It's okay! We don't have a daddy!"

The remarks the two boys made kept rendering Roxanne nonplussed. She wanted to stop her youngest son from spilling the tea, but it was too late.

She could only anxiously wait for Lucian's response.

The man's eyes narrowed with suspicion. There's something fishy about the things he said and the pictures.

"What do you mean by you don't have a daddy? Where's he?" Lucian could not help but ask.

Benny looked at the confused man and explained, "Daddy didn't want us anymore. He abandoned Mommy, and he didn't like us. We grew up living with Mommy, so we have not seen our daddy before."

Upon hearing that, Lucian frowned and gazed into Roxanne's eyes. His eyes flickered with complicated emotions.

So all these years, this woman raised these two kids single-handedly?

He could not imagine the hardship they had to endure.

Besides, the woman had such an impressive résumé when she was abroad.

How on earth did she manage to juggle between the kids and her work? And how could that man abandon them just like this? Damn it!

Roxanne noticed the man was overwhelmed with emotions. She could even predict what he was about to say next.

Before he could say anything, however, Roxanne shut her eyes for a bit to conceal all her emotions and interrupted their conversation nonchalantly, "All right. Essie is not crying anymore, so it's time for you to go home. I should get to work soon, too."

She then released the little girl and gently stroked her head. "Go home with your daddy, all right? You can always come and visit Archie and Benny next time."

Pleased with Roxanne's assurance, the teary-eyed Estella broke into a smile and nodded before returning to her father.

Lucian's eyes darkened for a second. He decided not to ask further since it was clear that Roxanne did not want to continue the topic.

As the little girl with red-rimmed eyes walked toward him, he rubbed her head quietly and toned down his voice. "Say goodbye to Ms. Jarvis."

Estella raised her hand and waved Roxanne and the two boys goodbye.
noveldrama

The mother and sons responded with a hand wave.

Lucian bobbed his head and said to Roxanne, "We're gonna go now."

Before Roxanne could react, Lucian held Estella's hand, turned around, and left.

Chapter 61

After watching Lucian's car depart, Roxanne brought Archie and Benny back to the mansion.

She squatted down and gave them a serious look. The two boys, too, looked at her as they knew their mother wanted to talk to them. noveldrama

"Archie, Benny, listen carefully. Don't ever tell anyone about our family again- especially the fact that you don't have a daddy!" Roxanne felt her head throbbing when she recalled the incident earlier.

Thank God I managed to put a stop to their conversation. Given Lucian's intelligence, the things the kids said would have aroused his suspicion.

Archie and Benny looked perplexed. "Why not? It's a fact that we didn't have a daddy!"

Roxanne's head pounded even more intensely when she heard their reply.

I can't be telling these boys the real reason, can I? How can I tell them I'm afraid their biological father will come looking for them?

After a short pause, Roxanne made up a story. "Because bad guys like kids who don't have fathers. They know mothers are not strong enough to protect their children. What if they snatch you away?"

The two geniuses exchanged glances. They thought the explanation was lame but decided to play along. "Okay, Mommy."

Roxanne sighed with relief. She got up, took her bag, and brought them to the research institute.

Meanwhile, after leaving Roxanne's house, Estella was still sulking though she was not crying anymore. Throughout the drive back, she pouted and looked at the view outside the window as if

Lucian was not around.

Feeling helpless, Lucian sighed and said in a deep voice, "Still mad at Daddy? I'm sorry, Essie. It's all Daddy's fault. I shouldn't stop you from making friends, but you can't simply run away from home all the time. Communicate with Daddy if you have a problem."

Estella tilted her head to look at him. Instead of looking out the window again, she lowered her head and stared at her tiny feet.

Lucian sighed again. He reached out his hand and gently stroked her head. "Instead of writing, you should try to speak. Writing might not accurately convey your emotions and can sometimes cause misunderstanding."

Estella shook her head and brushed his hand off. She hugged her notebook even more tightly and refused to put it aside.

Upon seeing his daughter's reaction, Lucian frowned and fell silent.

All the years, everyone assumed Estella was a mute, and Lucian had never bothered to explain to the public.

The little girl was not mute. In fact, she had learned to speak much earlier than peers her age.

However, Estella was later diagnosed with autism, and she gradually stopped talking to anyone. That was why she preferred to write down her thoughts on paper.

Even when she was with Lucian, she refused to speak.

As years went by, Lucian learned to accept Estella for who she was. But deep in his heart, he still wished to hear his daughter speak again.

The two boys said she doesn't have many friends in kindergarten. I guess it's because she doesn't want to talk to anyone.

Both of them stayed silent for the rest of their journey.

Even after they had arrived at the manor, Estella got out of the car and walked in front.

Lucian walked behind and entered the mansion right after her.

"You're finally home!"

Lucian was a little bewildered when he heard his mother's voice the moment he stepped into the house.

He glanced at the living hall and saw his parents standing next to Aubree. They were all surrounding Estella, wearing joyful expressions on their faces.

Chapter 62

"Dad, Mom, what are you doing here?" Lucian frowned and asked.

Sonya whined while inspecting her granddaughter, "I had to drag your dad over because I was so worried when I heard my baby girl went missing this morning. And why didn't you tell me?"

Lucian did not know how to answer her.

"Essie, come. Tell Grandma where have you been?" Sonya was relieved that Estella came home in one piece. She hugged the girl and said, "How could you run away from home just like that? You're still a little girl. Grandma is so worried about you. Don't do this again anymore, okay?"

Aubree echoed, "You can always talk to me if you're upset. Don't just run out of the house without telling us! Grandpa and Grandma were so worried about you. So was I! Had you not come home, I would have gone out to look for you!"

Estella did not react much to Sonya's hug and Aubree's question, a frigid expression on her face.

Knowing that this kind of atmosphere would make Estella uncomfortable, Lucian walked up to Sonya and took over the child. "Essie was just around the neighborhood. She's a smart girl, so you don't need to worry about her."

Estella flung her arms around Lucian's neck and buried her head into the crook of his neck.

Sonya's heart ached for her granddaughter. She turned around and complained to Lucian, "You must have neglected Essie because you're always busy with work! She wouldn't have felt lonely had you married someone who could take good care of her. She wouldn't have run away if someone was here to look after her!"

Upon hearing that, Lucian knitted his brows. He knew Sonya was trying to press him to marry again. He immediately promised, "From now on, I'll try to stay home to accompany her during weekends. I didn't plan to go out today either, but an emergency cropped up, and I had to make a trip to the office."

Sonya knew he was trying to play dumb. Instead of beating around the bush, she asked directly, "I don't want to play mind games with you anymore. When do you plan on marrying Aubree? She waited for you for six years, and you expect her to wait for another six years? Don't you feel bad for her?"

Aubree held onto Sonya's arm and looked at Lucian with a faint smile as if she was anticipating a positive answer from him.

That was why she invited Sonya and Elias over today,

Vas

He'll have no choice but to talk about our wedding since his parents are here.

Yet, the answer Lucian gave shattered her dream.

"Mom, I've been busy lately, and you saw what happened to Essie. She has been quite emotional these days, often running away from home. Now is just not the right time for me to think about marriage."

Sonya looked up at Lucian with a scowl and advised him, "All the more reason for you to tie the knot with Aubree! Isn't it better if she can help you take care of Essie? She has always regarded Essie as her own,"

"Mom!" Lucian interrupted Sonya in a deep voice and reiterated, "I said this is not the right time, and I'll always put Essie's first before making any decision, so stop giving me pressure!"

Aubree's expression turned grim when she noticed the annoyance on his face. She stepped in to defuse the tension, saying, "It's all right, Mrs. Farwell. I can wait. I believe Essie would one day accept me. We'll give her more time."

Touched by Aubree's remark, Sonya gently patted her hand to console her. What a gentle, affectionate child. I don't understand why Lucian refused to marry her right away.

Estella overheard their conversation and grimaced. I don't want this evil woman to be my mommy!noveldrama

Chapter 63

At noon both Elias and Sonya stayed at the manor for lunch. Aubree also made up an excuse and stayed.

At the dining table, she put on an attentive act. Not only did she take soup and food for the couple every so often, but she even helped Estella peel prawns that she didn't eat much herself.

“Here, I remember that you love eating prawns, so I peeled them especially for you, Essie.”

Aubree slid the plate of prawns she had peeled to Estella.

Estella merely lifted her head and glanced at it. Then, she dipped her head again and continued eating the food in her bowl as though she didn't see anything.

Aubree's hand was still on the plate, and the smile on her face stiffened slightly.

Some time passed, but still, Estella didn't touch that plate of prawns at all.

“Essie, why are you not eating the prawns Ms. Pearson peeled especially for you. Besides, you didn't even thank her,” Sonya chided.

Estella turned a deaf ear to it and continued eating.

Upon seeing that, Sonya frowned slightly, and her voice turned significantly harsher as she said, “Such behavior is exceedingly rude, Essie.”

Stilling, Estella lifted her head, her eyes brimming with obstinacy.

I just don't want to eat anything from this evil woman!

Beside her, Aubree hurriedly acted considerate and sensible when she saw that Sonya was standing up for her. “Don't be angry, Mrs. Farwell. Perhaps Essie isn't eating the prawns because she's already full. Besides, she's emotionally unstable in the first place. You'll frighten her.”

“What a considerate girl! I'll rest easy with you taking care of her in the future,” Sonya lauded in gratification.

Aubree cautiously shifted her gaze to Lucian with a somewhat forced smile on her face.

Likewise, Sonya looked at her son, but her eyes were filled with recrimination.

As Lucian met their gazes, his expression tensed, and he said to Aubree in a clipped voice, “Essie doesn't eat food from outsiders. You don't need to try anymore.”

When Aubree heard that, a flash of hurt flittered across her face, and she sheepishly took the plate of prawns back.

Sonya wanted to smooth over their relationship upon seeing that Aubree was hurt. She turned and chastised her son, “This is all on you for pampering her.”

Lucian remained indifferent. "Children should have some safety awareness in the first place. At

the very least, she won't simply eat food from strangers when she's outside."

Sonya wanted to speak further, but Elias beside her gave a cough and seconded. "Lucian is right Essie likes to wander around these few days. No one can afford to take responsibility if she eats something she shouldn't be eating outside."

Only then did Sonya relent.

After lunch, Lucian still had work to handle, so he asked them about their plans.

Regarding her granddaughter lovingly, Sonya remarked, "It's been a long while since I last brought Essie out to shop. Essie, I'll bring you out to buy some beautiful dresses!"

Although she was dissatisfied with her son's marriage, she still loved her granddaughter from the depths of her heart. Considering that her son was a man and would inevitably be negligent in that aspect, she would always bring Estella out to buy things favored by little girls every time she visited.

Estella was just about to agree when Aubree came over. "I'll go with you, Mrs. Farwell. I can also see what Essie likes."

"Sure!" Sonya agreed with a smile.

Having said that, she reached out to take Estella's hand, only to grasp empty air.

Estella shook her head at her grandmother before writing in her notebook: I don't want to go out today. I want to practice writing at home.

I don't want to be with this evil woman!

Sonya didn't force the issue.

Elias led his granddaughter to the couch for a seat. "Here, I'll teach you. Tell me what word you'd like to practice today."

Recalling the names of the two boys she glimpsed written on their books when she was in kindergarten, Estella wrote "Archie" and "Benny" in her notebook.

At that, puzzlement inundated Elias. "Why do you suddenly want to practice writing these two words?"

After all, those two words weren't common nouns, and he couldn't think of any special meaning to them.

Shaking her head, Estella tugged at her grandfather's sleeve, imploring him to teach her. noveldrama

Chapter 64

Chapter 64 Elise didn't pursue the matter further. Since Estella wanted to learn those two words, he decided to teach her. They both had the housekeeper bring a pencil and paper, then started practicing writing at the dining table in the dining room. Seeing that his father was taking care of Estella, Lucian excused himself and went upstairs to his study. Meanwhile, Aubree was seething. She could tell that Estella was evidently trying to keep her distance from her. The latter had been turning her down in front of the Farwells. If this continues, Mr. and Mrs. Farwell will definitely notice something amiss! No, I've got to find an opportunity and teach that brat a lesson so that she'll behave! Because of Estella's sudden visit, it was almost ten o'clock when Roxanne arrived at the research institute with Archie and Benny. After settling them in her office, she started working without delay.

The data Colby proposed hadn't been processed, so he sought her out right away upon learning that she had arrived.

The two of them proceeded to devote themselves wholly to work. It wasn't until it was time to get off work in the evening that they came to a conclusion at long last. Stretching, Roxanne caught sight of her two sons who were studying something or other on their laptops. "Archie, Benny, we can go home now," she called out gently. Hearing that, Archie and Benny lifted their eyes from behind the laptops and nodded docilely. They put the laptops down and got up from the couch. Colby glanced at the time before suggesting with a smile, "It's just dinner time now. You've done me a great favor today, so how about me treating you and the kids to a meal?"

Roxanne was stunned for a moment. She turned to her sons to seek their opinions. Archie and Benny exchanged a look, understanding dawning upon both of them. Well, it's clear as day that Mr. Galloway wants to pursue Mommy. Having observed the man for a day, they felt that Colby was indeed very much outstanding. In terms of career, at the very least, he had common topics with Roxanne. On top of that, his looks were also passable. For some inexplicable reason, however, only their father's countenance flashed across their minds whenever they imagined a man with their mother. How strange. We've never seen Mommy and Daddy standing side by side, but we

instinctively feel that Daddy is the only one who's worthy of standing by Mommy's side. Therefore, it's best that we keep a distance from Mr. Galloway! "Thank you, Mr. Galloway, but my mommy already has a date tonight. So, it's okay," Archie declined politely. Colby looked at Roxanne in mystification. Throughout the day, he hadn't heard her mentioning about a date that night. Roxanne swept a gaze over Archie and Benny. While she couldn't fathom why they lied, she still went along with them. "I have a dinner date with my best friend tonight. I'll take a rain check." At that, Colby flashed her a warm smile. "I'm all muddled from work that I forgot to ask whether you have plans later. In that case, I'll head off first." After saying that, he bid Archie and Benny farewell before spinning on his heel and leaving. When they left the research institute, Roxanne eyed Archie and Benny questioningly with her brows slightly furrowed. "Why did you lie earlier? Do you not like Mr. Galloway?" In response, Archie and Benny shook their heads solemnly. "We were helping you turn a suitor down." Roxanne was torn between exasperation and amusement at the sight of their earnest expressions. "Regardless of the reason, you can't simply lie in the future." The two boys nodded obediently. noveldrama

Benny leaned close to her with a grin. "We feel that Mr. Galloway is indeed pretty good, but you can still choose for a bit, Mommy. There's no need to rush. Archie and I aren't in a hurry to have a daddy anyway." Roxanne inexorably burst into giggles. "Choose? Do you think it's the same as choosing groceries at the supermarket?"

Chapter 65

Roxanne wasn't familiar with the restaurants nearby, so she asked Madilyn to recommend her a place and brought Archie and Benny there directly. noveldrama

As they were eating, she received a text from Jonathan that read: Is treatment needed tonight, Dr. Jarvis?

Only then did Roxanne remember that she didn't explain the treatment process to him. She replied: Old Mr. Queen is still a little weak, so treatment can't be conducted so frequently. He has already undergone treatment twice consecutively. Let him rest for a day. I'll come over tomorrow. Sorry, I forgot to tell you about it.

In no time, Jonathan texted back: Okay. I'll be waiting for you anytime.

When Archie and Benny noticed that their mother was texting during dinner, they asked curiously, “Is something the matter, Mommy?”

Smiling, Roxanne took some food for them both. “No, the patient the other day was asking me if I’m going over.”

Upon hearing that, the two boys nodded sensibly. “You’ve worked hard, so eat more, Mommy.”

Roxanne’s heart melted at the sight of their attentiveness.

Dinner was a delightful affair.

