

## **ABANDONED 1891**

### Chapter 1891 Who Am I To You

Seeing that she was keeping mum, Lucian remained silent as well.

In the end, Elektre forced herself to stop crying because she didn't want Lucien to think she was trying to gain sympathy through her tears.

Therefore, she owned up to what she did. I should've known this would happen from the moment I came in contact with Christine. If I had chosen to expose the fact that Christine was actually Aubree and alerted Lucien about it, everything would've been different now. However, it's all too late now. I don't understand, though. Why is Lucien here in Christine's room? How did Lucien find out about this? Also, how did he change the whole situation? After all, I added harmful substances to all the products. I spent so much time and effort accomplishing that.

"When did you find out about this? I really want to know the answer to that question. How did you do it? Did you recall the tainted products?" Elektre knew it was the end for her, so she just wanted to know what led to her failure.

"Elektre, did you consider the consequences? You did, didn't you? Was Roxenne your target? You wanted to ruin her, right? Have you been planning all this since the very beginning? Since you proposed this project?" Lucien asked instead of answering her questions.

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His tone was so cold that it was as if he was talking to a stranger. By then, Elektra had given up hope because she knew Lucian's impression of her was unsalvageable. That was why she decided to admit to everything.

“Yes. | considered the consequences. My target is indeed Roxanne! | wanted to destroy her. Lucian, | need an answer. Over all these years, who am | to you? Do you really not have the slightest of feelings for me?” she asked.

Lucian knitted his brows in response as hostility filled his expression. He shot a cold, vicious glare at Elektra that resembled countless deadly arrows that pierced the woman's heart in an instant. A bitter smile surfaced on Elektra's countenance.

“Elektra, I've actually looked into what Aubree did in Hawen. At first, | thought she would turn over a new leaf and start a brand new life after assuming the identity of Christina. However, she was still determined to take revenge on Roxanne. Thus, | have people watching her every move the second she crossed the border. It's just that | didn't expect you to be the person she was. working with!” Lucian ignored Elektra's questions because he no longer had the patience to answer them. We were childhood sweethearts, and our families have known each other for decades. Heck, | even disregarded Jonathan and gave her the opportunity to collaborate with Roxanne. Jonathan is more than capable of doing whatever she can! Yet, all this while, she has been plotting against my wife just to send her to prison! No matter how close our relationship was, it's over now that everything is exposed.

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“Listen closely, Elektra. I'll make things clear to you now, so you'd give up. Ever since we were little, I have always regarded you as my little sister. I don't have siblings, so you and Jonathan are like my brother and sister. You should know that! Still, you attempted to sabotage my wife! Did you not consider the future of my three children? Also, did you not think about your parents? What would they think if they knew you did all this?” Lucien could no longer suppress his anger and spoke through gritted teeth.

“Listen closely, Elektra. I'll make things clear to you now, so you'd give up. Ever since we were little, I have always regarded you as my little sister. I don't have siblings, so you and Jonathan are like my brother and sister. You should know that! Still, attempted to sabotage my wife! Did you not consider the future of my three children? Also, did you not think about your parents? What would they think if they knew you did all this?” Lucien could no longer suppress his anger and spoke through gritted teeth.

That was probably the first time he expressed his emotions so explicitly and aggressively.

As soon as he finished talking, he abruptly rose to his feet and walked up to Elektra, his gaze burning with fury.

## Chapter 1892 The Unexpected Guest

Elektra was dumbfounded. I've never seen Lucien express his anger so straightforwardly before. All these years, he hadn't been one to wear his heart on his sleeve. Even when he had to take over Farwell Group back then, he faced all his problems in a composed manner.

Right then, Elektra was overwhelmed by great sadness, and she had trouble breathing.

