

## ABANDONED 1261

### Chapter 1261

Frieda stood rooted to her spot as she looked at Jonathan and Lucian leave. She was stunned for a while before regaining her senses and hastening toward Aubree's ward.

She had to hear Aubree's answer in person.

Frieda was halted by Jonathan's subordinate, who was stationed outside the ward's entrance. "Ms. Queen, Mr. Queen forbade you from coming close."

She glared at him angrily. "Get lost! I'm just going in to say a few things. I'll come out the moment I'm done talking." With that, she made to stride into the room.

Jonathan's subordinate was caught in a difficult position, standing before Frieda and blocking her way forward. Still, he didn't dare to lay a finger on her and could only watch as she pushed the door open and walked into the room.

"Aubree!"

Frieda impatiently wanted confirmation from Aubree right after she opened the door.

The next second, she caught herself when she witnessed Aubree crying hysterically. Then, she quietly left the ward. There wasn't any need for her to probe further, as Aubree's demeanor cleared up her doubts.

Lucian had indeed called off their engagement.

Terror surged within Frieda as she realized that. She was scared out of her wits when she was reminded of all the things she had done alongside Aubree.

Meanwhile, after Lucian left the hospital, he asked Jonathan to send him back to Farwell Group. Cayden knocked on Lucian's door and entered the office upon the latter's arrival. At that moment, Lucian was still giving off a gloomy aura.

As a result, Cayden shuddered when he stepped into the room. "Mr. Farwell, the result of the investigation into the incident at the research institute is out."

Hearing that, Lucian looked at Cayden with a frown. "What's the result?"

"There's nothing wrong with the components, and the experiment was carried out by adhering to Ms. Jarvis' usual work protocol. Logically, that gas shouldn't have been produced," Cayden replied politely.

That meant someone had indeed tampered with the experiment. Lucian's gaze darkened. He fell silent for a long while before suddenly getting up and exiting his office. Cayden hastily followed him. "Mr. Farwell, where are we going now?"

Lucian uttered coldly, "Let's check out the research institute." | told Colby to find out all the medicines on the lab table which were used that day. | wonder how his progress is.

Cayden guessed Lucian might've found a lead, so he trailed behind the latter without saying a word. After reaching downstairs, Cayden drove them to the research institute. Coincidentally, Colby had just come out from the building.

Colby panicked momentarily when he saw the pair get out of the vehicle. However, he swiftly recollected himself and approached them nonchalantly. "Mr. Farwell."

Lucian nodded. "Did you find out all the medicines?"

A guilty look flashed across Colby's eyes. "I did, and I placed everything back on the table accordingly."

Lucian glanced at him dubiously in response. "You placed everything back? Didn't you mention it was dangerous?"

Colby lowered his head to force himself to stay calm. "I already reminded the research facility's personnel to avoid touching the medicines on that lab table, so there shouldn't be an issue."

Lucian nodded. "Bring me there and show me the medicines."

Colby grunted in acknowledgment before turning around and leading the two into the research facility.

Upon entering the building, they saw many researchers carrying out their duties.

The researchers offered simple greetings to Lucian and the others, then immersed themselves in their experiments again. Colby led them to the lab counter and stood to one side. "These are all the medicines."

The arrangement on the lab table had been restored to its previous state, similar to the day when Roxanne did the experiment. However, Colby used a different medicine to substitute the one he added to the flask the other day.

The two bottles had a slight difference in size. No one would notice that minor change in detail if that person weren't a researcher who spent a long time inside the laboratory.

Even Roxanne and Jack wouldn't notice he had switched the medicine as they were focused on carrying out the experiment that day.

Chapter 1262

The trio stayed quiet.

Cayden and Colby stood at one side, looking at Lucian examining the lab counter with different thoughts running through their minds. Colby was nervous to the extent of almost forgetting to breathe.

Given a choice, he wouldn't be willing to heed Lucian's order to restore the scene during the day of the experiment because that would easily expose his wrongdoing.

Still, if Colby had refused to follow Lucian's instruction, that would be no different from declaring his guilt to the latter.