After they finished eating, Roxanne brought Archie and Benny to the counter to settle the bill.

No sooner had she reached the counter than she spotted two people heading toward them.

Holding each other’s arms intimately, Aubree and Frieda walked into the restaurant while chatting and laughing.

Unbidden, Roxanne slowed her pace and scanned her surroundings, wishing to head into the crowd to avoid them both as they had always been hostile toward her.

Aubree had a long-standing grudge against her. In fact, the woman had even joined forces with all the medicinal herb suppliers in Horington to boycott her research institute.

Frieda, on the other hand, merely looked down upon her medical skills and mocked her time and again.

Judging from the look of things, they clearly had a close relationship.

Roxanne had no doubt that Frieda would team up with Aubree to revile her.

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In normal circumstances, she might have ignored their presence and walk right past them.

But with Archie and Benny tagging along right then, she didn’t want to have a row with them in front of her sons.

Just when she was about to take a detour with Archie and Benny, Frieda’s mocking voice sounded from afar.

“Hey, what a coincidence, Dr. Jarvis! Are you also here for dinner?”

Roxanne’s brows creased slightly, but she planned to ignore her.

Alas, the two boys thought that she didn't hear it and tugged on her sleeve. "Someone is calling you, Mommy."

Left with no other choice, Roxanne could only halt in her tracks. She turned around and met Frieda's gaze calmly. "Indeed, it's very much a coincidence. But I've already finished eating, so I'll leave you both to it. Please excuse me."

After saying that, she proceeded to lead Archie and Benny past them to pay the bill.

Frowning, Aubree asked Frieda, "You two are acquainted?"

In response, Frieda nodded. Sweeping a gaze over the trio who had almost reached them, she declared in a disdainful voice, "Don't say that. I'm too lowly to be acquainted with Dr. Jarvis when her medical skills are so superb. So many people are helpless in the face of my grandfather's illness, but she only jabbed a few needles into him before he regained consciousness. My brother now holds her in high regard, so much so that her status is far higher than mine."

As soon as Aubree heard that, her expression changed imperceptibly. "What did you just say? Why did you all hire her to treat Old Mr. Queen?"

"We didn't do so. She was the one who came knocking on our door. As for the reason, I reckon she took an interest in my family's medicinal herbs. After all, my brother signed a contract with her the instant my grandfather regained consciousness," Frieda sneered.

When she finished saying that, she shot a hateful glare at Roxanne. "She doesn't even know her place. My brother merely mentioned it in passing, and she agreed right away. The contract is now signed, so she'll be dead if anything happens to my grandfather!"

Chapter 66

When Aubree heard Frieda's answer, a mixture of emotions brewed in her eyes. noveldrama

Having been turned down by Lucian previously and suddenly learning that Roxanne had returned to the country, she didn't dare wait anymore. In the past few days, she had been doing everything possible to have an identity linking her to the man.

Early that morning, she had purposely asked Elias and Sonya to persuade Lucian. She had thought he would listen to his parents and change his mind,

yet again she had hit a brick wall and even had to put up with Estella for the entire day.

With the couple there, she didn't dare throw a tantrum either.

Enraged at the end of the day, she had asked Frieda out to shop in a bid to dissipate her anger.

However, never had she expected to hear such news.

Countless renowned doctors were helpless in the face of Old Mr. Queen's condition, yet Roxanne managed to cure him. That aside, Jonathan even signed a contract with her, promising to supply medicinal herbs to the research institute at half the price! In that case, haven't my efforts of urging the medicinal herbs suppliers in Horington to boycott her research institute been in vain?

At that line of thought, Aubree's gaze turned chilly. "Didn't I arrange for a medical team to treat Old Mr. Queen? Were they not effective? Why was she allowed to take over his treatment?"

While saying that, she glanced at the woman who was meters away from her with fury blazing within her.

I've gone to such lengths, but she still managed to find a medicinal herb supplier in Horington! She must have laughed at me behind my back!

Frieda was startled for a moment before she hesitantly replied, "It's not that. The medical team you arranged was unquestionably effective, but she came knocking on our door and convinced my brother. Besides, Grandpa's condition has indeed improved following her treatment. For that reason, my brother has decided that she'd be in charge henceforth."

With things having come to this, nothing I say will be of use.

Aubree snorted inwardly, but her expression remained as courteous as ever. She said to Roxanne, "I didn't know that you even have such capabilities, Ms. Jarvis, that even a professional medical team can't compare to you alone."

Swiping a finger across the screen of her phone, Roxanne retorted indifferently, "There are many more things you don't know. Why, are you still planning to sabotage me further after learning that I signed a contract with the Queen family?"

Aubree's gaze abruptly darkened. Despite that, she sounded very much innocent when she said, "What did you mean by that? I'm thankful that you cured Old Mr. Queen, so how could I possibly sabotage you?"

Not in the mood to play along with her, Roxanne answered directly, "I'm sure you know full well

what I meant by that. Also, I don't care if you still want to sabotage me further."

Aubree's face darkened frightfully. She didn't reply immediately.

Beside her, Frieda cautiously interjected upon seeing the two of them at each other's throats. "Aubree, are you both... acquainted?"

At that, Aubree sneered and no longer masked her hostility toward Roxanne. "Not only are we acquainted, but you can also say that fate binds us together tightly."

After saying that, she turned to Roxanne and drawled provocatively, "Don't you agree, Ms. Jarvis?"

Roxanne had just finished paying when she heard that. Lifting her eyes, she swept her gaze over the two women in front of her. "I'm afraid I don't dare agree with that, Ms. Pearson. I'm not really that close with you, so please don't make such a statement again in the future. It troubles me a lot."

Aubree's expression stiffened, and rage blazed in her eyes.

"It's getting late. Hurry up and go into the restaurant. I'll leave you both to enjoy your meal."

Roxanne then inclined her head at them impassionately and walked past them with Archie and Benny, leaving the restaurant without a backward glance.

Chapter 67

Aubree and Frieda watched as Roxanne's figure disappeared from the door. Then, they went over to a window seat and sat down.

"Aubree. what exactly is your deal with that Dr. Jarvis? You seem to know each other, but your relationship isn't that great?" Frieda queried cautiously with her eyes pinned on the woman across from her.

Aubree was so livid that she had steam coming out of her ears. "How could our relationship be great? Roxanne Jarvis is Lucian's ex-wife!"

If it weren't for her, my marriage to Lucian would've been a sure thing ages ago!

Shock flooded Frieda when she heard that. "She's Lucian's ex-wife?"

It was no secret within their circle that Lucian was once married six years ago, especially among them who grew up with him.

However, they had also thought that Aubree would be the man's future wife until he got married out of the blue.

His spouse had never appeared before them, and he had rarely mentioned her outside.

Hence, no one knew that woman's identity even after they divorced.

I never expected it to be her.

The scene whereby Lucian and Roxanne met that night played in Frieda's mind.

Back then, I naively found it strange that Lucian targeted that woman for no reason yet insisted that I apologize to her. It turns out that such is their relationship.

At that thought, she belatedly lamented, "No wonder Lucian defended her that day."

Sharply catching that remark, Aubree demanded coldly, "What are you saying? Lucian defended her? What was that about?"

Recalling the events that night, Frieda wore an expression of sheer disgruntlement and promptly griped, "It was the night she came knocking on our door, requesting to treat Grandpa. I merely made a few skeptical remarks about her since she looks so young and no one knows whether she really has such capabilities, but both Lucian and Essie asked me to apologize to her!"

When Aubree heard that, her heart sank at once.

I went to great lengths to guard against her because I was afraid that Lucian would meet her and even did everything possible to have him change his mind and firm up our marriage. But little did I know that they had actually met without my knowledge! Worse still, Essie knows her and even spoke up for her. Furthermore, judging from Lucian's character, the fact that he stood up for her means that he isn't averse to her!

Panic inexorably deluged Aubree.

No, this can't be happening. She appeared out of nowhere six years ago and snatched Lucian away from me, but this time, I'll never allow her to mess up my plans again!

After leaving the restaurant, Roxanne got into the car with the two boys and headed home straight away.

Archie and Benny were still pondering about the incident earlier. Although they couldn't find any fault with the two women's words, they could distinctly sense their hostility toward their mother and that their mother seemed to be mad as well.

The two of them exchanged a glance, both feeling rather vexed.

"Who were those two people earlier, Mommy?" Archie asked with a tense expression.

"One of them is a family member of my patient. The other one is probably... Essie's mother," Roxanne answered.

Right after she said that, a strange feeling inexplicably welled up within her.

Hearing that, Archie and Benny curled their lips in disdain.

Hmph! So it was because of that woman that Daddy abandoned Mommy and didn't want us anymore. How could she compare to Mommy?

Chapter 68

Archie and Benny proceeded to compare Aubree with Roxanne from head to toe. In the end, they felt that she was all too far beneath their mother.

Daddy actually abandoned Mommy for that woman? How blind of him!

After inwardly disdaining him for a while, Archie suddenly remembered the conversation in the restaurant earlier. He leaned close to Roxanne and inquired, "Mommy, what did you mean when you said that the woman sabotaged you just now? Did she pick on you?"

Roxanne didn't want to involve her two sons in the mess, so she denied it casually, "It's nothing. It was just a work issue, and it has been resolved."

No sooner had she said that than Archie's determined voice rang out beside her ear.

"She did pick on you, then! What happened exactly? Hurry up and tell us, Mommy!" The boy's petite face was stretched taut, and he frowned in an adult-like manner.

"Didn't we promise each other that there can be no secrets between us, Mommy? You can't lie to us!" Benny seconded.

Roxanne's brows knitted together in exasperation.

She had almost forgotten that Archie and Benny were different from other children. Their intelligence quotient was ridiculously high.

In the face of their interrogative gazes, Roxanne finally broke down and told them about Aubree teaming up with the medicinal herb suppliers in Horington to boycott their research institute.

Upon hearing that she actually picked on their mother, Archie and Benny were so furious that their hands balled into fists. "That woman is simply too evil!"

"Everything's fine now, so don't do anything rash," Roxanne urged.

Archie and Benny nodded docilely, but inwardly, they raged.

Once they were home, they seized the opportunity while Roxanne was bathing to sneak into the study.

Archie whispered something or other into his brother's ear mysteriously. In the next heartbeat, Benny's eyes lit up. He turned on his laptop, his fingers flying across the keyboard. Shortly after, he hacked into Pearson Group's system.

When Roxanne came out after her bath, Archie and Benny had already slipped into bed innocently. They gazed at her with bright eyes, imploring her to tell them a bedtime story.

Early the next morning, Aubree was awakened by the ringing of her phone.

Displeasure was written all over her face. noveldrama

Infuriated after learning that Lucian had met Roxanne last night, she had gone to bed very late.

Thus, she was furious about being awakened early in the morning then.

"What is it?" Her voice brimmed with impatience when she answered the call.

On the other end of the phone, Charles sounded exceedingly frantic. "Ms. Pearson, come to the office quickly! There's a huge problem with the company's system!"

The instant Aubree heard that, she jolted awake. Getting out of bed, she washed up for a bit before rushing to the office.

Only when she arrived at the office did she discover that the entire company's system was down. All the employees were standing at the side with peculiar expressions on their faces, whereas those from the technical department were trying to fix things.

No one knew the origin of the virus, but no matter what method they employed, they couldn't resolve it.

When Aubree turned up, all the employees at the side lowered their heads in unison as though concealing something.

Meanwhile, the employees from the technical department wore grim expressions.

"What's going on? What use is the lot of you when you can't resolve things even after so long?"

Aubree strode right over to the computers. As soon as she saw the picture on the screen, her face flushed bright red with fury.

Two cartoon characters were fighting on the screen.

Precisely speaking, one of them was pummeling the other.

The character taking a beating had Aubree's name written on her face and the words "evil woman" printed clearly on her shirt.

Next to the character dishing out the beating was a speech bubble with the phrase, "Let's pummel the evil woman!"

It was clear as day that the person behind the virus was targeting her.

Chapter 69

Chapter 69 Aubree looked up and glanced around the area to find all the computer screens within her sight had the same image. The sight made her tremble. When the employees saw that she had seen the image on the screen, they tiptoed around her and did not even dare to breathe loudly. Some who were curious to see Aubree's reaction immediately retracted their gazes after meeting her furious eyes. Aubree swept a gaze across everyone. She then named a few people through gritted teeth and instructed Charles to dismiss them right away. After that, she returned and scolded the employees of the technical department, "Is this how you work? How could the company's system be simply hacked by someone? Besides, so much time has passed, yet none of you solved this. Did I spend this much money to hire all of you to humiliate the company like this? If you can't resolve this, then get lost!" The employees had known how nasty Aubree's temper was and had prepared themselves mentally to be scolded by her. Hence, they could only seethe in silence as she lashed out at them.

Right then, the manager of the technical department mustered his courage and stepped out to explain, “Ms. Pearson, this virus is really powerful. It has to be created by a famous hacker, at the very least. We... need more time to crack this.”

Aubree shot him a glare. “Settle this as fast as possible! Otherwise, you can pack your things and get lost with them!” The manager hurriedly nodded in reply and urged his subordinates to get working. All the employees were suffering. Aubree’s face turned purple with rage as she stared at the two figures on the screen and silently

clenched her fists. How dare this person humiliate me? They’d better not let me find out who they are, or I’ll make their life a living hell. Early that morning, Roxanne was about to send Archie and Benny to school when she saw Benny walking out of the room while clutching his stomach. Worried, Roxanne stepped forward to examine him. “What’s wrong?” Benny’s face contorted in pain as he said, “Mommy, my stomach hurts. Can I not go to school today?” As soon as he finished, Archie, too, walked out of the room and looked at Roxanne, saying, “Mommy, my stomach’s not feeling well, too.” Seeing that, Roxanne frowned. “Maybe both of you ate something bad last night. Go in and get some rest. I’ll give your teacher a call.” Archie and Benny nodded. When they saw Roxanne leave, their eyes glinted with mischief. Roxanne was not the slightest bit suspicious of the boys. After all, they had always been obedient children who never showed any signs of aversion toward kindergarten. Naturally, they would not pretend to be sick to avoid school. After ending the call, Roxanne brought the boys some warm water and indigestion pills. The children did everything they were told. Roxanne had wanted to go to the research institute. However, she chose to work from home in the end since the children were unwell. After settling Archie and Benny, Roxanne got up and went into the study. When the boys heard the study door shut, they were instantly in high spirits and they no longer showed signs of exhaustion from earlier. Benny switched on the laptop on his bed, smiling happily when he saw that his virus had not been cracked. “That evil woman must be at the office at this time,” Archie said with certainty while looking at the

time. Benny snorted smugly. “Then she must’ve seen my animation. I bet she’s mad.” The thought of the evil woman stomping her feet in anger gave them a rush of joy.

Chapter 70

“She’s got to pay the price for bullying Mommy.” Archie snorted coolly, Benny nodded vehemently and started typing on the keyboard again.

Archie was confused. “What are you doing?”

Feeling excited, Benny explained, “Their technical team is too weak. My virus is so simple, yet they can’t crack it till now. In that case, I’ll increase the difficulty and make that evil woman angrier.”

Hearing that, Archie nodded to express his agreement. “It’s best if they can’t crack it. That way, more people will laugh at her. Let’s see if she still dares to bully Mommy in the future.”

With that, the boys poured their attention to the laptop.

Suddenly, a series of footsteps could be heard near the door.

Archie, who had sharp senses, heard the sounds outside and gave Benny a nudge.

Benny quickly finished coding and shoved the laptop to Archie.

When Roxanne entered the room, she saw Archie hugging the laptop and Benny sprawling on the bed, looking at the screen curiously.

“Aren’t you two feeling unwell? Why are you using the laptop instead of resting?” Roxanne frowned as she sat beside the boys. “Come here. Let me take a look at you again.”

Archie’s and Benny’s hearts tightened when they heard those words.