Seconds later, the tears that she had been holding back suddenly came streaming down her cheeks. Lucian used to take me under his wing. Back when I was harassed by the other students in school, he would always show up. He used to put his heart into preparing gifts for me. During my coming-of-age ceremony, he even gifted me a cool sports car. Back then, I took everything for granted, thinking he only did all that on the account of the relationship our families shared. In hindsight, he actually regarded me as someone important in his life. Although he didn't have romantic feelings for me, I was still more than a friend to him. I never once realized that he thought of me as his younger sister.

In an instant, Elektra felt drained of energy. Her body went limp, and she was on the verge of collapsing onto the ground. Lucian grabbed her right hand and fumed, "You must face the consequences! You're not getting away with this!"

He pulled her toward the couch, and she slumped into it.

The iciness in Lucian's gaze didn't fade.

Roxanne was the love of his life, so he would never forgive or have mercy on whoever tried to harm her.

"I found out about it from the moment you started adding substances to the products. It was simple, really. Although the new factory hadn't been officially put into operation, the transportation company the drivers worked for was under the management of Queen Group! Although it was only a small company, we had control over the logistics," Lucian revealed.

That night, two trucks were delayed for no reason. Out of consideration for the transportation of the products of Flora Verba Group, Jonathan went to consult the drivers.

Upon finding out what had happened, Jonathan felt something was fishy.

Hence, he went to discuss the matter with Lucian the next day before intercepting the trucks. There and then, all the products were recalled.

That was exactly the day when Christina and Elektra thought everything was going according to their plan. Little did they know that Lucian had already started investigating the matter.

However, everything happened too fast. Ten thousand products had been tampered with within three to four days. Besides, all the products had the same packaging, so Lucian couldn't tell them apart.

Therefore, he gave the order to intercept all the trucks that had been to the new factory and stored all the products mixed with harmful substances in one warehouse.

In order to prevent Roxanne from worrying, he told her he wanted to export the products and received permission from her.

After that, he told Leroy and a few other factory managers to bring their new employees to the temporary factory Jonathan had found. There, they worked overtime to produce an extra ten thousand products to replace the tainted batch.

Lucian's worst fear was that Roxanne could get betrayed by the people around her.

That was why he investigated all the people in the research institute to find a possible suspect.

He never expected Elektra to be the one in bed with Christina.

The night before, Lucian had already found out where Christina was staying, so he told Cayden to bring a few bodyguards with him to the hotel to apprehend and question Christina.

Unfortunately for Lucian, Christina had quite a few professional bodyguards under her payroll. Those bodyguards sensed something was amiss and escorted Christina out of there in the nick of time.

Although Christina got out in time, she accidentally left her phone behind because she was in a hurry.

The contact number found in the call log was an unknown number, and that was the newly-registered number Elektra used to call Christina.

At first, Lucian wanted to call that number right away and track its location.

However, Elektra started calling in the morning. Lucian ignored the calls because he didn't want to raise suspicion.

Then, he went to the hotel and waited patiently for up to four hours.

He knew the person who was working with Christina would show up anxiously upon realizing that their evil scheme had failed.

At long last, the doorbell rang, but to his dismay, the person he was waiting for was the last person he hoped to see.

## Chapter 1893 Incomparable

“Your plan had many flaws. It was foolish of Christina to have the audacity to use Flora Verba Group's name to recruit temporary workers!”

The expression in Lucian's eyes was cold as glaciers, but fear actually lingered in his chest. Although the scheme was full of loopholes, its primary focus was to achieve speedy results.

If the one hundred thousand sets of goods had entered the market, it would've been meaningless to investigate and identify the culprit afterward.

It would be difficult to salvage the situation after the public's opinion toward the company was tarnished. By then, regardless of how hard Flora Verba Group's employees tried to explain themselves, the trust crisis wouldn't be solved.

And as the company's technical director, Roxanne's reputation would be dragged through the mud after getting involved in that scandal.

“I had anticipated this day would come.” Once again, Elektra stopped crying.

Despair was the greatest sorrow.

At that point, she no longer knew how to face Lucian, Roxanne, her parents, or anything else.