After mulling his options over, he had no choice but to restore the arrangement of the medicines on the lab table, albeit with a slight alternation. He could only hope Lucian wouldn't notice anything suspicious.

Lucian was oblivious to Colby's train of thought. He was focused on inspecting the medicines on the lab table, meticulously checking every item.

While doing that, he recalled every detail he saw on the surveillance footage that day. Lucian clearly remembered Roxanne had touched all of the bottles on the table.

All of a sudden, he fixated his gaze on a transparent bottle placed in the corner for a few seconds before turning around to speak to Colby. "Bring me to the surveillance room again."

Colby's pupils constricted as uneasiness filled him. He had noticed Lucian staring at the bottle for a prolonged time. Why is that? Did he discover something? Colby's hand, hanging by his sides, trembled uncontrollably when he considered that possibility.

However, under Lucian's watchful gaze, Colby could only tuck his hands into his white coat's pockets, feign calmness, and nod. "Okay."

After saying that, he spun on his heels and guided them to the surveillance room. Lucian played the surveillance footage from that day and studied the video carefully again.

As he expected, when Roxanne was doing the experiment, she accidentally knocked over the transparent bottle at the side but hastily picked it up the next second.

Although the differences were insignificant, that bottle was not the same size as the one Colby had currently placed on the lab table.

Besides that, the quantities of the medicine inside the bottles were also dissimilar. Lucian shifted his gaze onto the Colby onscreen, who was standing behind Roxanne.

He didn't believe Colby, who had spent so many years working at the research institute, would fail to distinguish between the two bottles of medicines.

Unless he did it on purpose.

"Mr. Farwell, did you notice anything?" Colby suppressed his anxiousness and asked warily, attempting to seize control of the situation.

Lucian glanced at him with an unfathomable look in his eyes. "Nothing for now. I'm afraid I'll have to trouble you to keep that particular table in that state, Dr. Galloway."

Hearing that, Colby took a deep breath. His facial expression relaxed imperceptibly. "Okay. I'll do my best."

Lucian bobbed his head. After that, he got up and left the surveillance room without taking another look at the surveillance footage.

Cayden followed closely behind him.

After exiting the research institute, Cayden started the car. "Mr. Farwell, are we returning to the company now, or is there any other place you wish to visit?"

Lucian glanced at the research institute's entrance while wearing a grimace. Colby stood there reverently to see them off.

Looking away, Lucian replied, "Go back to the office. Also, I want to see all the recent purchase orders by the research facility by tonight."

Cayden agreed with alacrity, started the car, and drove toward Farwell Group. At the research institute's entrance, Colby's legs turned to jelly after Lucian's car disappeared from his vision.

Lucian had displayed an ambiguous response earlier, causing Colby to be unable to ascertain whether Lucian had discovered he was the culprit.

And because of that, Colby felt all the more terrified.

Chapter 1263

Cayden had always been highly efficient at work. Besides, he only had to investigate the research institute's recent purchase orders.

That evening itself, he entered Farwell Group's CEO's office with the latest purchase order in hand. "I've done as you asked, Mr. Farwell. Here, have a look." Taking the order from Cayden, Lucian looked it over while listening to his report.

"A bottle of medicine on this order doesn't match the actual quantity purchased by the research institute. From my investigations, Colby was the one who privately arranged for the purchasing staff to buy it. He placed it with one of the other medicines and sneaked it into the research institute."

At that point, a conflicted expression showed on Cayden's face as he admitted, "However, I couldn't find out what medicine he smuggled in. He hid it so well that even the purchasing staff doesn't know the answer."

In a flash, Lucian's gaze darkened a shade.

Although we don't know the kind of medicine Colby privately bought, it's a fact that his behavior is suspicious enough. Furthermore, he appeared to be exceedingly apprehensive when I noticed something amiss with that bottle of medicine. He might think that he's hiding it very well, but still, I saw right through him.

Following that thought, he frowned slightly.

With all these leads, it's a veritable fact that Colby was the culprit. Indeed, I've misunderstood Jack. But then, how can his suspicious activities be explained?

Along while passed before he corralled his thoughts.

Anyway, the most important thing now is to have Colby pay the price for his actions!

