

ABANDONED 111

Chapter 111 Drawing Clear Boundaries

Estella was still playing with her doll on the carpet and couldn't help but glance at Roxanne every now and then.

She managed to hear their conversation loud and clear.

When she heard Roxanne asking her father why he expelled the two nice older boys, Estella frowned in confusion. She expected to hear her father explain that he had already gotten rid of that idea, but he didn't speak for a long time.

Estella pouted angrily.

Daddy's a liar and a bad guy! He promised me not to expel Archie and Benny but still ended up doing it!

With that thought in mind, Estella tossed her toy onto the floor angrily and ran upstairs without looking back.

I'll never trust Daddy again!

Lucian heard Estella running upstairs and felt an oncoming headache at the sight of her.

It was easy to figure out that she had overheard their conversation and misunderstood him again, causing her to throw another one of her little temper tantrums.

If he didn't explain, she would probably get even angrier.

Lucian massaged his temples and said in a deep voice, "I did talk to the head of kindergarten before, but after Estella was done throwing her tantrum, I told him not to expel the two of them. I really have no

clue what you're talking about. If you want, I can ask him for you."

Roxanne felt like he was simply faking it and said calmly, "Why should I believe you? It's already happened, and the head of kindergarten is under you. Naturally, he would stand with you no matter what you say. Lucian, do you really think I'm an idiot?"

She wasn't completely wrong.

Lucian could actually feel a headache beginning to clench in his skull, and he wanted to explain further, but the person in front of him had already stood up.

"I wish I never met you." Her tone was calm, and she enunciated each word clearly. As soon as the words left her lips, she turned around and left.

At this, Lucian's face immediately darkened, and he watched as she stalked off, almost boring a hole in her back with his stare.

As her figure slowly disappeared from his field of sight, Lucian took his phone out and called Cayden.

"Go and find out what happened at the kindergarten. Find out why the hell they went against my direct orders!"

Cayden could hear the pure rage in his boss' voice and immediately obeyed.

Roxanne began feeling exhausted after driving away from the Farwell residence and looked around, deciding to stop by a dark roadside so she could simply zone out.

Why is Lucian doing this? If he knew he was doing this to his own sons, how would he feel?

What would her two kids feel if they knew how much their father hated them?

Roxanne didn't even want to think about how the two of them would feel.

Besides, with Lucian there, she really didn't know where to send her two kids to.

She was afraid that every other kindergarten would turn her down for the same exact reasons.

Roxanne felt full of guilt toward Archie and Benny when she thought about what might happen to them in the near future. Her eyes began to redden once again, and countless tears began to fall like a string

of broken pearls down her cheeks.

She took in two deep breaths and forced herself to calm down.

This had finally made it clear to her that Lucian would never accept Archie and Benny as his own.

Archie and Benny only had her now, so she had to be strong for them.

Luckily, it was just a matter of not going to kindergarten. It was a good opportunity to really draw clear

boundaries with Lucian.

From today onward, she would make sure they no longer had anything to do with each other.

Chapter 112 I Will Not Keep Annoying You

After learning the truth, the two of them bid goodbye to Madilyn and trotted home sadly.

Madilyn didn't know she could be won over so easily. When she saw how disappointed the two kids

were, she hurriedly applied for a leave from work and went over to accompany them.

Archie and Benny were completely down.

All this time, they had been under the impression that their father probably didn't really hate them.

Now that they knew he had expelled them from school, they realized that he did actually hate their

guts.

Benny couldn't help but tear up at the thought, and his small hands clutched at the couch cover nervously, his small mouth pressed into a straight line.

Archie was also extremely disappointed, but he was slightly calmer compared to his brother.

When he saw the tears in Benny's eyes, he began to comfort his brother. "Don't cry over that bad man.

If he doesn't like us, then we shouldn't like him either. Besides, Mommy doesn't seem like she wants us to know about it, so let's pretend like we don't know, okay? Let's not make her worry."

Benny sniffed and nodded silently.

Meanwhile, Roxanne had just finished up at the kindergarten when she bumped into Lucian, who was sending Estella to school.

Estella looked as if she was in another mood and was pouting, barely letting her father drag her to school.

When their eyes met, Estella's gaze lit up as if she were excited about something.

Roxanne's heart lifted for a second but dropped again at the sight of the man next to the child.