Her expression suddenly took on an eerie calmness.

She gazed at Lucian longingly, wanting to engrave his countenance in her mind.

“Lucian, | hope you don't involve my parents and the Lane family in this matter. I'll bear all the consequences.” Immediately after she spoke, Lucian suddenly sensed something off in her tone.

When he turned to look at Elektra, he noticed she was dashing out of the room at breakneck speed. What is she trying to do?

Aterrifying suspicion flashed across Lucian's mind, prompting him to give chase.

However, he had clearly underestimated Elektra's determination to die.

She really didn't know how to deal with everything in her life anymore. The good impressions and wonderful perception that Lucian has of me must've ceased to exist. He must hate me now, right?

Bitterness washed over her, filling every pore in her body.

At that instant, only a single thought remained in her mind. I'm going to leave this unbearable world. She bolted into the elevator, quickly closing the doors and heading to the top floor.

“Elektra, stop!” Lucian was already moving at an incredible speed.

Unfortunately, when Elektra reached the elevator, the doors opened just in time for her to enter.

He watched helplessly as the elevator ascended.

Pressing the button repeatedly, he hoped another elevator would arrive sooner.

Lucian made it to the top floor of the building in less than fifteen seconds after Elektra did.

He noticed she was already standing on the railing and was one step away from committing a three-hundred-meter drop. Ultimately, she still yearned for him and hoped he could come after her. She felt relief wash over her and smiled faintly when she noticed he had indeed followed her to the rooftop.

“Don't come any closer, Lucian! | wronged you and Roxanne. She's, in fact, a perfect woman, and | can't compare to her in every aspect.”

“Hurry up and get down from there! Do you think that's the way to shoulder all the responsibilities? | won't let you go to jail, but you must face your mistakes. What you're doing is nothing more than running away from your problems. Do you think you can erase everything you've done by dying?”

Lucian narrowed his eyes, riveting his gaze on her while approaching her step by step. He tried to think of something that could calm Elektra down, but his anger couldn't be quelled.

As he slowly approached Elektra, she shook her head and flashed him a miserable smile. “Lucian, | get what you're saying. But |-I finally understand your feelings toward me now. Regrettably, | can no longer be your sister. | hope to end everything this way. The truth is, I've never wanted to be your sister. I've always loved you. Christina did threaten me, but | still had a choice. | was just too stubborn and unrepentant to do the right thing.”

Lucian was suddenly stumped. He stopped in his tracks as a conflicted expression spread across his face.

Lucian could vaguely tell she harbored romantic feelings for him, but Roxanne had won his heart many years ago, even long before they were married.

Chapter 1894 Next Lifetime

“Lucian, can I meet with Roxanne? I want to apologize to her sincerely. If I don't do it today, I might never have the chance again.”

Elektra had expressed all the thoughts in her mind.

At the brink of her death, she pondered on the remaining guilt and regrets she had in her life.

In the end, Elektra felt that she should face Roxanne one last time. I've lost to her in every aspect possible. Lucian furrowed his brows but finally nodded in agreement.

He dialed Roxanne's number and told Roxanne about Elektra's plan to end her life by jumping off a building and her wish to meet with Roxanne one last time.

In the meantime, Roxanne, who was in the research institute's office, was wholly dumbfounded.

She even wondered if her husband was joking. The third phase of the product had made a lot of profit, and the future of Flora Verba Group was undoubtedly promising, so why would the CEO of the company, Elektra, want to end her own life?

Roxanne wasn't heartless. In the end, the only reason she could think of that would motivate Elektra to do so was the latter's love life.

Yes, that's possible. But, it's still weird that she would attempt to end her life and that Lucian is currently with her. Roxanne planned to drive there herself, but Lucian called again the next second.

“Let Linda drive you over. I need to brief you on the circumstances on your way here.”

She agreed.