"Got it. You may be dismissed."

Putting the purchase order away, Lucian got to his feet and headed out.

He had figured out a way to have Colby confess to his crime even without solid evidence. However, he needed to seek Roxanne out and discuss it with her.

Cayden had no idea what his employer wanted to do, but still, he obediently left the office and watched as Lucian went into the elevator.

After stepping out of the office building, Lucian drove straight to Roxanne's house. It happened to be dinnertime right then.

When Lucian arrived, Roxanne was preparing dinner for Archie, Benny, and Estella in the kitchen. As such, it was the children who opened the door for him.

“Mr. Farwell!”

“Daddy!”

At the sight of him, all three children wore expressions of joy.

Smiling, Lucian stroked their heads before sweeping his gaze around the living room. “Where’s your mommy?”

Archie pointed in the direction of the kitchen. “In the kitchen.”

Upon hearing that, Lucian inclined his head a fraction in acknowledgment. He excused himself before heading to the kitchen. The three children looked at each other, but ultimately, they didn’t follow. Nonetheless, they still fixated their gazes on the kitchen in curiosity.

When Lucian reached the kitchen door, he didn’t go in directly or say anything. Instead, he merely stood there quietly and watched Roxanne bustle around.

As soon as Roxanne whirled around and spotted the man behind her, she inexorably jumped in fright. “When did you come? And why didn’t you inform me beforehand?”

Gathering her wits about her, she inwardly breathed a sigh of relief and continued her work at hand. Lucian’s eyes brimmed with tenderness. “Just a while ago. The kids opened the door for me.” After saying that, he glanced at the ingredients she was preparing. “Did you count me in?”

Roxanne wanted to deny it, but the portion she prepared was evidently too much for her and the children to finish. Thus, she didn’t answer but asked, “Are you not eating here tonight?”

At that, Lucian arched a brow. “From the look of things, you counted me in. How embarrassing that I’ve been eating for free these few days!”

Sensing that there was a hidden implication in his words, Roxanne stilled. She spun around and eyed him in puzzlement. “Therefore, I brought you good news today. We’ll talk about it after dinner later.”

Lucian met her gaze calmly.

Chapter 1264

Glimpsing the grin on Lucian’s face, Roxanne was stunned for a moment. Then, faint shades of crimson stained her cheeks. She only snapped back to her senses after a while, upon which she guiltily turned back around and continued cooking. Meanwhile, Lucian watched behind her with his arms crossed.

When she had finished cooking, he helped to carry the dishes out and lay the table.

Archie, Benny, and Estella, on the other hand, had long since seated themselves at the dining table in proper order. Dinner was a warm and cozy event.

After dinner, Lucian ordered the children to play in the living room while he went to the study upstairs with Roxanne. “What’s the good news?”

Sheer mystification deluged Roxanne. | wonder what exactly it is that he’s acting so mysterious.

Lucian's expression turned solemn. 'I think I've ferreted out the person who tampered with your experiment.'

At his remark, Roxanne's expression likewise changed slightly, anxiety marring her features. "Who was it?"

Lucian stared at her, suddenly hesitant.

In the past, every time we discussed this subject, she had been reluctant to suspect Colby for no other reason than they had worked together for many years. | wonder if she'd be able to accept it if | were to tell her the truth.

For a fleeting second, he even contemplated giving up his initial plan and waiting until there was solid evidence before telling her about it.

"Was it truly Mr. Damaris?" Upon receiving no response from him after some time, Roxanne couldn't help making a wild guess. Hearing that, Lucian put his thoughts away, his gaze darkening a shade. "You're that worried about him?"

During this time, we've hardly mentioned him. But no sooner had | said there was progress in the investigation than he popped into her mind. That aside, she sounds wholly incredulous.

Exasperated, Roxanne explained, "It's because you've been suspecting him all this while that | hazarded such a guess. So, who else could it be if not him?"

A frown marred Lucian's face. "That day, only the three of you were at the lab counter." In other words, he was steering her into directing her suspicions onto Colby.

Immediately, the intimation of that dawned upon Roxanne. When she perceived the only person left other than her and Jack, shock flooded her. "You mean it was Colby?"