The two of them quickly approached her.

Estella tugged at Roxanne's skirt lightly as she looked up at the latter with watery eyes, as if waiting for

her to say something.

Roxanne fell silent before stepping back slightly, removing her skirt from Estella's grip. "Archie and Benny won't be coming here anymore, so you should take care of yourself, okay? You can make friends with the other kids."

She saw the light in Estella's eyes slowly fading off as she spoke and Roxanne looked away, trying her best to sound calm. "I have to go to work. Goodbye."

After that, she walked past them and was about to go back to her car when a large hand grabbed her wrist.

Roxanne stopped abruptly and turned back, meeting his gaze dully. "Is there something you need, Mr. Farwell?"

Lucian frowned. "Expelling the boys was not my idea. This is a misunderstanding."

Roxanne scoffed at that. "I can't believe you're still trying to defend yourself now, Mr. Farwell. I'm willing

to hear your excuses, though. Who's the lucky one you chose to frame this time?"

Lucian didn't seem annoyed at her tone and said in a deep voice, "I asked Cayden to look into it. This

is all because of Aubree. Because of what I said previously, the head of kindergarten was under the assumption that I was okay with it.”

Lucian trailed off, full of regret about what he had said.

He had never felt so much regret in his life than the moment he learned about the reason behind the kids’ expulsion. If he hadn’t said that before, then the head of kindergarten wouldn’t have misunderstood.

He wanted to salvage the situation, so he had personally made a trip here today.

Unexpectedly, he had bumped into Roxanne.

Roxanne’s expression became even more scornful at his explanation. “Aubree? So basically it was your idea too, right? Who in Horington still doesn’t know about the marriage between the Pearson family and the Farwell family? Aren’t you afraid she’ll feel bad after hearing how desperately you’re trying to clear boundaries with her right now?”

She pulled her wrist out of the man’s grasp and said coldly, “Don’t worry, Mr. Farwell. I’m not shameless, and I won’t annoy you anymore, so you don’t have to explain anything to me.”

After that, she walked off without looking back.

A dark cloud formed over Lucian's expression as he watched her leave.

Estella began crying uncontrollably after standing in shock for a few seconds. She tossed her father's hand aside and started to run after Roxanne's car.

She had a feeling that she might not see Roxanne again after this.

Estella felt immense panic at the thought and she didn't know what to do.

In her panic, she tripped over a rock on the ground and fell.

Chapter 113 Her Autism Was Triggered

Lucian watched in astonishment while his daughter chased after Roxanne's car frantically.

She hasn't even met Roxanne that many times, so why is she so attached to her?

While Lucian was mired in bafflement, the girl suddenly fell over, jolting him to his senses. He promptly

hastened over to embrace her. "Are you okay? Let Daddy have a look at you."

Estella refused to let go of the arms she had wrapped tightly around his neck, and while he worried about her plight, he heard the little girl break into a sob.

For a moment, Lucian thought his ears were playing tricks on him.

Even if she was merely crying, that was the very first time she had broken her silence growing up.

Estella bawled her heart out and clung to him so tightly that he really felt it around his neck. In spite of the emotional turmoil he was experiencing, he endured it quietly and directed his own attention toward comforting her instead.

“Ms. Jarvis... want Ms. Jarvis...”

Estella’s abrupt and stuttering enunciations of these words took Lucian aback, as he had never expected those to be her first words.

To think that that woman would matter so much to her.

The thought of that left a bitter taste in his mouth. In the end, he could only tell the girl the truth between gritted teeth. “Ms. Jarvis is gone, but Daddy will be right here with you, so don’t cry anymore.”

Estella’s incessant weeping took so much out of her physically that her tiny body started trembling.

Bereft of options, Lucian could only ask for her to be excused from school and take her home.

On the way back, the little girl settled down, slowly but surely, only sniffing from time to time while she sat in the back seat in utter silence.

Disregarding everyone when they got back in, she went straight back to her room and slammed the

door behind her.

Lucian assumed that Estella must be on one of her usual tantrums, considering the frequency with which similar such outbursts from her had occurred before.

On top of everything else, his presence at the company was still very much needed that day.

After some deliberation, Lucian nonetheless asked Catalina to keep an eye on the girl before he drove over to the office.