Mommy’s got incredible skills. If she examines us, we’ll definitely be exposed. Then, everything we did in secret will be exposed, too.

Roxanne reached out to hold Benny’s hand, but he avoided it.

“What’s wrong?” Roxanne gazed at him, perplexed.

Benny grabbed his wrist warily. Not knowing how to react, he turned to Archie for help.

Archie, on the other hand, was much calmer. He extended his hand toward Roxanne and said, “Actually, I feel much better after having the medicine. But you can still check on us again if you’re worried.”

Roxanne’s attention was successfully captured by him, and she proceeded to examine him. After confirming there was nothing wrong with Archie’s body, she turned to look at Benny.

She remembered that Benny’s symptoms were more severe just now.

Having witnessed Archie's method. Benny came to his senses and scuttled toward Roxanne with a grin. "Mommy, I'm feeling much better, too! The medicine you gave us is really incredible! You're the best doctor in the world. Archie and I really admire you. We love you the most!"

Amused, Roxanne shook her head. After examining them and seeing that the boys were fine, she let out a sigh of relief. At the same time, she felt that something was amiss.

"But I'm still not feeling well," Benny said seriously.

Roxanne's heart lurched when she heard that, and she studied him concernedly. noveldrama

To her surprise, she heard the boy saying sweetly, "I need your hug to feel better."

Right after he said that, a soft, chubby body pounced on her.

Roxanne brought him into her embrace with a smile, and the cloud of doubt above her head dissipated. As she hugged Benny, she glanced at the laptop screen. "Archie, what are you doing there?"

When she was occupied with Benny, Archie had seized the opportunity to change the browser page. Looking as if nothing had happened earlier, Archie met Roxanne's gaze. "I'm studying the trend of today's stocks. I invested in some foreign companies and earned some money."

"Archie earned over fifty million!" Benny looked prouder than Archie himself.

When Roxanne heard the amount, she could not help but feel astounded. "That much? Archie, you're incredible!"

Benny asked playfully, "What about me? What about me?"

Roxanne smiled. "Your computer skills are great, too. Both of you are incredible. I love you two so much!"

Then she planted a kiss on their foreheads.

The boys grinned innocently.

Chapter 71

Meanwhile, everyone in Pearson Group had been working nonstop because of the virus.

Aubree had been hanging around in the technical department. Every now and then, she would spew some insults.

“Mr. Pearson.” Charles’ voice rang out beside her ears.

Hearing that, Aubree quickly composed herself and lowered her eyes. “Dad, why are you here?” she greeted the person who had just entered.

Samuel Pearson had a serious look on his square face. “What’s going on? Are you guys still not done with the virus?”

The manager of the technical department, who had been scolded by Aubree the entire morning, was drenched in a cold sweat. He nodded while bending over, apologizing, “Mr. Pearson, we’ve really done our best, but this virus is just too powerful. Every time we’re close to cracking it, another difficult problem will appear. It’s like a never-ending,”

“So you’re saying you can’t solve it?” Samuel questioned, frowning.

The manager nodded guiltily. “Idiots!” Samuel roared. He then turned around to look at his daughter. “In that case, we can only contact Lucian’s company right away and ask if they have any solutions.”

Farwell Group had many talented employees, and their network system was the best in the world. On top of that, they had the world’s second-best computer genius working for them.

If Farwell Group, too, could not solve Pearson Group’s problem, then the company was done for:

“No way!” Aubree rejected it instantly and glanced at the image on the screen with a scowl.

If we get someone from Farwell Group to solve this, then Lucian will definitely see this. I’d be utterly humiliated if that happened.

Samuel lectured coldly, “If you’re worried about being humiliated, then why did you mess with people without knowing their background? And now, they’re getting back at you. Do you know how much our company will lose if this isn’t dealt with right now? Which one is more important now? Your reputation or the company?”

Aubree bit her lip. In the end, she had no choice but to give in.

Samuel shot her a glare and dialed Lucian’s number, asking the latter to send some men over to solve the problem.

Upon receiving the news, Lucian merely asked Cayden to pick someone randomly from the technical department and send him to Pearson Group.

The employee sent by Lucian was clearly more skilled than the ones at Pearson Group.

The employees of Pearson Group were powerless against the virus for the entire morning, yet Lucian's employee took only one glance before he started tapping away on the keyboard.

Those who were in the same industry could easily see that the virus had almost been cracked by Farwell Group's employee.

Meanwhile, Roxanne returned to the study after making sure that Archie and Benny were fine.

Archie returned his gaze to the laptop screen and studied the stock prices.

After he studied it for some time, a series of codes appeared on the screen.

"Benny, look!" Archie immediately called out to Benny. noveldrama

Benny's eyes lit up when he saw the codes that popped on the screen.

It was a program he had designed. When someone had cracked the core sequence of the virus, the window would automatically pop up.

I thought this virus wouldn't be cracked today. Looks like the other party is a professional.

Benny got more excited at that thought. He took the laptop from Archie and started tapping away on the keyboard, battling against the person on the other side.

Half an hour later, Benny stopped typing.

"What is it?" Archie asked in puzzlement.

Benny smiled excitedly. "It's been cracked."

Hearing that, Archie looked at his brother strangely. "Why are you still smiling so happily?"

Benny nodded indifferently. "That person is really incredible. That fight with him just now was quite interesting. But I'm sure he's not from Pearson Group. He's way stronger than those idiots."

Though Archie was not as skilled as Benny in terms of technology, he understood what was going on.

Pearson Group made zero progress the entire morning. Now that Benny has lost all of a sudden, surely the opponent is an expert, and they are not someone from Pearson Group. The whole morning should be enough for Pearson Group to seek help from someone else

“It might be... someone from Farwell Group.” That was the only possible answer Archie could think of.

Farwell Group’s technical team is well known for being excellent at their job. Besides, if that woman is really Essie’s mommy, there’s no reason for Pearson Group not to get help from Farwell Group.

Upon hearing that, Benny frowned and pursed his lips. He was furious.

Though he knew that the woman was Estella’s mother, she was also the woman who bullied his mother. He could not believe that Lucian had helped Aubree.

No way. I must teach them a lesson.

At that thought, Benny picked up the laptop again, looking serious, his fingers gliding across the keyboard.

At the same time, the employees of the technical department of Pearson Group stood at their supervisor’s workstation and watched the genius at work.

All they saw were the series of codes constantly appearing on the screen. It did not take long for the cartoon on the computer screens to disappear one by one.

SClee. “Is it done?” Aubree stood up excitedly. The moment she wanted to thank her savior, the latter’s expression stiffened.

Aubree’s heart, too, sank instantly.

“It is, supposedly. But,” The person frowned, and he watched a code appearing automatically on the screen.

It was simpler than the virus earlier.

A row of words appeared, which read: Are you from Farwell Group?

The hacker is actually talking to me.

The employee hesitated for a moment before replying: Yes.

A series of codes appeared on the screen again. It wrote: How dare you help that evil woman? I'm angry now!noveldrama

Immediately after that, the conversation on the screen disappeared and was replaced by an attack

more complicated than the virus just now.

What's going on? Who exactly is this?" Aubree's face turned purple with rage after she read their conversation.

Caught off guard by the attack, the employee ignored her and started battling the hacker,

However, he could not help but feel that something was off with the conversation earlier.

The hacker has incredible skills, but they sounded a little childish...

In the afternoon, seeing that the person he sent had yet to return to the company, Cayden asked hesitantly, "Mr. Farwell, the person we sent to Pearson Group isn't back yet. Should we send another person over?"

"We'll wait for the people from Pearson Group to come to us first," Lucian said calmly.

After all, every time Pearson Group made a request would mean that they owed Lucian a favor.

Cayden hummed in response and changed the topic. "The executive meeting in the afternoon will be starting in ten minutes. Would you like to go over now?"

Lucian nodded and went to the conference room, with Cayden following closely behind him.

Along the way, Cayden noticed Lucian occasionally taking his phone out to glance at it.

In fact, Lucian, who rarely placed his phone beside him during meetings, had been glancing at his phone from the corner of his eye during the meeting.

Cayden was perplexed, but he held back his curiosity until the meeting ended.

"Mr. Farwell, do you have anything important happening today?" he asked cautiously.

As soon as he finished his sentence, he saw Lucian furrow his brows and look rather annoyed.

“No,” Lucian answered coldly.

He whipped out his phone and glanced at the screen again. Still, there were no incoming calls.

Seeing that, Lucian put his phone away, his heart filled with displeasure.

Chapter 73

Lucian waited until the evening. Yet, he did not receive any calls from Roxanne.

He suppressed his displeasure and rushed to the kindergarten to pick Estella up.

I should be able to find out what’s going on once I’m at the kindergarten.

By the time he arrived, most of the children had left.

Lucian spotted his daughter standing in the corner at a glance.

She was hanging her head low and holding her schoolbag with both hands, looking utterly dispirited.

Lucian frowned slightly and went forward to pat her head. “Why are you upset? Is it because I’m late? I’m so-”

Before he could finish, Estella pursed her lips and snorted, walking straight past him. Lucian’s hand hung in the air, and his voice stopped abruptly as he turned around helplessly to watch his daughter reach the car.

He watched her climb into the car before retracting his gaze and scanning the remaining children.

Even so, there were no signs of the twins.

“Mr. Farwell...” One teacher noticed he seemed to be looking for someone. Her heart skipped a beat, and she hurried over cautiously.

Lucian shifted his gaze and stared at the person in front of him expressionlessly. “Where are the twins? Have they been expelled?”

The teacher lowered her head guiltily. “Not yet. I wanted to tell them about the news when they came to school. But Ms. Jarvis called me this morning, saying the boys were feeling unwell, so I didn’t get to tell —”

“Okay,” Lucian said curtly and strode to the car without waiting for the teacher to react.

In the car, Estella hugged her schoolbag and rested her head on it, her eyes downcast. She looked as if she was pondering something.

Seeing Lucian entering the car, she scooted to the side without lifting her head, putting a distance between them.

Lucian sat beside her and instructed the driver to drive. After that, he gave her a concerned look, asking, "Can you tell me why you are angry today?"

Estella turned her head to one side upon hearing his voice, looking completely reluctant to communicate with him.

Lucian understood the signs right away. I'm the culprit for making her angry again.

As for the reason, he had a rough guess, but he had no intentions of solving it at that moment unless Roxanne contacted him personally.

Despite that, Estella clearly wanted him to bring up the topic. She made some gestures during the journey home, wanting to attract his attention.

However, Lucian feigned ignorance.

Upon reaching home, a red-eyed Estella shot him a glare before storming back to her room and slamming the door shut. She everflocked the door from the inside.noveldrama

Catalina, who was watching the pair's cold war from downstairs, cast Lucian a concerned gaze. "Mr. Farwell, what's wrong with"

"Let her be." Lucian knitted his brows. "She'll be fine after a while."

Catalina had no choice but to ignore the matter.

However, when it was time for dinner, Estella still did not go downstairs.

Catalina looked at Lucian, who sat at the dining table without digging in. She sighed inwardly and rushed upstairs to bring Estella down.

Unfortunately, no one came to open the door after she knocked on it for some time.

"Ms. Estella, please come down to have—"Before she could finish her words, a muffled sound could suddenly be heard. It sounded as if something had collapsed to the floor.

Catalina's heart sank. Just as she was about to go downstairs to get Lucian, she spun around and found him already standing behind her..

“Mr. Farwell, you know what Ms. Estella’s character is like. She’s always been unsociable, and she doesn’t know how to speak. Please be more patient with her. How will things work out if you don’t communicate with her properly? Ms. Estella is different from other children. Aren’t you worried that her condition might worsen?” Catalina asked.

The sound of something crashing onto the ground in the room made Catalina extremely – anxious. She was so worried that her eyes reddened when she uttered the last sentence.

Chapter 74

Lucian frowned.

He never thought the child would be so mad.

After listening to Catalina, he nodded and went forward to knock on the door. “Essie, open the door. Daddy wants to speak to you.”

When he finished, a muffled thump sounded on the door.

Clearly, Estella was throwing something against the door to show her rejection of him.

Lucian froze momentarily. He spoke once again in a gentler tone. “What do you want me to do? Can you open the door and tell me? We’ll talk about it, okay?”

A faint thump sounded on the door again.

It was also Catalina’s first time witnessing Estella acting that way. The thought of the latter’s condition caused a fear to rise in Catalina’s heart. Worried that something might happen to Estella, she said hurriedly, “Mr. Farwell, I think we should just go in. I’m worried Ms. Estella might...”

Lucian hesitated for a moment, but he nodded in agreement.

Soon, Catalina brought a spare key, opened the door, and they entered the room.

They were instantly taken aback by the mess inside.

The dolls Estella always treasured were scattered all over the floor. There were also a few exquisite- looking music boxes by the door, and two of them had cracks on them.

Evidently, the items that were thrown at the door were the two music boxes.

Among the mess was Estella curled in the corner. She was staring blankly at the ground as tears streamed down her cheeks uncontrollably. Sitting beside her were two relatively ugly dolls the adults had never seen before.

Noticing the adults entering her room, she backed away subconsciously and lowered her head to avoid meeting their gaze. noveldrama

Lucian's heart ached when he saw the state of the girl. Feeling regretful, he stepped forward, wanting to pull her into his embrace.

Sensing that he was approaching her, Estella raised her head immediately, her eyes filled with resistance. With her hands on the ground, she scurried backward frantically.

Lucian paused when he saw her reactions. "Don't... be afraid. I know I was wrong." Estella did not seem to hear his words. Finally, she leaned against the wall and turned her body sideways to avoid his gaze. She hugged her knees and buried her head inside.

The adults could not see her expression. All they saw were the heaving motions of Estella's body when she sobbed.

Lucian fell silent instantly.

Feeling heartbroken, Catalina stepped forward. "Mr. Farwell, why don't I give it a go?"

With that, she carefully approached Estella and extended her arms toward the little girl.

This time, Estella did not avoid it.

Catalina let out a sigh of relief and hugged Estella gently, patting the latter on the back. "What's wrong, Ms. Estella? Can you tell me about it? Were you bullied by your classmates in school?"

Estella merely continued sobbing, showing no response whatsoever.

Catalina had no choice but to coax Estella in her embrace.

"Is it because the twins didn't go to school?" Lucian asked grimly. Estella's eyes lit up a little, and she turned her head aside with a sob.

Noticing her slight reaction, Catalina quickly hinted at Lucian with a look to console Estella.

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· Lucian sighed. He did not expect Estella to be so dependent on the twins.

Could they be somewhat attracted to each other because they're siblings from another mother?

"Okay. I won't make them leave the kindergarten."

It was only then that Estella looked at him, looking extremely aggrieved.

His daughter's state left Lucian no choice but to give in. "I promise you. I won't chase them away again."

Estella still stared at him with a gaze filled with accusations.

Understanding the meaning of her gaze, Lucian said gently, "They didn't go to school today because they took a sick leave. The teacher hasn't told them about their expulsion."

Chapter 75

Estella blinked, and her sobs reduced. Still in disbelief, she pursed her lips.

She had heard Lucian talking to her teacher with her own ears, and the two boys were absent from kindergarten that day.

How could there be such a coincidence?

Lucian sensed her doubt, which made him feel even more helpless. "There's no need for me to lie to you. They didn't go to school today because they were unwell. You'll see them tomorrow."

Estella continued to purse her lips aggrievedly. Suspicion was written all over her face.

Lucian was at a loss for what to do. "How should I make you believe me?"

Never did he expect Archie and Benny to have such an important place in Estella's heart. They were so important to the point that she did not believe his words. Estella hesitated for a moment and let Catalina put her down. She then picked up a small notebook from the pile of mess and scribbled something while sobbing. Her squiggly writing read: Confirm! noveldrama

She wanted to hear the boys tell her that they were not expelled and that she would still see them in kindergarten in the future.