How could it be him? We've partnered together for so many years. If he hated me, he would've made a move ages ago! Even if he were jealous that | got to take the lead in this project, he had plenty of opportunities to sabotage things before this. Why would he pick this time and use such a cruel method?

Verily, Roxanne couldn't fathom it.

At the look on her face, Lucian's heart inexorably grew heavy. "At present, he's the prime suspect."

"Is there proof?" Roxanne furtively clutched at the hem of her shirt, still harboring a shred of hope within her. In response, Lucian shook his head.

Utter relief suffused Roxanne. "If there's no proof, perhaps you misunderstood. Didn't you previously claim that it was Mr. Damaris—"

Before she had finished speaking, Lucian interrupted, "There's no proof now, but I've got a way to prove that it was him as long as you're willing to play along."

That promptly took Roxanne aback.

If someone else were to say that to her, she would only regard it as a baseless accusation.

However, the person in front of her was Lucian.

For him to make such a statement meant that he was nearly one-hundred percent certain of Colby's culpability.

"I know you can't accept it, but I think you're far more interested in knowing why he did such a thing. I'm also beyond curious about his reason for consigning you to death!"

Lucian pinned his eyes on her with a grim look in them.

Chapter 1265

When Roxanne met Lucian's gaze, the confidence in her eyes gradually started wavering. A long moment passed before she dipped her eyes and agreed softly, "Okay, I'll do it. What do you need me to do?" During those few seconds when their eyes held, she searched the depths of her heart.

Perhaps she didn't believe that Colby would do such a thing, but given a choice between him and Lucian, her heart would still be biased toward the man before her.

On top of that, the look in Lucian's eyes was incredibly resolute.

Following her agreement, Lucian's expression eased. He told her about his plan in a deep voice. As Roxanne listened, she nodded thoughtfully.

"Will this really work? We don't have concrete evidence."

Truth be told, she was still a touch hesitant after listening to the man's plan.

Lucian's expression turned chilly. "As long as he was the one behind it, he would definitely feel guilty in such a situation. Even if not, he'll be afraid of dying!"

Upon hearing that, Roxanne fell silent for a few seconds. Yet in the end, she still relented.

She took out her phone and gave Colby a call, informing him that she would be making a trip to the research institute tomorrow. On the other end of the phone, Colby readily agreed without a trace of oddity in his voice.

After she had hung up the phone, doubts again surfaced within her.

If it was truly his doing, how could he have hidden it so well? Could it be that... we've really misunderstood him?

As though discerning the misgivings within her, Lucian lifted his hand and placed it on hers. His voice was calm and steady. "Trust me. If it really wasn't him, you can also rest assured."

Pursing her lips, Roxanne bobbed her head. That night, she didn't sleep a wink.

No matter what, she couldn't accept that a partner with whom she had worked together for many years turned out to be the culprit who almost killed her.

Her only hope was that she would obtain an answer tomorrow. Early the following morning, Lucian was already seated in the living room when Roxanne went downstairs.

She hadn't slept well, so she was somewhat dazed. At the sight of him, she spaced out for a few seconds before asking in a murmur, "Are we going over right now?"

At her wan look, Lucian's gaze darkened. "We'll go over as soon as possible when you've had breakfast. We can't give him any breathing room."

If it was really Colby behind the incident, he's exceedingly meticulous. With just a bit of breathing room, it'll be enough time for him to do many things.

Roxanne nodded with a heavy heart. After eating some food, she bid Archie, Benny, and Estella farewell before getting into Lucian's car to head to the research institute.

By the time they arrived at the research institute, Colby was already there, busy with something or other.

The instant he saw Roxanne and Lucian appearing together, his expression stiffened for a heartbeat. "Dr. Jarvis, Mr. Farwell, why did you both come together? You should've told me in advance."

"Does Dr. Jarvis need to tell you before returning to the research institute to work?"

Lucian retorted unceremoniously. At once, Colby froze, the smile on his face stained with a hint of guilt.

Sighing inwardly, Roxanne said to Colby, "Please bring me to the lab for a look. I can't shake off the feeling that there was some problem with the experiment that day."