Linda drove while Roxanne sat in the backseat, quietly listening to Lucian's account of Christina's entire plot. After hearing that, Roxanne felt chills traveling down her spine.

She couldn't believe that underneath the calm surface of the seemingly joyous three-day period, sinister schemes were brewing, and thrilling rescues took place.

Fear washed over her as she became aware of what had happened. If it weren't for Lucian's attentiveness, noticing something was off, and taking decisive countermeasures, Flora Verba Group and the research institute would've been doomed.

Roxanne reckoned that if worse came to worst, she probably wouldn't be able to escape the mess unscathed as well and might have to face imprisonment.

The most important day of her life was just one week away.

That meant Elektra had deliberately planned to send her to jail before the wedding.

Realizing that, Roxanne regained her composure right away and even began emanating a forbidding aura. Is she truly seeking death, or is this just a ploy for her to gain Lucian's sympathy so she can escape this plight?

Suddenly, Roxanne lost all pity and sympathy for Elektra since the latter was clearly trying to put her in a desperate situation. What would happen to the three children if | were really sent to jail?

Upon arriving at the office building, Roxanne looked up at the top of the structure. While waiting for Roxanne's arrival, Elektra gradually sat down with her legs dangling on the edge, seemingly unafraid of falling and resolved to meet her end.

Poker-faced, Roxanne strolled toward the entrance casually, wanting to see for herself what else Elektra was planning to do. At that moment, her mind was blank. She didn't know what to think about.

Suddenly, some strange thoughts popped into her head. Is there truly an afterlife? Do people truly forget everything after passing on? But | don't want to forget Lucian. If | was given a chance at rebirth, can | make a wish to let Lucian fall in love with me in my next life?

Elektra turned around and regarded Lucian with a yearning look. He had been silent after he was done talking on the phone with Roxanne and was tapping something on his phone. Finally, the elevator carrying Roxanne finally reached the top floor with a ding.

She would arrive on the rooftop after taking a dozen more steps.

#### Chapter 1895 Freedom Even Death Cannot Grant

“Jump then, Elektra! That is if you think doing so can truly grant you freedom.”

Roxanne walked onto the rooftop. She felt much more at ease at the sight of her husband sitting calmly aside. She believed Elektra's attempt at seeking death to gain sympathy would not work on her husband.

Seeing that Roxanne had arrived, Elektra guiltily avoided meeting the former's gaze.

Stunned, she froze upon hearing Roxanne's words.

She'd assumed Roxanne would try convincing her not to end her own life. However, to her surprise, Roxanne's eyes were filled with nothing but icy contempt.

“Roxanne, don't worry, for I'll jump! | just wanted to apologize to you before | go. In the end, I'm still jealous of you. | can't accept the fact that you got together with Lucian.” Elektra smiled bitterly.

“Save all that sweet talk. You have the right to apologize, but | can also choose not to accept your apology. You heard it right. | have no desire to forgive you at all. You've had plenty of chances to stop everything that was going on while we were collaborating. In fact, you could have told me about how Christina threatened you, yet you remained silent and kept all that to yourself!”

Roxanne made her way over to Lucian's side. Instead of interrupting her, he gently held her hand.



His gesture of affection was like a stab to Elektra's heart.

How ironic. Here | am on the verge of death, and they're still proving to me how in love they are.

Elektra couldn't come up with a response to Roxanne's statement.

She's right. | did have a chance to redeem myself. Unfortunately, | was possessed by the devil in me and lost my rationality.

“Elektra, | have no idea why you summoned me here. You could have done away with your life privately without causing Lucian and me any more stress. Am | right?” asked Roxanne.

She's seeking death now that everything is exposed. What a joke! | don't believe whatever guilt or regret she has. The last thing Roxanne wanted was for Lucian to be guilt-tripped by Elektra into thinking that he'd been the cause of her death. “Roxanne, |—”

Elektra fell into the depths of despair as she observed Lucian's placid expression. She couldn't handle Roxanne's intense interrogation at all.