When he was just about finished with his work in the afternoon, a call came in from Catalina. "Please come back home quickly, Mr. Farwell! I think that something might be wrong with Ms. Estella!"

She sounded almost panicky to him.

With his heart in his throat, Lucian immediately set aside whatever he had on hand and drove homeward like a bat out of hell.

"After you left, I tried to console Ms. Estella but saw that she had no reaction whatsoever no matter how I spoke to her..." Catalina was so unnerved that her voice was quivering.

With swift strides and a tremendous sense of urgency, Lucian made his way into Estella's room. Sitting

curled up in the corner with vacuous eyes, the girl did not respond to their entrance.

“Daddy knows how upset you are, Essie, but you will still get to see Ms. Jarvis in the future, all right?”

This, I promise you.”

In the past, the mention of Roxanne would at least elicit some sort of reaction from Estella, but this time, she was completely and unflinchingly immersed in her own world.

Lucian’s heart sank when he saw that.

From the girl’s reaction, it was evident that her autism had worked up.

That realization prompted Lucian to phone and request the immediate attention of his good friend,

James Lann.

James was a well-regarded professional in the field of psychology and had been the one responsible for treating Estella over the years.

Very quickly, James came by to check on Estella. He, too, became solemn after assessing her condition. Turning to the other two persons in the room, he said, “Please step outside. I’d like to try talking to her for a while.”

Lucian and Catalina cooperatively did as asked.

Inside the room, James patiently spoke to Estella, but whatever he said was only met by her unfocused stares.

Compared to their previous sessions together, this situation was proving to be significantly more challenging.

Chapter 114 Unhappy With Him

Close to an hour later, James stepped out of the room, looking quite exhausted.

Nothing had worked to the effect that he was hoping for, in spite of him having doled out every trick in the book that he knew of just to coax some manner of response from Estella.

“How did it go?” Lucian inquired anxiously.

James shook his head. “Essie has completely shut herself in. She has refused to communicate with anyone and is resistant even to me. My guess is that she must have been triggered by something. The only way to resolve this is by identifying the source of her trauma.”

Lucian’s expression dimmed when he heard that.

Seemingly unaware of the change in his friend’s mood, James continued to ask of the latter in earnest,

“Has Essie encountered any situation recently that might have brought about this change in her

emotional state?"

Memories of the kid breaking her silence because of Roxanne came flowing back to Lucian. The

answer thus became obvious to him.

After a moment's pause, Lucian recounted the events that transpired earlier that morning.

James was stunned after learning how that woman managed to bring about such a sharp fluctuation in

Estella's emotions. "Perhaps this woman may be the key. Essie's condition may see some

improvements if we could just get her to come over."

Getting that woman to come to Essie?

Recalling the manner of the former's departure that morning caused Lucian's brows to bunch up in

frustration. "Got it. I'll try to talk to her about this."

James nodded.

Elsewhere, Roxanne remained completely in the dark about Estella's predicament.

Unsure whether it was owing to what Lucian said to her, she had been feeling rather unsettled since

leaving the kindergarten premises behind.

As she reflected upon it, the man's tone of voice and expression did not seem feigned, but she had

logical cause to believe that Lucian must be somehow involved.

All the way home, Roxanne's mood had been in the doldrums but driven by concerns that her children would notice, she did her best to collect herself.

The two wee ones had already sorted themselves out. When they saw her enter, they approached docilely. "Are you done with the paperwork, Mommy?"

Smilingly, Roxanne nodded as though nothing was wrong. She even mentioned her meeting with Estella. "It's done. I've also spoken to Essie on your behalf."

"Thanks, Mommy!" The children expressed their gratitude biddably.

Patting them on the head gave Roxanne a greater sense of rootedness.

Opposite them, the sight of the drama between the trio that was playing out in front of her pained Madilyn, who had become increasingly unhappy with Lucian.

Leading their mother by her hands, the two kids sat her down on the couch excitedly. "Since we can't go to kindergarten but haven't enrolled for tuition yet, would we be allowed to take a short break?"

The doting mother of the pair of boys consented to their stated request without hesitancy. "Sure. I can

make arrangements for you to attend tuition after you've rested enough."

"In that case, could you also take a break for a while?" Benny hugged Roxanne's arm, appearing

adorable. "It's been so long since we've been here that we've gone out together. Take us out to play,

won't you, Mommy? Archie and I would really like to go visit Universe Park because Aunt Madilyn told

us that it is lots of fun!"