At that comment, even greater guilt swamped Colby.

He had come over early in the morning to go over everything on the laboratory counter and replace the medicine he switched with a bottle of the same size to prevent discovery.

Unexpectedly, Roxanne and Lucian had arrived before he could do so.

Worse still, Roxanne was requesting to reconduct the experiment.

Chapter 1266

Roxanne, Lucian, and Colby stood next to the lab counter. "Dr. Galloway, Mr. Damaris isn't here today, so please conduct the experiment with me." Done with all the preparations, Roxanne glanced over her shoulder at Colby, who was standing at the side.

Colby had a feeling that something was off about the experiment that day. He was downright reluctant deep within, but he could only bite the bullet and concur so that he wouldn't appear even more suspicious. Stepping forward, he walked over to Roxanne.

As Roxanne went about the experiment, she uttered, "You should be clear about the steps for this experiment, so I'm not going to repeat them. I merely want to see where exactly things went wrong."

Colby flashed her a forced smile. "Okay, I'll do my best." Without looking at him, Roxanne vaguely muttered an acknowledgment.

She wasn't sure whether it was her mind playing tricks on her, but after that brief interaction, she found his reaction seemingly strange.

Consequently, she became very distracted throughout the experiment.

Finally, they came to the segment where the accident occurred.

Surprisingly, no smoke billowed out from the flask as it did the other day.



Roxanne stood at the side with her eyes lowered, rendering her expression indiscernible.

Just as Colby was about to speak, he glimpsed her suddenly turning and casting a glance in Lucian's direction. When the couple looked at each other, helplessness showed on Roxanne's face.

Colby keenly perceived the expression of her emotions, and a wave of jealousy surged within him.

I'm standing right next to her, and | understand the experiment far better! So why? Why is she asking him for help? Come to think of it, they also came to the research institute together this morning. It seems that their relationship is much closer than | expected!

Belatedly, something occurred to him. Argh! | might have accidentally benefitted him!

At that realization, intense fury and envy instantly displaced the guilt within him. The leash he kept on his expression slipped as well.

When Roxanne turned back, she was greeted by his insidious expression. "Dr. Galloway," she reflexively called out, her heart clenching.

In all the years they had been acquainted, she had only known him for always being gentle and elegant. That was the first time she had ever witnessed such a dark side to him.

In a flash, Colby jolted back to reality. The baleful expression on his face disappeared in the blink of an eye, a warm smile taking its place. "What's the matter?"

Roxanne's lips parted, but her heart was so heavy that no words came out.

While she was at a loss in facing such a veritable stranger, Lucian's voice rang out behind her. "If you don't mind, I'd like to have a look."

Lucian casually inserted himself between the two of them, separating them both.

Naturally, Roxanne had no objections since that was part of their plan.

Contrarily, Colby's heart lurched. "The experiment has always been thus. There must have been a mistake somewhere along the way that day. Even if you take a look, you won't be able to find anything."

Acting as though he didn't hear the man, Lucian shifted his gaze to Roxanne beside him. "What is this? | don't think | saw you using it during the experiment."

Following his gaze, Roxanne caught sight of a transparent bottle on the counter. After scrutinizing it for a while, she answered, "Nothing important. It's just distilled water for supplementation."

"In that case, there shouldn't be any problem adding this in, yes? From the surveillance footage, the amount of liquid in this bottle seems to have dwindled, probably having been used in the experiment. But you didn't use it earlier.

As Lucian said that, he had already reached out and picked up the bottle.

Chapter 1267

Colby watched Lucian's actions intently, his breathing catching for a second.

Despite knowing that it wasn't the bottle of medicine from that day since he had personally replaced it with the bottle of distilled water, he still couldn't help breaking into a cold sweat.

He actually realized that someone had used that bottle of medicine! D\*mn it! | didn't even notice that tiny detail! "Dr. Galloway, | can add this in, right?" Without warning, Lucian turned and looked at him.

Colby's pupils constricted. He dug his nails into his palms to force himself to remain calm. "Of course. It's only going to dilute the solution. Perhaps Mr. Damaris added it that day, but we didn't notice it."