“| guess we're done here. You've apologized, and I've heard you, so Lucian and | will be taking our leave now. If you still intend to jump, please make your own decision.”

With that, Roxanne turned to gaze at her husband. Lucian gave her a look of encouragement before they both turned to leave hand-in-hand. The sight of them leaving together left Elektra in utter despair.

Roxanne was right when she accused Elektra of being selfish. The latter wasn't afraid of death and was merely using it to sway Lucian.

To her dismay, not even that worked.

She could no longer elicit any emotion from Lucian, regardless of whether she was dead or alive.

Aturmoil of mixed emotions began stirring within her. Memories of the childhood she shared with Lucian began flashing in her mind.

Everything is over. There's no turning back time, and things will never be the same again.

Even death could not free her from the pain of such a loss.

Elektra stared blankly at the receding figures of the couple as they vanished into the distance.

Roxanne and Lucian stepped into the elevator, descending the building swiftly.

Their future happiness as a couple took precedence over everything.

Elektra would have to take accountability for all the wrongs that she had committed.

“Lucian, thank goodness you saw through the scheme just in time! Otherwise, both | and Flora Verba Group would have been destroyed completely! | have learned my lesson. In the future, I'll be more discerning and meticulous in every aspect of my career.” Roxanne couldn't help but sigh as soon as she got into Lucian's car, ridiculing her own foolishness.

“Forget it. You're exhausted as it is. There's no need to be even more meticulous than you already are. They merely got lucky this time to have taken advantage of the situation. | sure do not hope to see you become even more of a workaholic than | am.”

Lucian caressed Roxanne's hair affectionately.

## Chapter 1896 Make Things Right

In the end, Richard and Mila, Elektra's parents, rushed to the building.

Roxanne had already gotten down from the railing and was squatting on the ground with her hands wrapped around her legs. Her expression was devoid of any trace of emotion.

She finally piped up after a considerable amount of time had passed.

“Dad, Mom, I'm sorry for causing both of you to worry. | can never atone for what I've done in this lifetime! | don't have the slightest clue how to salvage everything, but I'll continue living and strive to make things right step by step for the rest of my life.”

Roxanne had completely won Elektra over. Her words had been a wake-up call for Elektra.

Seeking death is just running away from my responsibilities. The only way | can convey my sincerest apologies is through actions.

Half an hour later, the senior management of Flora Verba Group called for a meeting, whereby an announcement about Elektra's resignation from the position of CEO was made. Henceforth, she was no longer part of the company.

Resigning from the company was Elektra's own decision, for she was too ashamed to remain in the company.

Roxanne subsequently declared as the director that the initial thirty percent of Elektra's shares would be decreased to twenty percent and transferred to Richard.

That evening, Elektra went to the police station with her parents and confessed to all of the crimes she'd committed.

Despite that, her lawyer still tried to plead her case and fight for the reduction of her sentence with the first reason being her attempt at the crime was unsuccessful. Secondly, she had yet to cause any severe harm to society.

Soon enough, the Lane family released a statement stating they'd donate two hundred million to the victims of the fire. The amount would be used to treat those whose faces were scalded and disfigured by the fire.

Lucian and Roxanne couldn't care less about the final verdict of the court case.

Nevertheless, Richard still called Lucian later during the day to apologize and inform him about his daughter being detained at the police station.

“Lucian, I am grateful to you and Ms. Jarvis. Elektra would have chosen a path of no return and jumped off the building if Ms. Jarvis hadn't said what she said. Elektra now understands she was at fault and will try to make amends by all means possible. Thank you for still retaining our portion of the shares. If not, we'd be doomed. We're truly sorry...” Richard began choking up toward the end.

Lucian gave a brief response, telling them not to overthink. Elektra's incident might have ended, but Christina, the perpetrator, seemed to have vanished into thin air.

She was still nowhere to be found even after the police had listed her as a suspect and issued a search warrant for her. Besides, her current identity as a Hawenese only complicated things.