In their discussion prior, they had come to the conclusion that their father's decision to have them

expelled from the kindergarten could have saddened their mother no less than it did them, so they

thought about getting her to go out and take a load off.

Roxanne appeared a little apprehensive.

Guessing as much how they felt, she thus chose to accommodate them. "I haven't been there in quite a

while too. Seeing that I'm on leave today, why don't we head there together?"

Coupled with the fact that there she had nothing pressing to do over at the research institute, Roxanne

was in no mood to go in for work anyway. Hence, she dispensed with her own hesitancy and assented.

Gathering a few things, the four of them then set off for Universe Park together.

Chapter 115 We Will Protect You

Soon enough, the four of them arrived at Universe Park.

Even though Archie and Benny wanted to make their mother feel better, they had also been wanting to have some fun since before they arrived and had already come up with a plan.

Right after they entered, both of them tugged at Roxanne's hands, saying that they wanted to go to Jurassic Park to see the dinosaurs.

She agreed to it and brought them to the park. Both children were so engrossed in their surroundings.

Once they left Jurassic Park, they headed straight to the ET Adventure Ride for a trip to space on bicycles with the alien, ET.

Roxanne was already feeling a little tired after the two rides. However, Archie and Benny were still in high spirits, and they went on many other rides after that.

Each time they went on a new ride, they would insist on getting their pictures taken, and their mother would do as they wished every time.

All the negative emotions from the past few days were forgotten having been distracted by their antics.

After the discussion with James, Lucian still felt that it would be best if they called Roxanne over as soon as possible. Hence, he quickly gave her a call.

However, she never picked up the call.

His expression dimmed at that.

After spending some time with her, he had almost forgotten how ruthless the woman could be.

Not only would she not listen to his explanation, but she had also blocked his number on her phone too. It was as though she was trying to show him how resolute she was.

“How is it?” James’ heart sank when he noticed the man’s expression.

Time wasn’t on Estella’s side. The longer they waited, the worse her condition would get.

Lucian followed his gaze and glanced at the little girl’s room, his voice low as he said, “Please stay here and look after Essie. I’m going to go look for her now.”

Once he was done speaking, he headed straight for Roxanne’s house with Cayden tagging along.

The one who opened the door for them was the housekeeper from before. Seeing that it was them, she greeted with a smile, “Are you here for Ms. Jarvis? She’s not here right now. Do you want to head in and wait for her?”

Lucian’s face darkened at her words. “Where did she go?”

“I think she went to Universe Park. Is something the matter? Should I inform her of your visit?” Lysa said.

However, the man had already turned and left by the time she finished her sentence.

Cayden then said with a smile, “No need. We’ll head there to look for her.”

Then, he quickly followed closely behind Lucian.

“Mr. Farwell, where...” He had only made something up earlier as he did not know what the latter was thinking.

“We’re going to Universe Park,” Lucian said, his brows furrowed.

Hearing that, Cayden hurriedly drove to the theme park.

After getting the tickets and entering the place, both of them realized that they did not know where Roxanne was.

“Let’s split up. Call me the moment you find her,” Lucian ordered coldly.

Cayden nodded in response, and the both of them headed in different directions to look for the woman.

Soon, the assistant called, “Mr. Farwell, I think I see Ms. Jarvis.”

Lucian asked for his whereabouts and instantly headed that way.

Since it was a weekday, there weren't a lot of people visiting Universe Park. Both of them instantly saw the four figures standing outside the haunted house.

It seemed as if the four of them were in a stalemate. Though, to be exact, Roxanne was at a standstill with Archie and Benny.

The children were holding on to each of her arms, and she was standing rooted to the ground.

"Mommy! Come on in with us. We'll protect you," Benny whined while tugging at her arm.

Apprehension was written all over Roxanne's face.

Right then, Archie chimed in, "How are you going to be our role model if you're so timid, Mommy?"

After a moment, she finally relented. "All right... I'll follow you guys in."

After saying that, she was dragged into the haunted house.

At the same time, Lucian was following closely behind.

Chapter 116 Into His Arms

Everything was pitch black the moment they stepped foot into the haunted house. Roxanne held tightly onto the children's hands while Madilyn led the way in front of them.