Lucian understood what she meant. She wanted to go to Roxanne's house and confirm with the boys. The thought of it made his head hurt.

Seeing there was no response from Lucian, Estella pursed her lips and gripped her notebook tightly in her hands. She looked as if she was about to burst into tears again.

When Lucian recalled how miserably Estella had cried just now, he relaxed his brows helplessly and said, "Okay. I'll bring you to them now."

Estella froze instantly, blinking to confirm what she had heard.

Lucian nodded.

She quickly turned around and packed her bag, then carried it on her back and walked toward him, still sniffing since she had cried too hard earlier.

Lucian felt speechless when he saw how fast Estella's attitude changed. Given no choice, he brought her out to look for Roxanne.

Roxanne was having dinner with Archie and Benny when the doorbell rang. Thinking it was Madilyn coming for a free meal, Roxanne opened the door right away.

Her eyes widened in disbelief when she saw the people at the door.

"Are you two... Essie, are you here to play with Archie and Benny?" That was the only possibility she could think of.

A tall and slender Lucian stood in front of the door, holding Estella's hand. He was only dressed in a shirt with the sleeves slightly rolled up.

Estella lifted her head. Roxanne could not help but wonder if it was the breeze that caused Estella's eyes and nose to be red because the latter looked rather pitiful.

When she saw that Roxanne had seen her, all the sadness Estella had been feeling the entire night rose in her heart. She sniffed and pursed her lips, having the urge to cry again.

Lucian noticed the change in his daughter's behavior. However, he did not know how to answer Roxanne's question.

What am I supposed to say? My daughter got angry because I told the kindergarten to expel your sons? And now, she insists on confirming the reason for their absence?

He did not find it necessary to bring it up again since he had already dismissed the idea.

At that moment, the atmosphere at the door was rather awkward.

Roxanne eyed the pair in front of her who did not seem to have any intentions of speaking. Feeling puzzled, she lowered her head to look at Estella. "Essie, is something the matter? It's quite late already."

Pursing her lips, Estella nodded and broke free from Lucian's hand.

He had no choice but to let her be.

In the next second, tears rolled down Estella's cheeks again, and she approached Roxanne, extending her arm. Estella wanted a hug.

Chapter 76

At first, Roxanne was stunned by Estella's actions. But after that, her heart ached for the latter. She instinctively lowered herself and pulled Estella into her embrace, patting her on the back.

Estella tugged at the hem of Roxanne's clothes, sobbing uncontrollably.

A look of helplessness flashed past Lucian's eyes as he watched the scene before him.

When we were at home a while ago, all Estella did was avoid me. Now that Roxanne's here, this girl actually reached out without hesitation to ask for a hug. Are children naturally dependent on their mothers?

"Okay. Stop crying. Can you tell me what's wrong?" Roxanne consoled Estella, feeling worried.

Naturally, Estella did not know how to speak.

Finally, Lucian cleared his throat and said nonchalantly, "She went to kindergarten today and did not see your boys, so she thought they stopped going. She went home and cried the entire night, asking to come here to confirm their reason for absence." Roxanne sighed inwardly upon hearing that. This little girl is really clingy to my boys, eh?

Realizing that, Roxanne said in a softer tone, "There, there. Don't cry. The boys were having an upset stomach today, so I helped them to apply for a leave of absence. They'll be going back to school to play with you tomorrow."

When she heard Roxanne saying the same words as Lucian, Estella finally believed it. Slowly, she stopped sobbing and removed herself from Roxanne's embrace. And carefully, she peeped into the house, wanting to see the two boys.

However, it was impossible to view the dining room from the entrance. When she did not see the twins, she started feeling uneasy again.

Roxanne noticed Estella's cautious looks, and her heart melted. Patting Estella's head, she asked, "Do you want to play with them? I can take you to them."

With that, she smiled and carried Estella. Just as she was about to walk into the house, Estella

suddenly leaned back. noveldrama

It was at that moment Roxanne recalled that the man was still standing at the door.

On top of that, he would not enter the house without her invitation.

At that thought, she turned around to look at the man.

As the night breeze blew, Lucian's shirt clung to his body, and he stared impassively at the girls.

Looks like he was rushing to bring Essie here that he forgot to put on a coat.

Thanks to Estella, who was in her arms, Roxanne felt bad for him, and she said calmly, "Have a seat inside, Mr. Farwell."

Lucian entered the house as soon as she spoke.

The boys are having their dinner. Let me bring you over to them." Roxanne walked slowly, comforting Estella along the way.

Soon, three of them arrived in the dining room.

Archie and Benny were enjoying their food when they saw them walking in. They swallowed the food in their mouths, a puzzled look on their faces. "What is Essie doing here?"

Roxanne placed Estella between them and said softly, "Essie got worried when both of you didn't go to kindergarten today. She cried, wanting to look for you. Go on. Talk to her."

As if to confirm Roxanne's words, Estella interlaced her fingers nervously on her dress and looked unblinkingly at Archie and Benny with her large eyes. The tip of her nose was slightly pink, making her look like a doll.

Archie and Benny exchanged gazes when they saw Estella in such a state. They found her cute yet pitiful at the same time.

"We weren't feeling well this morning. We're much better now. Don't worry," Archie reassured earnestly.

Benny turned to Essie and made a face. "Look at you, all scared like that. We're just taking a day off. Can't you be away from us for just a day? You little minion."

A sense of relief washed over Estella when she heard their words, and she broke into a smile.

Chapter 77

Lucian, who was standing at the entrance of the dining room, looked conflicted when he saw Estella finally smiling,

It took me so long to coax her, yet it was nothing compared to the trio's words. Not only did she stop crying. she even smiled.

After standing there for some time and watching the boys making Estella grin from ear to ear, he stepped into the room, wanting to take her home.
noveldrama

They had only come over because Estella wanted to confirm things with her own eyes. Now that it was done, it was time for them to go home.

As soon as he reached Estella's side, he heard her stomach growl.

Roxanne frowned. "Have you not had dinner?"

Estella pursed her lips and nodded.

Seeing that, Roxanne turned to look at Lucien with a reprimanding gaze.

Lucian glanced at her emotionlessly. "I've tried talking to her. She's been crying all night. She locked herself in the room as soon as she got back without eating or drinking anything. It was only when I promised to bring her here that she finally stopped. We didn't manage to have dinner yet." Roxanne scanned his thin shirt and withdrew her gaze.

At the side, Archie looked at Estella concernedly. "We've just started eating. Do you want to join us?"

Estella's eyes lit up, and she nodded fervently. It was at that moment that she finally remembered to ask her father for permission

Lucian hesitated for a few seconds and glanced at Roxanne. "If it's not too much of a trouble, could you prepare something for her?"

“Do you want to sit between the boys?” Roxanne suggested.

Estella beamed instantly.

Archie and Benny quickly moved their chairs, making some space so Estella could sit between them.

Lucian frowned as he watched Estella sit between the twins.

From his point of view, they looked like a family, while he looked more like a stranger.

After helping Estella to settle down and serving her some food, Roxanne looked at the three children sitting side by side and was all smiles.

However, the gaze of the man beside her sent chills down her spine.

She stopped smiling and turned around to look at Lucian.

As he met her gaze, Lucian composed himself and put on a calm expression.

“What about you?” Roxanne asked casually, repressing her feelings.

Upon hearing that, Lucian put on a look of confusion.

Roxanne averted her gaze and glanced at the dishes on the table. “Have you eaten?”

If Essie made a fuss without having dinner, then he must’ve been busy coaxing her the entire night.

Stunned, Lucian stared at her for some time before narrowing his eyes indifferently. Sounding distant, he answered, “I’m fine. There’s dinner at home. I’ll just heat it up when I get back. It’s just that Essie likes spending time with them. Sorry for troubling you. I’ll just wait in the living room and not disturb you guys.”

With that, he cast the three joyful children a final glance before walking out.

When Roxanne heard his words and noticed he was about to leave on an empty stomach, she

could not help but purse her lips. “There’s enough food for all of us. Besides, Essie will definitely

· feel uneasy if her daddy’s not here.”

Estella lifted her head, her eyes filled with nervousness when she saw Lucian walking out.

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Without waiting for Lucian's reply, Roxanne served him a plate of food and placed it on the table. "Come and join us if you don't mind."

Archie frowned slightly at the scene, but he said nothing.

Benny, on the other hand, continued eating while secretly glancing at the man in the distance, feeling excited.

Chapter 78

In the past, it had always been the three of them-Roxanne, Archie, Benny-having meals together, occasionally with Madilyn joining in.

However, it was a first for them to have their meal with Lucian.

At that moment, various emotions rose in Archie's and Benny's hearts.
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Lucian stopped in his tracks and turned around to meet Estella's glistening eyes. He then shifted his gaze to the seat beside them, which had utensils placed on the table near it. His eyes immediately glinted with emotion.

As the matter of fact, the four of them were indeed a family.

It would seem odd if he were to sit there.

Though that thought passed through his mind, he had already taken his seat by the table before even realizing it.

For some reason, the atmosphere that was originally jolly had become tense. He could not help but wonder if he was the reason for the change.

Archie and Benny fell silent and lowered their heads to eat their food.

Since the boys were not talking to her anymore, Estella lost her appetite. She held her utensils and took tiny bites out of her food.

"Essie, is there something you dislike?" Roxanne asked gently, noticing the change in her behavior. Hearing that, Estella hurriedly shook her head.

She liked everything Roxanne made.

She just wasn't in the mood to eat.

Benny knew Estella could not talk. Thus, he put down his utensils and answered on her behalf, "Essie is just like us. She doesn't like carrots and peppers. She always picks these out in the kindergarten."

Roxanne smiled kindly. "I'll help you pick them out, okay?"

A smile reappeared on Estella's face, and she nodded obediently.

Seeing her response, Roxanne walked over to Estella, picked out the carrots and peppers from the latter's plate, and placed them on her own. She then watched Estella picking up her spoon again.

Just as Estella was about to continue eating, something tugged the back of her hand, which made her tear up in pain. She stopped moving her arm, lifted her head, and looked at Roxanne pleadingly for help.

Noticing the expression on Estella's face, Roxanne put down her utensils right away. "What's wrong?"

Estella bit her lip, trying her best to stop herself from crying as she turned over her hand to let Roxanne examine it.

Everyone was stunned as soon as they saw the back of her hand.

Estella had extremely fair skin. As the light shone on the back of her hand, a horrifying red mark could be seen visibly.

Roxanne frowned and asked worriedly, "What happened?"

Estella bit her lip without saying anything.

Roxanne had no choice but to glance at Lucian, who was sitting beside her.

Lucian felt a pang of guilt when he met her questioning gaze. Despite that, he looked as calm as ever. "Did you hurt yourself when you were throwing things just now?"

The worry in Roxanne's eyes intensified. "Throwing things?"

Lucian said, "Essie doesn't know how to vent her emotions. Sometimes, when she gets really angry, she'll throw things to vent it out." noveldrama

He could not bring himself to utter the word "autism."

On top of that, he did not know what her reaction would be once she found out about it.

Surprise flashed through Roxanne's eyes as she turned to look at Estella to confirm the fact. "Did you hurt yourself?"

Estella hesitated momentarily before nodding gently.

Seeing her admitting to it, Lucian frowned. "Why didn't you tell me?"

Estella shuddered and inched closer to Roxanne, feeling frightened.

Roxanne cast Lucian another displeased glance when she saw Estella's reaction.

The kid's injured. How could he still speak to her in such a tone?

"Does it hurt a lot?" Retracting her gaze, Roxanne held Estella's hand and massaged it gently.

Estella pursed her lips and nodded.

"You'll be fine. I'll help you to apply medicine. It won't hurt in a while." Roxanne gently released Estella's hand and instructed her boys, "Keep her company. I'll get the medical kit."

The boys nodded immediately and started taking turns telling Estella some interesting things..

Chapter 79

Soon. Roxanne returned with the medical kit, and she carefully applied some medicinal cream onto Estella's hand.

Estella was well-behaved throughout the entire process. When it hurt, she would only shrink away a

little and would quickly place her hand back.

It made Roxanne's heart melt incredibly.

After applying the medicine to Estella's hand, Roxanne immediately occupied the seat beside her.

Archie gave up his seat obediently and carried his plate to sit beside Lucian.

"Is it okay if I feed you?" Roxanne asked Estella for her permission.

Naturally, Estella would not reject it. She nodded with a look of anticipation.

Roxanne picked up Estella's plate with a smile and started feeding her.

With Roxanne feeding her, Estella's appetite improved tremendously. She fixed her eyes on Roxanne, opening her mouth to eat anything she fed.

Roxanne's smile grew wider when she saw how well-behaved Estella was while eating.

Lucian watched their interaction from the opposite end.

Every time Estella's lips were stained, Roxanne would help her wipe them right away. Even her feeding speed was just right.

Estella's eyes crinkled as she ate.

For a moment, a mix of emotions flashed through Lucian's eyes.

Meanwhile, Archie and Benny had been watching everything in silence. They merely thought that

Estella looked cute when she ate instead of feeling jealous of her.

When they looked away from her, they glanced at Lucian at the same time.

The next second, they exchanged suspicious glances with each other.

If we're not mistaken, Daddy has been staring at Mommy. Besides, there doesn't seem to be any hate in his gaze. Instead, it looks a little... affectionate.

Archie frowned and put down his fork. He picked up the ladle by the side and served Lucian some food while looking at him innocently. "Mr. Farwell, why aren't you eating? Do eat more!"

Hearing that, Lucian snapped back to his senses and thanked Archie subconsciously, "Thanks.

As soon as he said that and saw the vegetable on his plate, his gaze darkened.

Coincidentally, the vegetable Archie chose was celery.

Lucian looked up and scanned the dishes on the table to find the plate of celery placed quite far from

Archie's reach. It looked as if the latter had served him celery on purpose.

When Archie finished his words, he buried his head in his plate and eyed Lucian from the corner of his eye.

He remembered that celery was the vegetable Lucian hated the most the last time he and Benny looked into his background.

I don't know why he abandoned Mommy in the past and was looking at her with such a gaze just now.

But since he abandoned Mommy, he must be punished. This bit of celery is nothing.

Lucian picked up his fork, looking meaningfully at the boy who served him the vegetable.

Sensing his gaze, Archie lifted his head and met Lucian's gaze fearlessly.

Lucian raised his brow. For some reason, he sensed that Archie was challenging him.

However, Lucian could not figure out what was the reason for the challenge. Thus, he did not think much about it.,

"Do you dislike celery, Mr. Farwell?" Archie looked at Lucian innocently. His words seemed to be urging the latter.

Lucian smiled and replied, "No."

With that, he put the celery into his mouth impassively.

From a certain angle, Archie could not see the look of disgust that flashed through Lucian's eyes as he swallowed the celery.

Roxanne watched the man put the celery into his mouth. It was too late when he turned away; she saw

the look of disgust in his eyes. Suddenly, she felt as if she had returned to the days six years ago.

"You can put it aside if you don't want to eat it." Roxanne retracted her gaze and lowered her eyes to conceal her emotions.

The man's calm voice rang out. "I didn't say I'm not eating it."

A mix of emotions swirled within Roxanne, and she kept silent.

Chapter 80

Benny's eyes brightened. Emboldened by Lucian's acceptance of Archie's gesture, he tentatively attempted the same.

Taking the plunge, he placed a roast potato on the man's plate and stared at him expectantly.

The boy's thoughtful gesture stunned Lucian, as he thought the former would complicate things for him. He offered a grateful smile upon regaining his composure. "Thank you. Have some more potatoes yourself." noveldrama

As he spoke, Lucian reciprocated the gesture.

Having remembered the vegetables the boy mentioned not liking earlier, he deliberately avoided those.

Benny's eyes widened in surprise. "Thank you, Mr. Farwell! I will!"

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Daddy gave me food!