While saying that, he took a step back to make room for the man.

Inclining his head, Lucian walked over and occupied the freed space. Uncorking the bottle, he slowly poured the liquid inside into the flask.

At the same time, a pill slipped out of his hand, which was in Colby's blind spot. After falling into the bottle, it dissolved upon contact with water, blending with the colorless and odorless distilled water before mixing with the liquid in the flask.

"All done."

He corked the bottle back and moved away. "Let's observe for a while longer and see whether there's any unusual reaction. Maybe it was a problem with the distilled water."

Colby couldn't shake off the feeling that something was amiss. Nonetheless, he steeled himself and returned to his place at the counter. His entire body tense, he stared at the flask that was still in the midst of reacting.

Shortly after, the same gas as that day gradually filled the flask.

For a moment, Colby's breath caught. He gaped at the gas in the flask before glancing at the distilled water at the side, his eyes brimming with disbelief.

How could this be? | personally placed the distilled water there. How could there be gas? Could it be that... someone switched the liquid inside?

As panic inundated him, Lucian's voice split the air hauntingly. "Does this bottle really contain distilled water, Dr. Galloway?" Stiffly turning around, Colby trained his gaze on Roxanne beside him.

In her eyes, he could see the reflection of himself that appeared all tense and guilty.

Behind him, Lucian's scorching gaze bore into him as though wishing to see through him.

Abruptly shuddering, he whirled around and took off without an ounce of hesitation.

It wasn't until Roxanne had witnessed that scene that she truly believed Colby was the culprit behind everything.

Casting her mind back to the events that day after learning the truth, she realized that the man was all too suspicious.

It was after he had taken over the experiment the other day that a great amount of gas materialized. That aside, when we were going to check on the flask, he deftly hid behind us...

In that instant, turmoil brewed within her.

Verily, the fact that a partner who had worked with her for so long had almost killed her was a bitter pill for her to swallow. "I've caught him, Mr. Farwell." While she was wallowing in self-doubt, Cayden's voice drifted into her ear.

Promptly snapping back to her senses, Roxanne swung her gaze over, only to see Colby restrained by Cayden, his head hung so low that it almost touched his chest.

Colby initially wanted to flee. Unexpectedly, he ran right into Cayden, who had been keeping guard, just when he reached the gates of the research institute.

Even with his head lowered, he could sense Roxanne's questioning gaze on him.

His gaze grim, Lucian threw a look at the woman beside him. Aware that she couldn't accept the truth of the matter, he stepped forward and blocked her from seeing Colby.

"It was just an experiment, Dr. Galloway. Why did you leave in such a hurry?"

He fixated an icy gaze on the man restrained by Cayden, his voice dripping with sarcasm.

Chapter 1268

Colby kept his head bowed, his pupils darting around incessantly.

Now that things have come to this, | won't be able to keep the truth under wraps no matter what | say. Besides, Lucian has already discovered there's a problem with that bottle of distilled water. Does he have other evidence in hand?

As his brain whirred, Lucian's voice rang out once more. "Did you think you could get away with it by privately asking the purchasing staff to help you sneak the medicine in?"

The instant those words fell, Colby snapped his eyes up and gaped at the man in shock. He knows! He really knows everything!

Lucian held his gaze expressionlessly. "Are you still planning to deny it at this point? Or are you only going to confess to your crimes when the police have arrived?"

Behind him, Roxanne had stepped out at some point in time and regarded Colby blankly.

When Colby met her gaze, his lips twitched. An intense struggle transpired within him.

Along time passed before he ultimately admitted, "Indeed, it was me. Everything was my doing!" The very moment Roxanne heard his confession with her own ears, her legs went weak.

She instinctively shot her hand out and grabbed onto Lucian's arm, digging her nails into her palm to retain her composure. With her eyes pinned on Colby, she questioned, "Why did you do such a thing? | don't think I've wronged you in any way in all the years we've worked together. Even this project is a collaborative effort between us both."

| still remember how pleasant it was to collaborate with him while abroad. Likewise, it's still vivid in my mind that | only gained a foothold in the research institute because of him back when | first returned to the country.