Archie and Benny snickered silently. They had never expected their mother to be so afraid of ghosts.

But she'll probably forget about whatever's been bothering her after getting scared here, right?

With the plan in mind, both of them decided to not tell her that their hands hurt from being held so tightly and dragged her along.

The longer they walked, the more frightened Roxanne felt.

She had been afraid of things like this since she was young. Even though she knew that ghosts weren't real, with the music and lights setting off the mood, she couldn't help but feel terrified.

It was especially so when she didn't know when the NPCs would appear.

The three people walking in front of her had been saying that they were going to console her. Yet, it seemed like they were not talking on purpose, making her more and more terrified. She wanted so much to just turn around and leave.

However, at the thought of what Archie had said earlier, Roxanne braved it and continued walking ahead because she wanted to be the children's role model.

Just as she was feeling restless, a pair of stiff legs appeared before her eyes.

The woman froze upon seeing that, but she subconsciously looked up.

Under the dim lights, a pale face with its tongue out hovered before her face.

“Ah...” At the sight of this, Roxanne felt as though her heart was about to jump out of her chest. She couldn't even make a sound out of shock.

It was already too late by the time Archie and Benny realized that something was wrong with their mother.

The woman flung her hands away from them and ran in the direction they came from.

It's too terrifying. I want to leave!

“Mommy!” The children were stunned by her reaction. Nonetheless, they quickly chased after her once they snapped back to their senses.

Madilyn turned around and saw the hanging ghost that had appeared some time ago. She couldn't help but feel exasperated seeing this.

The NPC had appeared at such perfect timing. It wasn't there when she and the children walked over.

Yet, it had appeared right in front of Roxanne.

The three of them went after the woman hastily. However, she was nowhere to be seen after taking two turns.

At that moment, Madilyn, Archie, and Benny couldn't help but worry.

They knew how much Roxanne feared these things. They only wanted to take her mind off of things when they brought her in here.

No one had expected something like this to happen.

She would have been shocked to the core if she ended up encountering a horrifying part of the haunted house alone.

"It's all my fault. I shouldn't have insisted that Mommy come in here," Benny mumbled guiltily.

Madilyn didn't know what to say to console him at that point.

Taking a look around, Archie took his brother's hand and said, "This is not the time to be blaming yourself. Let's look for Mommy now. If we really can't find her, we can go to the employees here for help."

At that, they started to look for Roxanne in the haunted house.

Meanwhile, the woman was clueless about their worries. Fear had taken over her, and all she could think of at that moment was the stiff legs and the NPC's pale face. She had even forgotten about the

three's existence as all she wanted was to leave the place.

Roxanne ran around the haunted house for a long time, but she was still unable to find the exit. She couldn't stop herself from feeling despair, and she started to mumble while running, "Please don't scare me... Please..."

Suddenly, while in the dark, she bumped into someone's firm chest.

The woman's body stiffened, and she let out a scream a moment later. Her mind had already gone blank.

The four of them were nowhere in sight by the time Lucian and his assistant entered the haunted house. It turned out that they had gone through different entrances. Both of them spent so much time looking for them but to no avail. Just as he was starting to feel frustrated, someone fell right into his arms.

Right when he was about to push the person away, he heard the scream coming from the person. He paused instantly and started to take the person into his arms.

Chapter 117 What Is There To Explain

Roxanne was scared out of her mind. Her body was trembling as she instinctively tried to burrow further into his embrace.

When he felt her body tremble, Lucian's heart softened, and he asked, "Why did you come in here if you're so scared?"

She was too stunned to react when she heard his voice.

Sighing, the man said, "I'll bring you out."

Roxanne slowly snapped back to her senses. She felt that the voice was really familiar, and the scent surrounding her senses made her heart sink.

Lucian? No. Why is he here? She looked up in confusion and met up with the man's worried eyes.

Roxanne froze as soon as their eyes met. She responded immediately after, and all fear seemed to have left her body. Her face turned expressionless as she struggled to free herself from his embrace.

Lucian could feel her resistance, and he quickly became cold toward her, allowing her to move away from him.

"Why are you here?" she asked, watching the man before her warily.

Taking some time to recollect himself, Lucian replied indifferently, "To find you."