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Meanwhile, Archie pouted in disdain as he observed their interaction. Benny is such an idiot. He can't even see such an obvious ploy of Daddy currying his favor! I won't be that easily fooled!

The rest of dinner passed with that strange atmosphere hanging over them. Roxanne got up to clear the table when they finished.

Lucian silently helped her put the silverware back in the kitchen drawer out of politeness. Upon completing that task, he stood around hesitantly, as he was unsure what to do next.

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Though it stood to reason that he should return with Estella, he thought it would seem inappropriate to just leave after putting Roxanne through the trouble of hosting dinner.

"I can manage on my own," Roxanne asserted when she noticed his discomfort. "Could you keep an eye on the children?"

Lucian nodded and headed to the living room.

Estella was working with the boys on the final stages of a Lego project they had been working on together.

Having already assembled a section, the children were struggling with the height of where it was supposed to be attached. Roxanne was usually close by to lend a hand after the preliminary assembly was completed on the ground.

As she was busy with the dishes at that moment, the children stood around, figuring out how to circumvent that obstacle.

After a glance around, Archie decided to bring a chair from the dining table.

"Here, let me." Taking pity on the children, Lucian softened his expression to the best of his

ability and offered Archie a hand.

Archie hesitated for several seconds before handing the assembled part in his hands to the man

Following Archie's instructions, Lucian took it and snapped it in place.

"Thank you," Archie said gruffly.

Lucian nodded noncommittally. With one hand in his pocket, he mostly watched the three children amuse themselves with the toy bricks and occasionally lent a hand with the assembly.

In the kitchen, Roxanne was distracted. Instead of the chore at hand, her attention was stubbornly fixed on the group in her living room. She was beginning to regret allowing Lucian to stay after dinner.

Archie and Benny had already revealed too much when they confronted Lucian the last time, so Roxanne felt deeply uneasy about them being alone together.

The way they got along, especially, bothered her a lot.

She was even more afraid that the boys would say something they were not supposed to.

If Lucian finds out that the boys are his...

· Roxanne felt a panic rising in her chest at that very thought.

She could not guarantee that Lucian would not take them away from her.

Given her current status, it would be easy for him to rob her of her sons.

She could not imagine how she would feel then. It was hard enough to conceive of a future without the two boys.

Roxanne began to feel truly frightened.

The bowl slipped through her fingers and fell to the ground before she could react. The crisp sound of shattering glass shook her out of her reverie.

Startled, the four in the living room looked toward the kitchen as one.

Chapter 81

The three children exchanged glances before putting the Lego pieces down in an unspoken agreement and running into the kitchen.

"What happened, Mommy?" Archie and Benny asked in concern.

Their voices roused Roxanne out of her trance. She felt even more uneasy at the sight of her sons before her. Barely able to suppress her fears, she shook her head and mustered a smile. "It's nothing," she said. "The bowl must have slipped out of my hand. Don't come in. There are broken pieces everywhere."

With that, she squatted down as if nothing had happened to pick up the pieces, still distracted as she did so.

Lucian's eyes darkened from behind the three children as he studied the woman on her knees.

I could be imagining it, but this woman does seem to have a lot on her mind.

Roxanne lowered her head. The man's intense gaze upon her disconcerted her further.

In a momentary lapse of vigilance, her fingers closed around a particularly sharp corner of a shard.

A tingling pain erupting from her fingertips snapped her back to her senses, and she gave an involuntary gasp of pain.

"Mommy!" "Ms. Jarvis!"

The children cried out anxiously as blood dripped from Roxanne's finger.

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Archie and Benny were about to dash into the kitchen when a tall figure suddenly stopped in front of them.

A moment later, they watched Lucian squat beside their mother to hold her wrist in his large hand with a cold expression on his face.

Archie and Benny froze in their tracks.

"What were you thinking?" he asked with irritation.

Roxanne stared blankly at the vast hand on hers. She was at a loss for words.

Lucian wrapped his arms around her waist and lifted her to her feet in an instant.

Roxanne was already standing by the sink when she regained her senses.

Looking ill-tempered, Lucian turned on the faucet and dragged her wrist under the stream of water.

"Wait outside," Lucian ordered, turning his attention to the three children by the door. "Do not come in."

Though the children were worried about Roxanne, they nodded when they saw that she was in good hands. noveldrama

Upon being satisfied that the wound on the woman's hand was clean enough, Lucian took out a clean handkerchief from his pocket and wrapped it around her injured finger to stem the bleeding

"Thank you." By that point, Roxanne had regained sufficient control of her faculties. She tried to jerk her hand out of his while avoiding his gaze. "I can finish up on my own."

The man frowned and tightened his grip.

Roxanne felt annoyed at his refusal to let go.

He has a child with another woman. Essie is watching us right now.

Distinctly aware of Estella's eyes on them, Roxanne tried her best to distance herself from Lucian.

He has no cause to care for me to this extent. He only has hatred toward me, anyway.

Grimacing at the reminder, Roxanne gazed at him with plain refusal for his help.

Lucian pretended not to have noticed her resistance. "I'm going to dress your wound," he announced solemnly.

Without another word, he led her out by her hand.

Roxanne gritted her teeth in consternation. "Please don't trouble yourself. It's late enough as it is; you should take Essie home. I can manage on my own."

Lucian froze in his tracks at her words.

Roxanne noticed a vague dissatisfaction emanating out of him that disappeared without a trace by the next second.

"How will you dress your wound when your right hand is the injured one?" Lucian suppressed his annoyance and dragged her out without paying her protests any heed.

The three children followed them eagerly.

Roxanne did not struggle anymore under their concerned gazes. Instead, she resigned herself to her fate.

This man is too domineering.

Chapter 82

When they arrived in the living room, Roxanne was forced to sit on the couch.

The children flocked around her as they stared with concern at her finger wrapped in a handkerchief while Lucian rummaged unsuccessfully through the living room to locate the medical kit.

In the end, Archie was the one to jump off the couch to produce the medical kit from the TV cabinet.

Lucian patted the boy's head in gratitude and stood next to Roxanne with the kit now in his hand.

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The children hurriedly stepped aside.

Lucian sat down beside Roxanne. Though his face did not betray a hint of his thoughts and his presence caused a perceptible shudder in her, his movements seemed gentler than usual.

Roxanne watched him work for several seconds before being compelled to look away. She willed herself to keep her gaze on the floor.

Looking any longer would create unnecessary misunderstandings. The man obviously hates me. Why is he so caring all of a sudden?

After having iodine applied to her cut, Lucian produced another Band-Aid and wrapped it around her wound. Roxanne sighed in secret relief when he finally let go of her hand. She leaped up as soon as she could place some distance between them. "Thank you, and sorry again for troubling you."

The man frowned slightly at her words but did not respond.

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Roxanne glanced at the mess on the kitchen floor and made to get up.

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"What are you doing?" The sullen voice sounded again.

Roxanne froze. "The floor needs cleaning up," she said. "The children might step on the shards."

Lucian's scowl deepened.

Despite this woman's stellar credentials, she can't even take care of herself!

Roxanne grew anxious at the man's gloomy expression, not knowing what she had done wrong this time.

Could it be because of the trouble she had caused him earlier? noveldrama
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After careful consideration, Roxanne was about to apologize when he spoke again.

"You can't get your bandage wet. Let me find you a housekeeper."

Without giving her a chance to respond, Lucian gave his assistant a call.

After his dinner, Cayden was about to wash up and tuck in when he suddenly received a call from his employer. He picked up the phone nervously.

"Find me housekeeper and deliver them to No. 32 of Durwest Garden within half an hour"

Cayden was stunned. Before he managed to formulate his question, the other had already hung up.

After gazing at his darkened screen in confusion for several seconds, Cayden contacted a housekeeping company and personally escorted the housekeeper to the address as instructed by Lucian.

"They're on their way," Lucian informed Roxanne in a low voice after hanging up.

Roxanne's protests ceased as he had already found a housekeeper. She seated herself some distance away from him.

The three children sat between the two adults and exchanged glances in silence.

The atmosphere in the living room was stiff.

Nearly twenty minutes later, the doorbell was a relief as it broke the uncomfortable silence in the living room.

· Roxanne was about to get up to answer the door, but Lucian arrived first.

"Mr. Farwell." Cayden stood on the other end with a middle-aged woman with short hair.

Lucian stood sideways as he beckoned them in.

The housekeeper cleaned the kitchen with surprising efficiency while striking up an animated conversation with the three children as she worked.

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She amused the children so much they could not stop laughing.

After seeing how fond the children were of the housekeeper, Roxanne was struck with an idea. She decided to take the initiative to ask, "Excuse me. I'd like to ask if you would consider working here full

time. Your main duties will be caring for the children with some housekeeping now and then. I'll leave the salary to you."

The woman readily agreed, "I would love to; I happen to like children. You can call me Lysa."

Chapter 83

Roxanne breathed a sigh of relief at how little effort it took.

Having expected to go to further lengths than that for a suitable nanny, she was surprised to find such a promising candidate so easily.

"Come over tomorrow morning," Roxanne proposed after a brief discussion regarding Lysa's salary range. "I will draw up the contract by then. You can sign it if everything is in order."

Lysa nodded in response. After bidding the others farewell, she departed with her tools and left the few of them in the living room once again.

Though Roxanne's mood improved after the chat with Lysa, her stiff formality returned when she turned to Lucian. "I'm sorry for the trouble of bandaging my wound and finding me a housekeeper. I owe you one."

A strange glint flitted across Lucian's deep eyes. He quickly suppressed the arising feeling and responded with a similar detachment, "Don't mention it. Essie and I were the ones to trouble you in the first place. Consider these trivial matters a token of my gratitude." Estella nodded in vigorous agreement with her father's words. She even ran over to grab Roxanne's wrist and stared at her bandaged finger for a long time.

Roxanne smiled as she stroked the little girl's head. "It's all right. Don't worry. It doesn't hurt at all."

Estella blinked as she touched Roxanne's fingers delicately. Upon ascertaining that there was indeed no problem, she looked up and gave the latter a sweet smile.

Roxanne's heart softened at the child's tenderness.

"It's getting late. We have intruded upon your kind hospitality long enough." Lucian cleared his throat as he lowered his gaze to Estella. "Say goodbye to Ms. Jarvis and the boys, Essie."

Looking as if she did not want to, Estella waved to the boys obediently at the prospect of seeing them the following day.

The two boys reciprocated her smile and waved. "Wait for us at the kindergarten tomorrow!"

Essie nodded vigorously. noveldrama

Lucian took the little girl's hand and, with a final goodbye to the three, turned to leave.

It was only when she watched his car disappear out of the driveway that Roxanne relaxed completely.

The two boys seemed reluctant to part with their guests as they stared into the distance for a long time without taking their eyes off the spot Lucian's car had disappeared.

Roxanne thought they missed Estella. "Come on, boys. Let's go inside," she said softly. "You'll see Essie tomorrow."

The two boys looked away slowly and followed her back to the mansion.

After shutting the door, Roxanne bent down to look solemnly into the eyes of her two sons. "I have something to tell you boys."

Archie and Benny were puzzled at the sight of her seriousness.

"If Essie's father ever asks how old you are, you are to tell him that you're one year younger than her. Do you understand?"

The boys understood at once, yet they pretended not to. "Why?" they demanded.

Roxanne hesitated, at a loss for an explanation, before sighing helplessly. "There is no reason. Just do as I say, please?"

The boys exchanged another glance before nodding slowly.

Archie did not betray a hint of emotion. His brother, however, looked confused.

It's clear why Mommy wants us to tell Daddy that we are one year younger than Essie. It's to make it impossible for him to find out that we are his. What happened between Mommy and Daddy? He was kind to her, wasn't he? Why doesn't Mommy want him to know that we are his children?

Chapter 84

It was nearly ten when Lucian arrived home with Estella.

The butler was already waiting at the door.

“Ms. Pearson is waiting for you inside, Mr. Farwell.”

Lucian’s brows furrowed at the news. With a nod at the butler, he strode in with Estella.

“You’re home!”

Aubree, seated on the couch, leaped to her feet when she saw them crossing the threshold. She bent down and tried to touch Estella’s head, which the latter did her best to avoid.

Aubree’s eyes flashed with displeasure, which she quickly hid by straightening up with a smile. “What’s the matter?” Lucian studied her intently. His tone remained indifferent.

Aubree gave him a casual smile. “I want to thank you again for lending us someone today. You helped us out of a jam there, and Dad had me come over to offer our gratitude personally.”

She was going to add something else after a brief pause, but Lucian cut her off, “Is the matter resolved?”

Aubree was momentarily dumbfounded by his bluntness. She nodded with a smile that now seemed rather forced. “Well, the little trouble we had kept us busy until the afternoon. I hope it didn’t interfere with your business.”

Lucian nodded. “There are plenty of employees in Farwell Group, and the absence of one wouldn’t make a difference. There’s no need to thank me.”

Without waiting for her response, he strode past her with Estella.

Aubree’s features contorted with fury, but they softened again when she regained her senses a few moments later.

“Nevertheless, you have helped me resolve something huge. I didn’t know what to get you, so I brought a little present for Estella instead. Don’t worry. I didn’t spend a fortune. Think of it as a token of my appreciation.”

As she spoke, she took out a limited edition doll from the bag on the couch. Its delicate packaging caused Lucian to recognize it as one in a set that Estella had in her room.

Aware that his daughter loved those dolls, he stopped to see if she wanted to accept the gift.

Unexpectedly, Essie did not even look up. Instead, she tightened her grip on her father's hand and edged closer to him.

Lucian understood at once. He met Aubree's eyes to decline her gift. "Thank you for the doll, but she already has this one. Besides, she's thrown a tantrum at me earlier. Forgive us for not being in the mood to entertain." noveldrama

Aubree's expression was a little stiff. She put away her things with a smile that looked more like a grimace before looking at Estella with concern. "What is she angry about this time?"

Having hit multiple dead ends in trying to interact with the girl before, Aubree did not try very hard this time for fear that Lucian would see through her falsities. Instead, she directed her question toward him.

"Oh, something small," Lucian said curtly before looking away, plainly not intending to divulge specific details.

Maybe he thinks it's not my place to be privy to such matters.

Aubree's hand holding the gift bag clenched into a fist. Her nails sank deep into her flesh as she forced a smile. "Is that so? Did you return this late because you took her for a fun night out?"

Lucian frowned. "It's getting late. You should leave if there isn't anything else I can do for you. Essie needs her sleep."

Aubree opened her mouth again, but no excuse came to her lips. She could only watch Lucian lead Estella past her as they made their way upstairs.

Aubree appeared unmistakably grim as she exited the mansion.

Her bodyguard, also her driver, noticed her expression and decided to tread lightly. "Do you wish to return home, Ms. Pearson?"

Aubree glared at him. "I want you to find out where Lucian was tonight with that little b*tch of his!"

The bodyguard shuddered before obliging her hastily.

Chapter 85

The following morning, Aubree was having breakfast when her bodyguard called.

“Ms. Pearson, I’ve checked it out. Last night, Mr. Farwell took Ms. Estella to a woman surnamed Jarvis. They stayed at her place for almost three hours before leaving—”

Alas, before the bodyguard could finish his sentence, the beeping of a disconnected call rang out from the other end.

There was no doubt in Aubree’s mind that the woman in question was Roxanne Jarvis.

The more she pictured Lucian and Roxanne spending time together, the more her face twisted with anger.

What could they have done in that three hours? I can’t believe they had Estella with them too!

A fresh swell of rage rose in Aubree as she stood up and flung her phone away, her eyes full of crazed fury.

Samuel, who was eating his breakfast opposite her, looked up with a frown when he heard the commotion.

To his surprise, he saw his daughter standing menacingly by the table while her phone lay on the floor, smashed to smithereens. “What’s going on?” Samuel asked sternly after setting his cutlery down.