Lucian immediately instructed Cayden to utilize all his resources and wide connections to locate Christina's whereabouts.

After tucking the three kids into bed, Roxanne returned to the living room. She saw Lucian's grim expression and knew he was still worried.

Danger was still lurking in every corner of their lives as long as Christina wasn't found.

The evil woman had been plotting and scheming for such a long time and had picked the right time to execute her ploy. It had been a close call for Roxanne. Roxanne's voice snapped Lucian out of his thoughts. “Lucian, I would like to discuss something with you.”

Roxanne proceeded to reveal her intentions to install Jonathan as the new CEO of the company and transfer ten percent of the company's shares to him.

This meant that five billion out of the company's net worth of fifty billion would instantly be transferred to Jonathan.

Roxanne did not have the slightest hesitation in doing so, for she was convinced that Jonathan's capability was worth far more than that.

“All right, but I'll have to think about it. After all, Jonathan is one of my most trusted right-hand men responsible for managing many of my businesses,” said Lucian in a teasing tone.

“I know, but he doesn't have to do much. He should just focus on establishing a core team. Elektra's resignation would definitely arouse suspicions among some of the senior executives. I just need him to calm them down and reassure them, that's all. Can't you just loan him to me?” Roxanne pouted, acting adorably to get her way.

Lucian pulled her into his arms and nodded at once.

## Chapter 1897 A Well Deserved Break

The next morning, Jonathan came over.

Lucian instructed the kitchen to prepare some pastries and served them with coffee to Jonathan.

Both were chatting casually while enjoying the food when Lucian brought up Roxanne's idea.

Usually, Jonathan would respond by nodding and acknowledging with an “Okay.”

However, Jonathan appeared a bit apprehensive today. He looked at Lucian cautiously. “Lucian, c-can | decline?” Lucian froze upon hearing his reply and instinctively furrowed his brows.

At that moment, Jonathan thought Lucian was upset with him. He hurriedly explained, “Lucian, | know these are Roxanne's thoughts. But I... I'm feeling a bit tired nowadays.”

Lucian snapped out of his daze and quickly shook his head. “There's no need to explain. I'm not angry.”

He looked at Jonathan with a gentle gaze.

For so many years, Jonathan had been a trusted aide of his who would never say no to him.

Regardless of the decisions made and the targets set by Lucian, Jonathan would strive to execute them without any complaints. That showcased the absolute trust and chemistry between them.

Deep inside his heart, Lucian was grateful for having such a buddy who was impeccable in so many ways.

However, the recent events with Elektra and Jonathan's rejection got him thinking.

Have | been putting myself above him all this while and that's why | never pay attention to his feelings? Or is it because of my authoritative and aggressive working style that made him fearful of me?

Whatever the reason might be, Lucian realized he had some shortcomings.

Seeing the changed expression on Lucian's face, Jonathan hesitated if he should retract his words even though he had mustered much courage earlier to reject Lucian.

In all fairness, which business leader would not be attracted to a CEO position, share ownership worth five billion, and the power to direct Flora Verba Group's future?

“Lucian, on second thoughts, maybe | should accept the proposal. | know you and Roxanne have my interests at heart. If | join Flora Verba Group, the Queen family would be able to have a core asset.”

Jonathan had just finished speaking when Lucian waved his hand in dismissal. “Don't misunderstand, | was just thinking about some stuff earlier. Why don't you have a cup of coffee and take a good three minutes to think it through? | can wait for your answer.”

Seeing Jonathan's hesitation, mixed emotions ran through Lucian.

He's always cautious and mindful of other people's feelings, resulting in him having to suppress his true feelings. How can such a person lead a happy life?

With that, Lucian started drinking his coffee and did not respond to Jonathan's shocked reaction. After a long while, Jonathan began to think seriously.

Nobody was aware that his medical condition had deteriorated recently, and it was not looking good.