Upon hearing that, Roxanne furrowed her brows slightly. "I think I've already made it clear enough. Seeing that you're doing so much to look for me, there must be something you want, right?"

She had already blocked Lucian on all platforms after she left the kindergarten in the morning.

Now that he had found her, all her efforts had gone to waste.

Besides needing her help, Roxanne could not think of any other reason why he would look for her.

Lucian's eyes darkened at her words. He originally planned to get straight to the point and tell her what he was after, but it felt as though her question had pierced right through his heart.

If he were to tell her that he needed her help, the woman would have come up with something sarcastic to ridicule him.

Staying silent for a few seconds, Lucian approached her in another way. "I just think that I haven't given you a proper explanation regarding Archie and Benny getting kicked out of school. I hope that you'll calm down and hear me out."

Roxanne was already determined that he was the one behind this incident. All she felt was irony when she heard what was just said.

Explain? What's there to explain? Did he not have enough of his fun over the past few days?

At the thought of this, a cold glint flashed through her eyes. Her tone was distant as she said, "Mr. Farwell, you hold great power, so do whatever you want. You don't have to deliberately explain after doing what you did. I don't want to hear it either."

The man scrunched up his brows as he said, "I always have a clear conscience whenever I do things, and there's nothing I wouldn't admit to. However, this isn't my doing. I've been blamed by someone else for no reason. I admit that I have spoken to the head of the kindergarten to kick Archie and Benny out when I found out that they were in the same school as Essie. But after the fuss she made that day, I promised I would never do it again as a consideration for my daughter's feelings. The only reason this whole thing had happened was that Aubree saw that the boys were studying there when she sent

Essie to school that morning. She took the liberty of telling the head of the kindergarten to expel the boys. I only found out about this when you came looking for me."

In the end, he was saying that Aubree was behind everything.

This made Roxanne feel more ridiculed. "So? What makes you different from her? You made the request first, and as your marriage partner, when Aubree brought it up again, do you think that the head of the kindergarten would not have thought about what you said? Ultimately, this all happened because of you!"

Upon hearing her putting Aubree and him together again, Lucian couldn't stop himself from feeling frustrated. "She's her own person, and I'm my own. Why do you always lump us together? I have no reason to intervene in Archie's and Benny's lives. I've already warned the head of the kindergarten last night. The boys can return to kindergarten any time now."

Chapter 118 Not Her Child

Roxanne found his words humorous. She could still clearly remember how the man had sworn that he would not marry anyone else but Aubree six years ago. He had even treated her coldly because she had taken Aubree's place.

"I find it hard to believe you, Lucian," Roxanne said, her voice tinged with bitterness. "You may claim that you're not involved with Aubree's actions, but your past actions and words tell a different story. How can I trust you now?"

Lucian's face hardened. "People change, Roxanne. I've realized my mistakes, and I'm trying to make amends. But you have to give me a chance to prove it."

Roxanne shook her head, her expression resolute. "I can't afford to let you or Aubree hurt my boys again. They're my priority, and I won't risk their well-being on empty promises."

A flicker of pain crossed Lucian's eyes, but he quickly masked it with determination. "I understand your reluctance, but I'm not asking you to trust me blindly. Let my actions speak for themselves. I'll make sure Aubree stays away from Archie and Benny, and I'll ensure they can continue their education without any interference."

Roxanne hesitated, torn between her desire to protect her children and the faint hope that Lucian might genuinely want to make things right. "I'll hold you to your word, Lucian. But if anything happens to my boys again, I won't hesitate to take legal action against you and Aubree."

Lucian nodded solemnly. "You have my word, Roxanne. I won't let you down."

With that, Roxanne turned and walked away, leaving Lucian standing alone, contemplating how to regain her trust and protect the children from any further harm caused by Aubree.

As she reached her car, Roxanne took a deep breath, trying to steady her emotions. She couldn't afford to let her guard down, not when it came to her sons. They had already been through enough.

The drive home was silent, the weight of the conversation with Lucian pressing heavily on her mind. She needed to stay strong for Archie and Benny, and she couldn't let her feelings for Lucian cloud her judgment.

When she arrived home, the boys were waiting for her, their worried expressions melting away as soon as they saw her. "Mommy, are you okay?" Benny asked, his eyes full of concern.

Roxanne smiled and pulled them both into a tight hug. "I'm fine, my loves. Everything's going to be alright."