Aubree met her father’s gaze and gritted her teeth. “Roxanne Jarvis is back, and Lucian has been keeping his distance from me recently! I think he has plans to reconcile with her!” she grumbled, sounding somewhat pitiful toward the end.

Samuel’s gaze darkened instantly. “Do Elias and Sonya know about this?”

As far as he knew, Roxanne had run off without saying goodbye back then, leaving only a divorce agreement behind.

For that reason, Elias and Sonya strongly resented her.

Now that Roxanne had shamelessly returned to their son, one could only imagine how they’d react if they found out about it.

Upon hearing her father’s words, Aubree’s brow twitched as a thought flashed through her mind.

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“Find an opportunity to inform the Farwells about that woman’s return,” Samuel suggested, which helped to affirm Aubree’s idea. “I’m sure they’re very unhappy with her.”

With that, Aubree nodded and slowly went back to her seat.

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Seeing that his daughter had calmed down, Samuel knitted his brows and advised earnestly, . “That woman has only just come back, so we can’t be sure what intentions Lucian has toward her. Don’t get yourself all worked up over nothing. Besides, Elias and Sonya know how loyal you’ve

been to their son and how much you’ve done for him. Even if that woman comes into the picture, they’d still be on your side. You have nothing to fear.”

After hearing Samuel’s reassuring words, Aubree felt a lot more at ease and visibly regained her composure. “Got it. I’ll remember to keep my cool.”

Meanwhile, Roxanne had finished her breakfast and sent Archie and Benny to the kindergarten.

When the teacher, Pippa Ward, saw the three of them, a concerned look crept across her face. “How are Archie and Benny? Are they feeling better?”

Roxanne smiled and nodded. “Yes, they’ve recovered. Thanks for your concern.”

The two boys looked up at Pippa and greeted her politely, “Good morning, Ms. Ward!”

Naturally, Pippa’s eyes filled with adoration at how well-behaved and sensible the kids were. noveldrama

Amid their conversation, the sound of a car door opening and closing suddenly rang out.

Everyone instantly turned to look, only to see a Bentley parked conspicuously on the street.

Lucian had stepped out of the car and scooped Estella from the backseat into his arms.

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Even though he wanted to carry her to the entrance, Estella struggled to get down as soon as she saw Roxanne and her sons.

Thankfully, Lucian wasn’t insistent and put his daughter down on the ground as she wanted. However, just as he was about to reach for Estella’s hand, he realized she had already scampered away.

For a moment, Lucian was stunned as he subconsciously turned to look behind him.

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To his surprise, he saw Roxanne and the rest smiling fondly at Estella, with the former even walking toward the little girl.

Chapter 86

It was a rare sight as Estella ran toward the school's entrance while waving wordlessly at Roxanne and the boys.

Seeing that the little girl was too caught up in the excitement to care about road safety, Roxanne quickly rushed over to hold her hand. When she saw Lucian walking calmly toward them, she couldn't help but feel a sense of helplessness.

Estella grinned from ear to ear as she held Roxanne's hand. Once they stopped walking, she even hugged the latter's leg affectionately.

Archie and Benny weren't jealous either and greeted Estella with big, friendly smiles.

When Lucian finally came to stand beside them, Benny boldly tugged at his suit sleeve.

Puzzled, the man lowered his head to look at the boy.

"Good morning, Mr. Farwell!" Benny exclaimed, flashing an innocent grin.

Lucian raised his eyebrows slightly, but his surprise soon turned to gentleness. "Oh, good morning to you too."

Having gotten his father's reply, Benny smiled even brighter. Archie, however, merely pursed his lips and gave Lucian a nod.

Of course, Lucian returned the greeting in the same manner.

Upon seeing how close the two families seemed, Pippa mused, "Wow, Ms. Jarvis, I suppose you must be on excellent terms with Estella. That's pretty rare, you know? I've taught her for so long, yet she's

never been this clingy with me."

Roxanne glanced at the little girl holding her leg and simply answered with a chuckle.

Estella refused to leave Roxanne's side, but that didn't matter since it was still early, and not many children had arrived at the kindergarten.

Thus, Roxanne and the kids decided to remain standing at the door to chat with Pippa.

Fortunately, Lucian had called the kindergarten head the night before to scrap the twins' expulsion, so Pippa never once mentioned how close Archie and Benny had been to getting kicked out of school.

Naturally, Roxanne continued to be kept in the dark.

After the three kids held hands and walked into school together, Roxanne turned around to prepare to leave. Alas, she felt her heart skip a beat when she accidentally met Lucian's gaze.

She had been chatting with Pippa for so long that she almost forgot that Lucian was standing quietly behind her.

*If there's nothing else, I'll be off to work, Mr. Farwell," Roxanne uttered, striding off before Lucian could even say anything.

As he watched her retreating figure, Lucian's gaze darkened.

The sight of Roxanne and the three kids chatting with Pippa earlier had left him in a daze. To him, it felt as though they were a family.

Only after Roxanne had sped off in her car did Lucian finally gather his thoughts and walk to his Bentley

After leaving the kindergarten, Roxanne made a beeline for the research institute.

Thanks to the Queen family's supply of herbs, the once-stagnant research gradually got back on track and continued to progress smoothly.

Roxanne kept herself busy the entire morning, and by the time Jonathan called, it was already noon.

"Dr. Jarvis, what time will you be dropping by this afternoon? I'll wait for you at home."

Hearing that, Roxanne suddenly recalled her appointment with Alfred for his treatment.

Oh my gosh. I've been so busy this morning that if it weren't for Jonathan's reminder, I'd have forgotten something as important as this.

Snapping herself out of it, Roxanne glanced at the work she had left and gave Jonathan a time.

Despite that, she made it a point to arrive earlier before her appointment that afternoon.

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The Queens' butler was already acquainted with Roxanne and knew her treatment was working wonders for Alfred's health. As such, his attitude toward her underwent a one-eighty, and he now treated her with the utmost respect.

Roxanne had only just stepped into the house when her brows furrowed at the person sitting on the couch.

"We meet again, Ms. Jarvis," Aubree piped up.

Even though she was wearing a smile, there was no hiding the cold glint in her eyes.

Chapter 87

Roxanne quickly composed herself and shifted her gaze from Aubree to Jonathan.

Sharp-eyed as usual, it didn't take long for Jonathan to notice the awkwardness between the two women. He casually approached Roxanne, making sure to block Aubree's line of sight as he did.

"Dr. Jarvis, my grandfather is already waiting for you upstairs. Shall we go up now?"

Roxanne nodded.

With that, Jonathan turned to Aubree to excuse himself and began walking toward the stairs with Roxanne in tow.

As soon as the two of them got to the stairway, Aubree spoke up again. "Ms. Jarvis, I heard that your course of treatment has helped Old Mr. Queen a lot. I think I shall use this chance to visit him and see you work your magic."

Right after saying that, Aubree followed behind them. Roxanne knitted her brows, clearly displeased. However, since Jonathan didn't object to it, she had no choice but to pretend that Aubree didn't exist.

Under Roxanne's treatment, Alfred had recovered a fair bit, so much so that he was well enough to move back into his bedroom.

When they got to his room, they found Alfred propped up in bed and looking like he was in good spirits. noveldrama

“Grandpa, Dr. Jarvis is here,” Jonathan announced as he led Roxanne to the bed.

After hearing that, Alfred peered at Roxanne with a grateful smile. “Dr. Jarvis, thank you so much for treating me. If it weren’t for you, I wouldn’t still be alive today.”

Alfred had seen Roxanne during the previous treatments, but he had been so weak that he could barely talk. Now that he had recuperated for a couple of days, he finally found the energy to thank the latter personally.

“Don’t mention it, Old Mr. Queen,” Roxanne replied with a polite smile. “After all, I’m a doctor, and you’re my patient. I feel just as happy and accomplished to see you on the road to recovery.”

Without further ado, she sat by the bed and began sterilizing her tools.

Seeing how focused she was, Alfred’s appreciation for her instantly grew beyond words.

Of course, Aubree was upset at Alfred’s reaction and quickly walked up to him to block his view of Roxanne. “Hello, Old Mr. Queen.”

Alfred finally noticed Aubree’s presence and nodded at her. “Oh, Aubree, you’re here too.”

“When I heard that you’ve woken up, I really wanted to visit you sooner,” Aubree said as she sat beside Alfred. “But I’ve been so busy at work that I couldn’t find the time to drop by. Thankfully, I

managed to free up my schedule today, so I rushed here immediately.”

‘The next second. Aubree glanced at Roxanne and added, “Lucian was supposed to come too, but he’s swamped with work and told me to send you his regards. We’re all just relieved to know that you’ve gotten better.”

Alfred beamed with gratitude. “You and Lucian are good kids. You’re both busy with work, yet you still put in so much effort to find me a doctor.”

“There’s no need to stand on ceremony with us, Old Mr. Queen,” Aubree lightly chided. “You’re like a grandfather to Lucian and me. It’s only right that we do everything we can for you.”

Even as she was talking, Aubree’s gaze lingered on Roxanne, her eyes full of pride and conceit.

It was evident from the conversation that Alfred had already regarded Aubree and Lucian as a family. Rationally speaking, Roxanne knew their relationship had nothing to do with her. However, for some inexplicable reason, she just couldn't shrug off the strange feeling inside her.

After sterilizing all her tools, Roxanne tamped down her emotions and walked toward Alfred and Aubree. "Please step aside, Ms. Pearson. I'm going to start the treatment now."

Aubree was still happily chatting away with Alfred when Roxanne's voice had the latter turning his attention back to her.

Left with no other choice, Aubree slowly put her smile away and stepped back with her teeth gritted.

Chapter 88

By the time the treatment was over, Frieda had also returned home.

Upon finding out from the butler that Roxanne was treating Alfred, she made a beeline for the latter's bedroom.

"Grandpa, how are you feeling?" Frieda asked concernedly the moment she stepped into the room. noveldrama

Alfred nodded slightly. "Much better."

Having lived for so long, he had gained an understanding of how traditional medicine worked and had also consulted countless famous doctors.

Roxanne, however, had come as a delightful surprise to him. After each course of her treatment, Alfred would always feel a significant improvement in his health, which was something that not even the best doctors in the world could achieve.

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Frieda looked her grandfather over and finally nodded with a smile. "That's good to hear."

Then, she turned to Aubree and added, "Have you come to visit Grandpa too, Aubree? Since it's getting late, why don't you stay for dinner?"

Naturally, Aubree had no objections to that and grinned broadly. "In that case, don't mind if I stay and bother you, Old Mr. Queen."

Alfred merely chuckled and nodded.

Now that Frieda was home, Roxanne hastened her packing, not wanting to stay and interact with the women any further.

Just then, Alfred smiled and turned to her. "Dr. Jarvis, why don't you stay for dinner too? I could use this opportunity to thank you properly."

Roxanne froze momentarily and was racking her brain for an excuse when Alfred continued, "Invite Lucian over too. It'd be great to gather everyone for a hearty meal. We can treat it as a celebration of my recovery, can't we? Besides, it's been a while since I had any fun."

Needless to say, Jonathan acceded to his grandfather's request and immediately left the room to call Lucian.

That, however, made Roxanne's heart skip a beat. After packing her tools back into the medical box, she hurriedly stood up and bid farewell to Alfred. "Since it's a family dinner, I don't think it'd be appropriate for me to join. If you really must thank me, we can always find another day for it, Old Mr. Queen."

Although Roxanne had met Lucian plenty of times since she returned from overseas and was also acutely aware of his relationship with Aubree, she truly loathed the thought of seeing them together.

In fact, the mental image of them sitting next to each other was enough to make her feel ill at ease.

Therefore, it was no surprise that she was in a hurry to leave.

It was apparent that Roxanne was reluctant to stay, and it didn't take long for Frieda to figure out why. "But you're my grandfather's lifesaver, Dr. Jarvis. Let's dispense with the formalities, shall we?" Frieda said as her lips curled into a sardonic smile. "Moreover, this is Grandpa's way of showing his appreciation. Join us for dinner if you have nothing on later."

Realizing that Frieda was up to no good, Roxanne's brows creased slightly.

Jonathan had just gotten off the phone when he overheard Frieda's words. Thinking that his sister was merely trying to be a good host, he chimed in, "Lucian will be coming over in a bit. You've met him before. I'm sure he'd like some updates on Grandpa's recovery, so it'd be good if you could stay to help answer his questions."

Since she couldn't bring herself to say no to that, Roxanne could only nod in agreement.

Frieda walked up to hold Aubree's arm while giving Roxanne a mocking gaze. Well, well, well. I can't believe the doctor really has the guts to stay.

As it turned out, Frieda only asked Roxanne to stay because Alfred had invited Lucian, and she wanted nothing more than to mess with the doctor.

Given Roxanne's relationship with Lucian, I wonder how she'd react when she sees him with other women. Oh, I can't wait to find out!

Chapter 89

Before the group headed downstairs, Alfred asked Roxanne if he could get out of bed in his condition. As soon as he got the green light, he let Jonathan and the butler hold him and slowly made his way down the stairs.

Roxanne kept her head hung low as she sat at the dining table, trying her best to make herself less visible.

Unfortunately, Frieda seemed to want to make things difficult by intentionally firing questions at Aubree and her every so often.

On account of Alfred, Roxanne answered them all.

A while later, the butler's voice rang out from the door. noveldrama

"Mr. Farwell."

arvThen, everyone heard Lucian give a brief response in his deep voice before seeing his tall and lean figure appear in front of them.

"Hello, Old Mr. Queen," Lucian greeted, his gaze slowly sweeping around the room. When his eyes fell on Roxanne, he couldn't help but pause a moment.

Roxanne dug her nails into her palms as she held his gaze and nodded at him calmly.

Without further ado, Lucian raised his brows and responded with a small smile.

"Take a seat, Lucian. Aubree's been waiting for you for almost half a day," Frieda said warmly, beckoning for him to sit beside Aubree.

Earlier, she had used the excuse of her grandfather wanting to thank Roxanne to get the latter to sit in front of Alfred while she and Jonathan plopped themselves down beside the doctor.

As such, the only seat left was the one next to Aubree.

However, knowing that Lucian had a closer relationship with Alfred than she did, Aubree immediately stood up and gave her seat to him.

That way, Lucian was now beside Alfred and also directly opposite Roxanne.

Upon seeing him sit facing her, Roxanne felt herself tensing up as she slowly lowered her gaze.

When dinner started, she quietly tucked into her meal and only spoke when Alfred talked to her.

As for Aubree, she was more concerned about Lucian's attitude toward Roxanne than anything else. Even when she was getting food for Alfred, she'd check Lucian's line of sight and frequently talk to him so he wouldn't focus too much on Roxanne.

Of course, Roxanne was unaware of Aubree's motives. All she knew was that their conversation really made them seem like a family, and she couldn't shake off the uncomfortable feeling stirring inside her.

Frieda glanced at Roxanne and was surprised to see her still so calm and composed. Hence, she turned to Aubree and said with a lilt to her voice, "Aubree, you and Lucian look so much in love! Have you picked a date for your wedding yet? I'm still waiting to be your bridesmaid!"

As soon as those words were out, Roxanne froze in her tracks.

Huh? What did she mean by that? Are Lucian and Aubree not married yet?

Aubree, too, felt her smile freezing in place. After all, she hadn't expected Frieda to bring up the wedding right there and then.

Just as she began thinking about how best to change the topic, she felt Alfred's concerned gaze on them. "That's right. The two of you have been together for so many years. Even Estella has grown up too. Isn't it time to settle down?"

"Yes, you guys should've gotten married a long time ago. I don't even know why you've dragged it on until now," Jonathan teased.

For a moment, everyone had their eyes on Lucian as they waited for his response.

However, instead of replying immediately, he merely shot a quick look at the woman opposite him.

Even though it was a brief moment, it hadn't gone unnoticed by those at the dining table.

Roxanne clenched her fists and managed to suppress her doubts before lifting her gaze to meet Lucian's.