But turning her gaze back to the man with a blank expression in front of her, she inevitably wondered whether the Colby she knew had ever existed.

Colby stared at her fixedly, the self-deprecation in his eyes intensifying. “Why did | do so? Do you really not know? Roxanne, do you know that your reaction now makes me feel that everything I’ve done has been nothing but a joke?”

Roxanne’s brows knitted together, bafflement written clear in her eyes. A feverish light came into Colby’s eyes, and he revealed the entirety of the thoughts hidden deep within him.

“If you want a reason, blame it on the fact that you’re too outstanding and eye-catching. Why must you be so striking? It makes me look like a rat in the drain, only worthy of looking up at you all day long. But what about you? You weren't even willing to look down and spare me a glance! Am | that contemptible to you? Admittedly, Jack, Jonathan, and Lucian are far more impressive than me. However, have any of them been by your side as long as | have? What gives? You just couldn’t see me!”

Hearing that, Roxanne was stunned, and her expression turned panicked.

Huh, he likes me? When did this start? Indeed, I’ve never noticed his feelings for me. Looking back, we first got acquainted when | went abroad to lick my wounds after being hurt by Lucian. At that time, not only was | pregnant, but | was still in love with Lucian. | hadn’t the presence of mind to take note of other men. Moreover, the only impression | have of him is merely that of a lab partner who was very much in sync with me. After returning to the country, | was wholly focused on the research institute. When everything at the research institute had finally gotten on track, Lucian reappeared in my life. At the end of the day, the space in my heart belongs to Lucian when he’s there and remains empty when he’s absent. I've never thought of allowing another man in...

Chapter 1269

From Roxanne’s expression, Colby understood everything. He chuckled bitterly in a self-deprecating manner. Roxanne lifted her eyes to him. “And so, you came up with this idea?”

Even then, she wasn’t willing to believe that the gentle and elegant man who had helped her tremendously would do such a thing.

Alas, her skepticism when things had come to that merely made Colby feel all the more insulted. “If | hadn’t done all this, would you have noticed me? Do you know how much I've given up all these years just to have you see me? Do you think I’m really only capable of being your second, considering my capabilities?”

Every single word out of his mouth hit Roxanne squarely in the chest. Only then did she realize how much she had overlooked all these years.

I'm already the top traditional medicine practitioner in Chanaea, and he’s about on par with me. In fact, Professor Lambert even praised him once. He has the capability of branching out and handling things on his own. Yet, he has always been my partner. | always thought that Professor Lambert specifically arranged for us to be together because he trusted us. Never had | imagined such a reason behind it all.

“Do you think this incident is the only thing | did?” Colby’s voice rang out once more. Shocked, Roxanne swung her gaze to him.

Meeting her gaze in derision, Colby suddenly burst into laughter. “Haha! It turns out that you don’t even know what I’ve done! You only investigated the incident this time because Lucian told you about his suspicions, huh? Sure enough, you never notice me, no matter what | do!”

“No, that’s not it! | just... | just trusted you too much,” Roxanne explained on reflex.

No sooner had she said that than Colby interjected coldly, “I’d rather you don’t trust me so much! | don’t want you to look at me with the same expression all the time. You smile at them and cry because of them, but when it comes to me, you’re forever acting professionally. Am | not even worthy of being your friend? Do you look down on me that much, Roxanne?”

A frown marred Roxanne’s countenance. For a moment, she didn’t quite know how to respond to his accusations. Some time passed before she awkwardly asked, “Other than this, what else did you do?” By then, Colby had already put away all expression from his face.

At that question, his lips turned up. “I’m not going to tell you that. Anyway, I’m going to leave this place soon. You’ve never seen me all these years, so this time, I’ve got to leave you thinking about me. Go and investigate yourself!”

Roxanne balled her fists, her expression as grim as ever. “Don’t do this, Dr. Galloway—”

Before she had finished speaking, Colby cut her off sharply. “Don’t call me Dr. Galloway! | almost killed you! Aren’t you the least bit angry? Why must you still address me so formally?”

Frowning, Roxanne went silent for a long time before murmuring, “Why must you do this, Colby? You could’ve just talked to me directly. Why did you have to use such a method?”