That night, as she tucked them into bed, she couldn't help but think about Lucian's words. Part of her wanted to believe that he had changed, that he genuinely cared about her and the boys. But the scars of the past were not so easily forgotten.

She sat by their bedside, watching them sleep peacefully, and whispered a silent vow. "I'll protect you both, no matter what. No one will ever hurt you again."

The following days passed in a blur of routine and work. Roxanne focused on her job at the research institute, using it as a distraction from her worries. She also kept a close eye on Archie and Benny, making sure they were adjusting well back at the kindergarten.

True to his word, Lucian had spoken to the head of the kindergarten, and the boys were welcomed back without any issues. Roxanne was relieved but still wary, knowing that Aubree could pose a threat at any moment.

One afternoon, as she was working on a project at the institute, she received a call from Lucian. Hesitating for a moment, she finally picked up.

"Roxanne," Lucian's voice came through the line, "I wanted to let you know that I've taken measures to ensure Aubree stays away from the boys. I've made it clear that any interference from her will have serious consequences."

Roxanne felt a mixture of relief and skepticism. "I appreciate that, Lucian. But I hope you understand that it'll take more than words to earn my trust back."

"I do understand," Lucian replied earnestly. "I'm willing to do whatever it takes. Just know that I care about Archie and Benny, and I want to be a positive presence in their lives."

Roxanne sighed, conflicted by her emotions. "We'll see, Lucian. For now, let's focus on keeping the boys safe and happy."

"Agreed," Lucian said. "Thank you for giving me a chance, Roxanne."

As she hung up the phone, Roxanne couldn't shake off the feeling of uncertainty. She wanted to believe that Lucian had changed, but only time would tell if his actions matched his words.

In the meantime, she resolved to stay vigilant and protect her children at all costs. They were her world, and nothing was more important than their safety and happiness.

Chapter 119 What Will You Do To Mommy

Lucian's expression darkened, and he stared attentively at Roxanne. However, he couldn't identify any

trace of disingenuousness.

Lucian looked away eventually, his heart throttled, and he was swarmed by a wave of confusion.

All this while, Roxanne thought that Estella was Aubree's child!

He was under the impression that Estella was abandoned by Roxanne. When Roxanne acted aloof

toward Estella when she returned to the country, Lucian thought that Roxanne was a cold-hearted woman.

However, from the way she spoke earlier, she seemed to not know that Estella was her child.

What is going on?

Or is she such a great actor that she's managed to deceive me?

Lucian was perplexed and dumbfounded.

It was only after a long time that Lucian managed to recollect his thoughts. He held on to her slender wrist, lowered his voice, and uttered word-by-word in precise clarity, "Since when did I say that Estella is Aubree's child?"

Roxanne's wrist started to hurt, but she was distracted by his mind-blowing statement. Shock and suspicion filled her heart.

Estella is not Aubree's child!

No wonder Aubree was not there that day when Estella was sick.

However, from what she knew, no one else got together with Lucian besides Aubree.

Who can it be? Who's Estella's mother?

The thoughts started to overwhelm Roxanne, and she struggled to resist popping the question.

"Mommy!" two familiar voices called out to Roxanne. "We finally found you! Are you okay?"

The children ran frantically toward Roxanne, whose wrist was clutched tightly by Lucian.

Archie and Benny exchanged glances before scrambling toward Roxanne.

"Mommy, don't be worried. We will protect you!" Benny extended his arm and stood in front of

Roxanne. He looked up, and he finally saw Lucian's face clearly.

Archie, too, walked to Roxanne's side and held on to her arm. With a deadly stare, he looked Lucian

ferociously in the eye.

Realizing that it was Lucian, Archie's face tensed as he pursed his lips. He then stormed furiously

toward Lucian, mustered all his strength, and pushed Lucian away forcefully. "Let go of my Mommy!

What do you want to do to her?"

Lucian frowned before releasing his grip. He quickly explained, "I'm just asking your Mommy for help.

I'm not going to harm her."

Archie nonetheless continued to stare at him warily.

Benny turned backward and held on to Roxanne's hand. He shook her hand gently and said, "Mommy, are you okay? Did he bully you? Archie and I will protect you!"

Roxanne, however, had yet to recover from her discovery about Estella's background. In response, she shook her head mindlessly. "Don't worry."