Their eyes met for a fleeting second, and Lucian noticed the indifference on Roxanne's face. He furrowed his brows, a trace of displeasure in his heart.

Chapter 90

Aubree hadn't taken her eyes off Lucian, so when she saw him glancing at Roxanne for the marriage question, she began to burn with envy.

"There's no need to rush the wedding," Lucian replied, still staring at Roxanne.

Ha! Let's see if she can still be so calm after this!

Although Roxanne was taken aback momentarily by Lucian's reply, it didn't take long for her to regain her composure.

So what if they aren't married yet? It's only a matter of time before they do. Why should I be surprised?

With that, Roxanne lowered her gaze and casually resumed eating. It was as though the earlier interaction had absolutely nothing to do with her.

Aubree, on the other hand, found Lucian's reply rather surprising. How weird. When I last spoke to Lucian about the wedding, he already hinted at wanting to call it off. Why would he change his mind now?

Alfred frowned, clearly unhappy with Lucian's reply.

However, before he could say anything more, Aubree hastily said, "Lucian's right. In any case, I won't be running off anytime. There's no need to rush, Old Mr. Queen. We're doing just fine, aren't we? Besides, it hasn't been easy for Lucian to find time to visit you, so let's not talk about us. We should be talking about happier things!"

If we drag this topic on any longer, I'm afraid Lucian might turn the tables and reveal his intention to end our engagement. How can I risk letting him say that in front of Roxanne? I'd be so humiliated if he

did!

Once again, the eagle-eyed Jonathan noticed Aubree's reluctance to talk about the wedding and chimed in, "That's Lucian for you. He loves his job more than anything else. Leave them be, Grandpa. I'm sure Lucian has his plans."

"I don't deny that work is important, but it isn't right to keep putting off the wedding, is it?" Alfred grumbled. "It's been so many years, yet Estella still doesn't have a mother to look after her. I don't know what you guys are thinking, but I know my heart aches for her!"

Flustered, Aubree gave a brief and vague response.

As soon as she thought about Estella, Roxanne, too, felt a little heartbroken.

Ah, no wonder the kid's always clinging to me. It's because she doesn't have a mother,

Just as she became lost in her thoughts, she suddenly heard Alfred calling her.

"What about you, Dr. Jarvis? Are you married?"

Roxanne snapped out of her daze and replied after a moment of stunned silence, "No. Not yet."

Alfred looked her up and down and curled his lips into a satisfied smile. “What do you think about Jonathan? Would you like to consider him?”

After several treatments, Alfred had long developed an admiration for Roxanne. It would, without a doubt, be even better if she could join their family as his granddaughter-in-law.

Caught off guard by the question, Roxanne stared back at Alfred, open-mouthed and speechless.

Frieda shot a disgusted glance at Roxanne and scoffed, “Stop trying to play matchmaker, Grandpa. No matter how capable Dr. Jarvis is, it still won’t change the fact that she already has children. As far as I know, they aren’t very young either. Given my brother’s caliber, how can you tell him to marry a divorcee with kids? You may approve of it, but I won’t! Not ever!”

“Is that so? Well, I never knew that,” Alfred muttered, genuinely surprised.

“Yes, I’ve been divorced once. I don’t think I’d be good enough for Mr. Queen.”

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Hearing that, Alfred drew his brows together disapprovingly. “So what if you’re a divorcee? Given your talents, I’m sure you have no lack of suitors. What’s this nonsense about not being good enough? If the two of you do fall in love, I’ll be the first to give my stamp of approval!”

Touched by Alfred’s enthusiasm, Roxanne chuckled. “Thank you for thinking so highly of me, Old Mr. Queen. Unfortunately, I don’t think Mr. Queen and I are suited for each other. Don’t worry. I’ll continue to keep an eye out for a suitable man.” noveldrama

“Yes. It must be tough being a single mother. Get married once you’ve found a suitable partner,” Alfred said with a nod.

Roxanne, too, bobbed her head in agreement.

As Lucian watched Alfred and Roxanne enjoying their chat, his gaze gradually darkened.

Chapter 91

After dinner, Alfred returned to his room to rest.

Roxanne followed him to give him one final checkup before heading downstairs to bid her goodbye.

“It’s so late now. Let me give you a lift home;” Jonathan piped up.

“No, it’s fine,” Roxanne replied with a smile. “You still have guests to entertain.”

Jonathan knew she was right and decided not to insist further. “In that case, please be careful on your way home. Oh, by the way, I hope you won’t take my grandfather’s words to heart. At his age, he tends to worry about things like that.”

Roxanne merely smiled and turned to leave.

“It’s getting late, and I still have work to do. I think I’ll be taking my leave now,” Lucian suddenly said when he saw Roxanne walking out of the mansion.

Aubree, who had become very wary, decided to follow suit. “Oh, I’m also thinking about leaving. Let’s go together, then.” “No. It’s not like we’re taking the same routes. I’ll be going now,” Lucian answered indifferently, striding off before Aubree could say anything else.

As she watched him walk away, Aubree stood in a daze, her face frozen with shock.

Jonathan, too, couldn’t help but furrow his brows.

Since dinner started, he could already feel something was wrong between Lucian and the two women, but unfortunately, he couldn’t put his finger on it. noveldrama

“Aubree?” Frieda mumbled, baffled at how stunned her friend was.

Thankfully, Aubree was brought back to her senses and quickly forced out a smile. “Well, I still have work to do, so I shan’t disturb you guys any longer.”

Even though Jonathan and Frieda could tell that something was amiss with Aubree, they refrained from asking any more questions. After exchanging a few more words, they eventually saw her off.

Once they were back in the mansion, Jonathan immediately turned to his sister. “Hey, how did you know that Dr. Jarvis has kids?”

Frieda pursed her lips. “I saw them when I was out for lunch with Aubree. Oh, I also know that she’s Lucian’s ex-wife! I can’t believe she had the gall to come back!”

Upon hearing that, Jonathan was momentarily shocked before realization dawned on him.

No wonder I had the nagging feeling that there was some awkwardness between Dr. Jarms and Lucian! She's the woman from six years ago!

Even after leaving the mansion and getting into her car, Roxanne still felt pretty unsettled from the conversations at the dining table.

She took a moment to collect her thoughts and only started the car when she had calmed herself down.

All of a sudden, someone rapped on the window.

Roxanne whipped her head around in the direction of the sound, but when she saw who it was, she looked away and pretended not to have heard anything.

Alas, the person outside knocked on the window again, going so far as to bend down to peer into the car.

Even though Roxanne knew no one could see her from the outside, she couldn't help but tense up. After some hesitation, she finally gave in and rolled down the window. "What is it?"

As it turned out, Lucian had been the one standing beside the car. When he heard Roxanne's voice, he calmly raised his brows. "I didn't drive here today. Mind giving me a lift if it's convenient for you?",

With that, he reached a hand out for the car door.

Unfortunately, before Roxanne could even get her bearings, Lucian had already entered the car and settled into the passenger seat.

He promptly fastened his seatbelt and added, "Let's go."

Roxanne finally came to her senses, but she was anything but pleased. "Where's your chauffeur?"

"It's already so late. Since I can easily get a ride, why should I trouble him to come all the way here!"

Those words rendered Roxanne speechless, and it took a while before she blurted out, "If I remember correctly, Ms. Pearson hasn't left either. I think she'd be happy to give you a lift."

Chapter 92

Chapter 92 Estella

As soon as the words left Roxanne's mouth, an awkward silence befell the car.

Having realized what she had said, she instantly felt a pang of regret and lowered her gaze, not saying anything more.

Lucian stared at Roxanne's side profile, his gaze dark and indecipherable.

Does she resist me this much? Why must she always push me to Aubree?

After a while, he replied coldly, "She still has something on and doesn't have plans to leave yet."

Roxanne gripped the steering wheel angrily.

How dare he! Aubree's too busy to give him a lift, but that doesn't mean I'm obliged to do so!

Unfortunately, with the way Lucian sat unmoving in his seat, Roxanne knew she'd never be able to chase him out of the car. As such, she had no choice but to start the engine and drive off from the Queens' mansion.

At the same time, Aubree marched out of the mansion and immediately turned livid when she saw Lucian through the rearview mirror.

Without further ado, she hopped into her car and followed them.

Once they had gotten onto the main road, Roxanne suddenly recalled something. "Where are you going?"

Lucian had had a long day at work and still had to rush over to join Alfred for dinner. Now that he finally found a moment of peace, he could feel the waves of exhaustion washing over him.

After hearing Roxanne's question, he quickly massaged his temples to wake himself up. "To the office. I remember it's along the way for you."

"It's already so late, though. Are you still going to work overtime?" Roxanne asked gently, her brows knitted as she glanced at him.

Lucian merely hummed his acknowledgment, too tired to say anything else.

For some reason, he always felt so relaxed when he was around Roxanne.

Seeing as how Lucian had no intention to talk, Roxanne, too, continued driving in silence.

However, every time she thought about how he was sitting right beside her, questions would start flooding her mind.

She remembered that before their divorce. Lucian had once said Aubree was the only woman qualified to marry him and that their marriage had to be put on hold solely because of Roxanne.

Naturally, that became a thorn in her side for years.

It was much later when she finally thought things through and decided to grant Lucian his freedom.

I thought that once I left, he'd immediately marry Aubree. But it's been six years since then, and they still haven't had their wedding. What on earth happened during that time?

With that in mind, Roxanne instinctively glanced at the man beside her. She was on the verge of shooting the question when she once again suppressed that urge.

Ultimately, this is a private matter between Lucian and Aubree. What right do I have to question them when I'm nothing more than an outsider? Besides, whatever happened between them couldn't possibly be my fault.

Lucian closed his eyes. Just when he hoped he could finally rest his mind, a wave of random thoughts instantly came over him.

He didn't know what had gotten over him either. His chauffeur had been waiting for him outside the mansion, but when he saw Roxanne getting into her car, all he wanted was to follow her.

By the time Lucian realized what he had done, he had already come face to face with Roxanne through the car window.

Of course, it went without saying that he had to get into the car.

Could it be because I overheard Roxanne's conversation with Old Mr. Queen? The sheer thought of her marrying some other guy makes me so frustrated!

All of a sudden, the ringing of Lucian's phone broke the silence in the car.

He quickly gathered his thoughts and stared at the caller display, his gaze darkening as he did.

"Mr. Farwell, when are you coming back? Ms. Estella has a fever." Catalina said anxiously.

Lucian's expression turned cold immediately. "Got it. I'll be right back."

As soon as he hung up the phone, he turned to Roxanne. "Can you please send me back to the manor? Essie's not feeling well, so I have to go check on her."

Chapter 93

P anne overheard Catalina's words through the phone and know Estella wasn't feeling well. She

promptly got worried.

After hearing what Lucian had to say, she made a U-turn and sped toward the Farwell residence.

Twenty minutes later, her car rolled to a stop outside the Farwell residence.

Recalling Estella's condition, Roxanne shot the man a dubious look. "Take good care of Essie. If you need my help, just let me know anytime."

Lucian met her gaze mockingly. "If you're that worried about her, why don't you take a look at her? Besides, Essie adores you. If she sees you when she's sick, I believe she'll feel better."

With that said, he opened the door and got out before heading in the direction of the mansion.

It appeared he was leaving it up to her whether she wanted to visit Estella.

The sight of his back caused Roxanne to frown slightly.

Essie's sick. Shouldn't he get her mother to visit her? No matter how busy Aubree is, she won't ignore her sick daughter, right? As the thought of the little girl sick in bed popped up in her mind, she exited the car and walked into the mansion behind Lucian.

na

The moment Lucian stepped into the house, Catalina came forward to greet him with Estella in her arms.

"Mr. Farwell, you're finally back. Ms. Estella's sick, so I wanted her to rest in bed. However, she insisted on waiting for you. I had no choice but to keep her company downstairs," Catalina reported.

Estella's cheeks were flushed, and there was a cooling patch stuck on her forehead. She looked really weak.

At the sight of her father, she stretched her arms out to ask him to hold her.

Lucian took her into his arms and tested her temperature. His brows snapped together as he asked, "Why did she suddenly have a fever?"

Catalina cast Estella a worried look. "Ms. Estella seemed to be in low spirits after she got home from kindergarten. She ate little at dinner. I thought she was sleepy and brought her upstairs to take a shower before realizing she was running a temperature. I called the family doctor, who prescribed her some medicine. However, Ms. Estella insisted on seeing you before she would head to bed," she explained.

Lucian shot her a curt nod and patted Estella's back. "Do you still feel unwell?" he inquired, concern evident in his voice.

Estella flung her arms around Lucian's neck and buried her head into the crook of his neck

before giving a weak nod.

Lucian patted her head comfortingly.

"Mr. Farwell, now that you're back, you should bring her upstairs so she can rest," Catalina urged.

However, Lucian hesitated. "Let's wait for a bit."

Catalina gazed at him in bafflement, for she had no idea what he was waiting for.

She was starting to panic when light footsteps sounded at the door.

Why does that sound like a woman?

The three of them turned to look at the door.

Lucian's gaze softened at the sight of the newcomer.

Catalina stiffened in disbelief. She couldn't believe her eyes when she realized who the newcomer

was.

Roxanne had just stepped into the house when she realized three pairs of eyes had landed on her. She immediately halted in her tracks.

She was filled with mixed emotions when she realized the mansion looked almost the same.

Six years ago, this was her house.

She had lived here for a few years. Lucian might be indifferent to her, but he allowed her to do anything she wanted.

Thus, some of the decorations in the house were bought by her.

She thought Lucian would change everything after her departure, but to her surprise, everything remained the same six years later.

After glancing around the house briefly, Roxanne averted her gaze and scoffed at herself silently.

I can't believe I'm feeling nostalgic after seeing the old decorations.

Never in her wildest dreams did she realize that Lucian didn't touch any decorations as he never paid any attention to them.

Chapter 94

Snapping out of her reverie, Roxanne tamped down her feelings and went to them.

Estella was running a fever, but her eyes were sparkling adorably. She had brightened up considerably after spotting Roxanne and was staring at the latter earnestly.

Roxanne gave her a concerned look.

In response, Estella reached out to ask Roxanne to hold her.

Seeing that, Roxanne glanced at Lucian instinctively.

She's sick, so why is she asking a stranger to hold her instead of staying with her dad? What will Lucian think about her action?

To her surprise, Lucian offered Estella to her calmly.

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After a brief hesitation, Roxanne took Estella into her arms...The moment Roxanne touched the little girl, she could feel the heat emanating from the small

body. Estella felt like a heater in her arms.

Without a second's hesitation, Roxanne pressed her cheek to Estella's to check the latter's temperature.

The cooling sensation from her cheek caused Estella's eyes to droop as she let out a soft sigh.

"You're running a high fever," Roxanne commented as she hugged Estella closer. Softly, she asked, "Essie, do you feel uncomfortable?"

Estella nodded silently.

As the little girl's eyes were red from the fever, Roxanne felt her heart ache. Turning to Catalina, she asked, "Has she taken her medicine?"

Catalina regained her composure and nodded hastily. "Yes."

Carefully, she observed Roxanne and asked, "Mrs. Farwell, when did you return?"

Catalina had worked for the Farwell family for some time and used to serve Roxanne briefly when the latter married into the Farwell family. Back then, she had a lot of respect for the younger woman.

Hence, she was quite surprised to learn that Roxanne had left without saying goodbye.

I can't believe Mrs. Farwell is back!

Roxanne was taken aback to hear her greeting. Flashing a smile, she replied, "I've been back for some time. Please don't address me that way. I left the Farwell family six years ago."

Realization struck Catalina as she lamented, "You haven't changed, so I thought... Forget it. I'll

take note of that next time."

Roxanne bobbed her head.

Catalina added, "Are you here to visit Ms. Estella?"

Roxanne explained, "We bumped into each other at my patient's house. I heard that Essie was sick and decided to come to pay her a visit."