When Colby heard that she had finally changed her address toward him, his expression eased for a second. Yet in the next heartbeat, he had steeled himself again.

Thereafter, he no longer responded no matter what Roxanne said.

“Colby Galloway, you should never have made a move against her!”

Seeing that Roxanne had ceased speaking, Lucian stalked over to Colby.

Before Colby even knew what was happening, a hard punch had landed on his stomach.

“I’m only giving you one punch because you’ve taken care of Roxanne for such a long time. If you dare do anything dumb again when you get out, | don’t mind sending you to meet your maker!”

Lucian’s voice was frightfully chilly.

Chapter 1270

Soon, the police arrived.

Colby was then escorted into the police car by the police.

Before leaving, he glanced back over his shoulder and took a long look at Roxanne. Roxanne merely held his gaze for a second before she promptly averted her eyes. Truth be told, she didn’t quite know how to face the man.

At the sight of her avoiding his gaze, Colby gave a bitter chuckle that dripped with self-deprecation. He cooperatively got into the police car.

Thereafter, the police car sped away.

Cayden also departed after taking his leave from Lucian.

Following that, Roxanne and Lucian were the only ones left at the entrance of the research institute. Lucian regarded the woman beside him in concern.

“What are you thinking? Are you still unwilling to believe that Colby would do such a thing?”

Lifting her eyes, Roxanne met his gaze. She said nothing, but the look in her eyes spoke volumes.

Indeed, overturning one’s long-time perception toward someone wasn’t something that could be accomplished overnight, at least not for her.

Casting a gaze in the direction where the police car had left, she asked, “What will happen to him?” Immediately, a frown marred Lucian’s countenance. “Even now, you still care about him?”

Roxanne’s expression turned rueful. “You don’t understand. Ultimately, he worked with me for many years. Besides, | can’t shake off the feeling that | was part of the reason for everything he did.”

If it weren’t because | was dense in matters of the heart, and if | had realized his feelings for me earlier, perhaps all this wouldn’t have happened. My thinking was too simple. He’s an outstanding doctor, but he’s been my deputy all these years. Yet, | took it as a matter of course.

As she was wallowing in guilt, a pair of arms gathered her into a cool embrace without warning. A massive hand stroked her head.

On the heels of that, Lucian’s baritone voice drifted into her ears. “This isn’t your fault. He was the one who strayed from the path. No one expresses their love in such a manner.”

Roxanne’s heart skipped a bit. She stared at his profile blankly, hoping to hear more from him.

“If he really loves you, he wouldn’t be able to bring himself to hurt you. He did many things to sabotage you, so he only has himself to blame for the consequences he’s bearing today. Pushing all the blame on you was merely his way of justifying himself.”

Well, | reckon Colby realized his mistakes when he was caught. Unfortunately, there was already no turning back for him. Hence, he could only use such a method to console himself that he hadn’t done anything wrong.

At Lucian’s analysis, the heavy boulder weighing on Roxanne’s heart slowly lifted. “But why exactly did he do all that?”

Still, she couldn’t understand Colby’s motivations.

She didn’t think he was lying about anything he said before he was taken away.

In fact, she believed that he really had feelings for her.

However, she couldn’t figure out his reason for hurting her.

As Lucian said, if he really likes me, he wouldn’t be able to stand hurting me...

The scene Lucian saw in the surveillance footage popped into his mind, and his gaze darkened a shade. When the gas was produced, Colby was actually calling out to Jack.

In other words, Jack was his real target, but Roxanne ruined his plan by accident.

However, if he had stopped the latter at that time, Jack would have definitely noticed something amiss. As such, he could only watch as Roxanne placed herself in the path of danger.

Nonetheless, Lucian didn't plan on telling Roxanne about it.

After all, she seemed to have been greatly moved by Colby's words, and he didn't want another man to take up space in her heart.

In any case, Roxanne hadn't expected to obtain an answer either. When the man remained silent, she muttered, "Also, he said this wasn't the only thing he did. What else did he do?"

Lucian stroked her hair in comfort. "I'll investigate. Don't dwell upon it anymore. You've just recovered, so rest more."