Looking at her troubled expression, Benny became even more worried. Enraged, he glared in response at Lucian.

Stupid Daddy! It's one thing to bully us, but now he's bullying Mommy when we're not around!

When I grow up, I will teach him a lesson!

All of a sudden, the atmosphere became tangibly stiff.

While Madilyn was displeased with Lucian, she managed to keep her cool. Understanding that it was not an appropriate place for a conversation, Madilyn walked up and pulled them over. "Maybe you should take this conversation outside."

After that, she tapped lightly on Roxanne's shoulder. "If you're afraid, then we should pass on the haunted house. Let's head out."

Roxanne finally came back to her senses. She nodded and followed Madilyn out, ignoring Lucian in the process.

Benny gripped Roxanne's hand tightly, worried that she would be frightened. Like a knight in shining armor, he protected Roxanne while she walked.

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Lucian followed right behind.

The exit was not difficult to locate. However, Roxanne was lost because she was frightened by the sophisticated gimmicks, causing her to panic.

After calming herself down, she managed to find her way out of the haunted house in a short time.

The sunlight shone on her face, dazzling Roxanne a little.

Lucian, who was right behind Roxanne, couldn't take his eyes off her.

At this point, both of them had different thoughts running through their minds.

Noticing that the atmosphere was tense, Madilyn pulled Roxanne to a side and whispered softly,

"What's going on? What is he asking for?"

Roxanne snapped back into her senses. She gazed at Lucian, only to notice his anxious and worried

look.

The next second, she recalled what Lucian said in the haunted house.

It didn't seem like he was lying.

With that thought in mind, Roxanne started to feel worried about Estella.

Before this, she had always thought that Estella was Lucian and Aubree's child. After knowing that

Aubree was not involved, Roxanne couldn't help but like Estella even more.

"Nothing, just some personal matters." Roxanne smiled.

Madilyn, however, was in doubt.

What personal matter did they have to discuss between them anyway? Even baffling was the fact that

Lucian came here all the way.

Just as Madilyn wanted to pry further, she realized that Roxanne had already left her and was walking

toward Lucian.

Madilyn's doubts intensified.

Lucian saw Roxanne walking toward him. He furrowed his brow and wanted to continue asking her for

help.

Roxanne, nonetheless, spoke first. "Let's take a stroll."

Lucian immediately heaved a sigh of relief. He thanked her profusely, saying, "I truly appreciate this."

After deciding to pay a visit to Estella, Roxanne took over Archie and Benny from Madilyn and said, "I

think you may head back first. We're going with him."

She knew that Estella was reliant on Archie and Benny. With the two of them around, it could aid in her recovery.

Madilyn decided not to pester Roxanne further. Quietly, she stared at the four of them leaving, behaving no differently from any other adoring family.

After coming out of Universe Park, Roxanne, together with Archie and Bernie, got into Lucian's car, leaving behind Madilyn and the car that they came with.

Cayden was already waiting in the car. He revved up the engine and sped toward the Farwell residence.

While on the way, Lucian briefly explained Estella's condition to Roxanne and her history of medical treatments.

Roxanne was disheartened to find out about the mental illness and hardships that Estella faced at such a young age.

It appeared that Estella's condition had deteriorated.

Holding that thought, Roxanne began to feel some guilt.

If she knew that Estella's condition was that severe, she would not have said those things in front of her.

Archie and Benny sat quietly beside Roxanne. They listened attentively to Lucian, and their hatred toward him was slowly replaced by heartache.

Estella was about the same age as they were, but she had to endure such horrific grievances in life.

Even in kindergarten, she was ostracized by the others.

We must protect Essie!

Cayden was driving at a blazing speed, and they arrived at the manor shortly after.

After getting down from the car, Lucian led Roxanne, Archie, and Benny and rushed toward the second floor of the building.

Meanwhile, James was waiting upstairs. Because of Estella's resistance, he had to keep his distance

while monitoring her, fearing that she would harm herself. Hence, he left the door slightly ajar and silently stood at the entrance.

When he saw the four of them, James had his brows slightly knitted before nodding. "Ms. Jarvis."

Roxanne nodded in reply, and her attention was focused exclusively on Estella. "Where's Essie? Let me take a look at her."

James pointed toward the corner of the room.