Hearing that, Catalina felt a stab in her heart. "That's good. Ms. Estella will surely get better quickly if you keep her company," she muttered under her breath.

Roxanne assumed Catalina was referring to the fact that she was a doctor and could treat Estella's condition by taking care of her. Chuckling, she inclined her head and promised, "Don't worry. I'll help out if Essie needs me."
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Catalina was puzzled after hearing her reply.

Was

Why is Ms. Jarvis acting all formal? Ms. Estella is her daughter. Isn't it natural for her to take care of her sick daughter? Besides, Ms. Estella would feel better if her mother were to stay by her side. Back then, it was Ms. Jarvis who

treated my headaches. I know she's a great doctor, so she is definitely capable of treating Ms. Estella's fever.

A wave of regret hit Catalina when she recalled the times Roxanne was still around.

Ms. Jarvis is pretty and smart. However, she never put on airs before us. She treated us as though we were part of her family.

She couldn't help but compare Roxanne to Aubree. Ms. Pearson, however, often shows up here without informing anyone. When Mr. Farwell isn't around, she acts as though she's the lady of the house and orders us around arrogantly. She never shows us any respect. I don't know what Mr. Farwell sees in her...

Lucian fell into a daze temporarily when he heard how Catalina addressed Roxanne.

However, when Roxanne corrected Catalina, his feelings became complicated.

Chapter 95

The sight of Roxanne standing together with the other two reminded Catalina of the past. She wanted them to spend more time together and left after exchanging a few pleasantries.

Soon, only the three of them were left in the living room.

Lucian's eyes darkened as he stared at them.

Sensing his gaze, Roxanne turned slightly and went to the couch to place Estella down.

However, Estella grabbed her shoulders tightly and refused to let her go.

Seeing this, Roxanne sat on the couch with her and said gently, "Essie, be a good girl. You're sick and need to go to bed early. Do you want me to lull you to sleep?"

Estella buried her nose into the crook of Roxanne's neck and shook her head.

Roxanne's brows knitted. "Don't you want to sleep?"

The little girl nodded and turned at her shoulder to point at the notebook on the table. Roxanne reached out and grabbed the notebook for her. She watched as Estella scribbled something on the notebook.

You'll leave if I fall asleep. I don't want you to leave.

After scribbling that down, Estella pursed her lips unhappily.

Roxanne read what she wrote as surprise flashed across her eyes.

Is Estella that attached to me?

Lucian had also read Estella's words. He glanced at Roxanne and said sternly, "Ms. Jarvis has to go home. Be good and go to bed."

Estella pouted and whipped her head around to seek Roxanne's confirmation.

Roxanne nodded.

The boys were waiting for her at home. Lysa was taking care of them, but she would still worry about them.

Besides, she didn't know how she should spend a night in the house she used to live in. noveldrama

At her silent affirmation, Estella looked down sadly. She kept fiddling with the corner of Roxanne's top and nearly crumpled it.

Roxanne couldn't bear to see her upset.

A while later, Estella released her grip on the corner of Roxanne's top.

Roxanne thought she was about to go to bed, but the little girl picked up the notebook again.

I want Daddy to bring the boys over. Please don't leave, Ms, Jarvis.

After writing that, Estella turned around and wrapped her hands around Roxanne's neck pitifully. She refused to let go.

Feeling the abnormal heat from the young girl's body, Roxanne couldn't bring herself to say no.

Can

Finally, she sighed inwardly and caved in. "All right. I won't leave. You can sleep now."

Estella raised her head suspiciously.

Roxanne gave her head a comforting pat. "I'll keep you company, so shut your eyes and sleep."

Estella snuggled into her arms and promptly fell asleep. Her head rested on Roxanne's shoulder, and she gripped Roxanne's top tightly as though she was afraid the latter would leave secretly.

Roxanne felt her heart melt as she stared at the girl in her arms.

Lucian's gaze dimmed when he saw their exchange. He joined them on the adjoining couch and told the butler to prepare two cups of coffee for them. Pulling his phone out, he proceeded to work from home.

He hadn't been lying when he claimed he had to work overtime earlier. Recently, he had been extremely busy.

Silence ensued in the living room.

Hearing Estella's steady breathing, Roxanne told the butler to bring her a blanket to cover Estella's body.

The little girl flipped over in her arms as though the heat bothered her.

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Carefully, Roxanne wiped the sweat off Estella's brows, her eyes filled with gentleness.

Chapter 96

She was busy taking care of Estella when her phone rang in her bag

Afraid Estella would rouse, she immediately covered Estella's ears and was about to get up to take her phone. To her surprise, Lucian got to his feet and came over to her with her phone.

"Thank you," Roxanne thanked him softly.

Glancing at the screen, she immediately berated herself for forgetting about her sons.

"Mommy!" the boys yelled the minute the call connected. "When are you coming home?"

Roxanne lowered her voice. "I'm busy tonight, so I might come home late. Have you had dinner?"

The boys replied, "Yes, we did. What about you? Don't forget to take care of yourself even if you're busy!"

Touched, Roxanne chuckled. "I know. I've eaten earlier. Don't wait up for me. Good night!"

"Got it, Mommy. Try to come home as early as possible. Don't tire yourself out!" the boys responded in unison.

Her lips curved into a grin. Roxanne chatted with them briefly before hanging up.

Beside her, Lucian heard the boys' voices faintly and placed his work aside. He looked at her and was about to ask whether she had to head home to take care of them, but the sight of her tender expression made him change his mind.

"Who normally takes care of the boys when you're busy? Do they stay at home? Or do you hire someone to take care of them?" he asked.

Roxanne told him, "My friend helps out. Now, Lysa will take care of them."

Lucian asked, "Was it the same when you were working overseas?"

Despite not knowing why he posed that question, Roxanne answered instinctively, "I'd hire someone to take care of them or bring them to my workplace. My colleagues loved them."

Right after those words left her mouth, the living room went silent again.

Roxanne lowered her gaze to check on the little girl's condition.

"They're older now and easier to take care of. It must have been hard when they were younger," Lucian said suddenly. His gaze fell on her as he pretended to ask nonchalantly, "How old are the boys? They are of similar height to Essie, so they should be around the same age."

The sudden question made Roxanne's heart lurch to her throat.

Every time the boys spent time with Lucian, she worried that he'd discover the truth. Thus, she kept reminding the boys to keep their ages a secret.

She didn't expect to be asked the question in person.

Averting her gaze, she fell silent for some time before replying, "They are around four years old. It's normal for boys to grow faster than girls."

That was the answer she came to a consensus with Archie and Benny previously. It was a lie, for Lucian might recall the night from six years ago if he were to know the boys' real age. She didn't want that to happen.

After giving her answer, she waited anxiously for him to respond.

Sometime later, she heard the man grunt in acknowledgment.

As he didn't pursue the matter, Roxanne heaved a sigh of relief deep down.

Lucian returned his attention to the email on his phone, but he couldn't focus on work.

The boys are around four years old, so they are one year younger than Essie. That would mean that she ended up with another man right after giving birth to Essie. She then gave birth to the boys shortly after.

As that thought occurred to him, Lucian scowled in displeasure. noveldrama

They were both engrossed in their thoughts when Estella moved.

Roxanne lowered her head.

Estella's brows furrowed together as she started sobbing pitifully. Her entire face was scrunched up.

Chapter 97

Hearing her sobs, Lucian glanced in their direction.

Roxanne patted Estella's back comfortingly, but the latter's sobs merely grew louder. Tossing the blanket aside, she sat up and threw herself into Roxanne's arms.

Her hands held Roxanne's top tightly as she cried sadly. Gradually, she opened her eyes and stared at Roxanne's face intently.

Her sobs died down after she confirmed Roxanne was still around.

By then, her cheeks were crimson from her fever and sobs. Roxanne felt her heart aching, for the little girl reminded her of her boys.

"Hush, Essie. I'm right here. Don't cry," Roxanne cajoled her while wiping the tears off her cheeks tenderly. Estella sniffled as tears continued to trickle down. However, she wasn't about to release her grasp on Roxanne's top.

The sweat from her palms drenched Roxanne's top and crumpled it up. Nevertheless, Roxanne didn't utter a word and comforted her patiently.

Soon, Estella fell asleep. Even in her sleep, she couldn't stop sniffling.

Roxanne wrapped her up in the blanket gingerly, leaving only her hands outside since she was still holding Roxanne's top in her sleep.

An unfathomable glint flashed across Lucian's eyes as he watched their intimate exchange. In the end, he chose not to say a word.

Catalina was still worried, so she came over to check on them. She was pleased to see Estella sound asleep in Roxanne's arms. "Indeed, Ms. Estella can sleep soundly when she's with you. Previously, she was a difficult child whenever she got sick. No one could calm her down, not even Mr. Farwell."

Roxanne widened her eyes in disbelief. noveldrama

What about Aubree? She's Essie's mother. Can't she calm Essie down? By the way, why didn't she show up at all now that Essie's sick? Where is she? Doesn't she care about her daughter?

She was about to pose that question when Lucian's voice rang out.

"She'll probably wake up again tonight. Why don't you bring her to the guest room? You'll get to rest there, too."

Catalina chimed in, "Yes, it's late. You came here with Mr. Farwell after work, so you must be exhausted. You should head upstairs and get some rest along with Ms. Estella.

Roxanne swallowed her question and shot the second floor a hesitating look. The past events emerged in her mind as bitterness engulfed her heart. She shook her head to reject the offer. "No

nccd. I'll just rest here briefly. Essie only fell asleep a while ago, so I don't want to wake her."

Lucian and Catalina gave up on trying to convince her to change her mind.

Catalina then chatted with her briefly before leaving them alone.

The living room turned quiet.

Roxanne's guard was still up after Lucian mentioned Archie and Benny's age, so she gazed at the sleeping little girl and avoided looking at him.

Lucian didn't utter a word for a long while, so she gradually relaxed.

Her schedule had been packed today. In the afternoon, she had spent a lot of effort treating Alfred, so her energy was quite low by now.

Estella's warm body and steady breathing made Roxanne grow drowsy.

Despite trying her best to stay awake, she soon fell into a deep sleep.

Chapter 98

The living room was enveloped in silence for some time.

Lucian lifted his head to see Roxanne sleeping with Estella in her arms.

As she was holding Estella, her posture was awkward, so she couldn't really sleep peacefully. Every time she woke up to shift slightly, she would tighten her arms.

That very sight pulled at Lucian's heartstrings.

Catalina showed up again to check on Estella. She had just arrived at the couch when her employer gestured for her to lower her voice.

Tiptoeing over, Catalina glanced at the sleeping mother and daughter on the couch. A smile nudged her lips.

Indeed, the bond between mother and daughter can never be broken. They haven't met for years, but Ms. Estella is still instinctively attached to her mother, and Ms. Jarvis adores her daughter.

She frowned at the sight of the little blanket barely covering their bodies and tiptoed away. Soon, she came back with a bigger blanket and offered it to Lucian. Lucian's brows snapped together. He hesitated briefly before accepting the blanket from Catalina. Bending his body, he draped the blanket over them carefully and tucked Roxanne in.

After that, he was about to get up when his gaze landed on Roxanne's sleeping face.

Lucian froze, and he couldn't keep his gaze off her.

This was the first time he had ever seen her up close.

It was obvious that she wasn't sleeping well. Her lashes would flutter occasionally as though she would wake up any minute.

Lucian wondered when she would wake up.

Suddenly, she frowned in her sleep as her head slipped off the couch.

Before she could fall off the couch, Lucian reached out instinctively to protect her head. She fell into his embrace instead.

Suddenly, he registered the sensation of her soft cheek brushing against his palm.

Lucian's gaze turned dark. Afraid of waking her up, he didn't move an inch.

Roxanne was in his embrace, and Estella was in Roxanne's embrace.

Seeing that, a thought occurred to Catalina. Ms. Jarvis left six years ago, but it might not be impossible for her to come back.

She beamed at them and suggested, "Mr. Farwell, you should bring them upstairs to get some

rest. If Ms. Jarvis sleeps here tonight, her body will ache tomorrow. She still has to go to work, right?"

A deep line appeared in the middle of Lucian's brows as he pondered over her suggestion. Shortly after, he gave a curt nod.

Catalina took Estella in her arms. Fortunately, Estella was sound asleep and didn't wake up despite being moved.

Holding Estella in her arms, Catalina grinned and said, "You'll have to bring Ms. Jarvis upstairs."

Then, she stood aside and waited for Lucian to take action.

Lucian paused upon hearing those words.

It took him a long while before he made up his mind and picked Roxanne up carefully.

In his arms, Roxanne's head lolled aside weakly before he rested her head on his shoulder. Even after he got to his feet, she didn't rouse.

Lucian stared at her and frowned unhappily.

She's as light as a feather. Has she not been taking care of herself over the years?

Catalina flashed a gratified smile at the sight of Lucian carrying Roxanne.

No matter what, Mr. Farwell and Ms. Jarvis are the perfect couple!

Chapter 99

Roxanne was indeed knackered. Usually, she was a light sleeper. However, she slept so soundly that night and didn't even realize that she was being brought upstairs to the guest room.

Lucian came to a stop beside the bed and placed her down. He made sure her head was resting on the pillow before he got to his feet.

Behind them, Catalina's grin widened when she saw how Lucian took care of Roxanne. She put Estella beside Roxanne and tucked them in before stepping back.

As Lucian was still gazing at Roxanne, she offered, "Mr. Farwell, why don't you get some rest? I'll keep them company. You have to head to the office tomorrow, right?"

Lucian shook his head. "No need for that. I'm not tired. Essie's sick, so I'll take care of her myself. You can get off work now."

Catalina was amused. He's worried about Ms. Estella? But his eyes are fixed on Ms. Jarvis! Hmm, it should be a good idea to leave them alone. They can spend some time together and hopefully grow closer as a family.

With that thought in mind, Catalina left the room quietly.

The only light source in the room came from a dim night lamp. Under the light, Lucian observed Roxanne's features without a word.

She still had the same gorgeous face from six years ago, but when her eyes were open, she would be a completely different person.

In fact, he found himself attracted to her now when he wasn't interested in her in the past,

I wonder how she spent the last six years.

A while later, Roxanne's brows furrowed all of a sudden.

Lucian frowned as well. Is she having a nightmare? What could it be? She seems uneasy even when she's asleep.

In a dream, Roxanne was back to the day when Lucian shot her a disgusted look.

He didn't even utter a word, but Roxanne could already tell what he was going to say. She staggered backward and covered her ears so she wouldn't hear what he had to say.

Even so, the man's cruel words resonated in her brain, "I'll never like you!"

That sentence reverberated around and refused to die down.

Feeling suffocated, Roxanne struggled for some time before jolting awake.

Her surroundings were dark, so it felt like she was still in a dream.

Roxanne's heart sank to her stomach.

"What's wrong? Did you have a nightmare?" Lucian's deep voice rang beside her.

His voice overlapped with the voice she heard in her dream.

Roxanne's heart lurched as she lifted her head to look at him.

The man stood in the shadows, so his expression wasn't visible. When she didn't reply to him, he frowned and took another step forward.

Roxanne thought she was still in her dreams and panicked when he moved. Instinctively, she held the corner of the bed and retreated hastily.

Lucian halted in his tracks and softened his voice. "What did you dream of?"

After he stepped out of the shadows, Roxanne saw the concern on his face.
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It took a few seconds for Roxanne to realize that she was no longer dreaming. She regained her composure and replied calmly, "Nothing. It was just a nightmare."

She turned and saw Estella sleeping soundly beside her. Reaching out, she felt the little girl's forehead.

Estella's fever had subsided by now, so she should be doing fine by morning.

Roxanne retracted her hand and got out of bed. After tidying herself, she said softly, "Essie will recover by morning, but make sure she doesn't catch a cold. I should head back now"

When she spun on her heels to leave, a large hand grabbed her wrist at once.