It was then he suddenly felt deeply frustrated and lost interest in everything. Sometimes, a flow of negative thoughts would enter his mind.

He did not understand what exactly was wrong with him. He felt like a zombie, devoid of all emotions. He was indifferent to everything around him.

However, he could not find anyone to confide in though he once considered seeking professional help from Madilyn. But ultimately, he did not proceed with it.

He was worried about inundating other people with his negative emotions, causing them distress.

A battle between rational views and sentimental thoughts was happening inside Jonathan's mind right now.

The reason why he suddenly declined Lucian's offer was because he was experiencing burnout.

In short, he could no longer withstand further pressure.

Perhaps, not only did he need to decline the offer on Flora Verba Group, he might need a well-deserved break too.

Chapter 1898

Three minutes to Lucian was akin to the time taken to drink two cups of coffee.

But to Jonathan, that three minutes was extraordinarily long.

He habitually glanced at his watch and then forced himself to pull his focus back from all the rambling thoughts. "Lucian, I..."

"Hold on!" Lucian immediately raised his palm in front of Jonathan without waiting for him to finish.

He discovered that Jonathan was so precise in his time management, measuring right down to the second.

He casually used three minutes as a reference, and Jonathan took it seriously without missing a second.

It must be so mentally tiring to cope with an obsessive-compulsive disorder. Lucian could not help but pity Jonathan.

"Jonathan, before you decide, | want you to know that I'll support you unconditionally no matter what choice you make in the end. Do you understand me?" Lucian's gaze became warmer and gentler.

Jonathan was overwhelmed with gratitude when he heard that. He nodded and forced a faint smile. "Lucian, I'm feeling drained recently. So I'd like to put things down for a while temporarily." As he spoke, he could not help but raise his eyes to look at Lucian's reaction.

Seeing Lucian's nod of approval, Jonathan continued, "I appreciate Roxanne's kindness. Perhaps you could give me some time. | think | want to take a break. Is that all right?"

"Of course, certainly!" Lucian promptly agreed.

With that, he poured Jonathan a cup of coffee and reassured him, "Listen, Jonathan. From now onwards, you can freely express whatever opinions you have to me. Do you hear me?"

Jonathan was taken aback. He could not help but think if he had done something wrong that made Lucian say those words. "Just by looking at your expression, I know you're overthinking again." Lucian sighed with a heavy heart.

Since when did Jonathan become like this? Did it start when I took over Farwell Group? He's cautious about everything and constantly walks on eggshells.

I don't deny the merits of being cautious. But it's not healthy to constantly suppress your feelings and not be able to express yourself. No matter how well-tempered one is, there is a limit to how much one can take.

"Jonathan, from today onwards, go and take a well-deserved break. I'll not bother you unless there're urgent matters. Take a step back and temporarily relinquish your responsibilities. I'll tell Cayden to take instructions from you. Let him handle everything." Lucian stood up and patted Jonathan's shoulder, assuring him.

As Jonathan left the mansion, he suddenly felt peace in his heart, a feeling that he had not experienced in a long while.

Perhaps, it's time for me to look into my illness seriously. I should find Madilyn and have a good talk with her.

Immediately, Jonathan drove to the hospital.

Back at the mansion, Roxanne woke up after Jonathan left. When Lucian relayed Jonathan's decision to her, she was rather shocked.

"It's all right. I respect his decision!" Roxanne responded. "Actually, I have someone in mind who can also assume this role." Lucian suddenly thought of a suitable candidate. Roxanne knitted her brows and pondered for a while. But she still could not think of who else was suitable.

People like Jonathan and Elektra, who were familiar with the corporate world and full of vigor and creativity, were really hard to come by.

In most cases, such talents were cultivated at a young age as they grew up in that environment. That was how prestigious families were formed and thrived. They strongly emphasized the importance of inheritance, ensuring the passing of knowledge and wealth from one generation to another.

"The person I have in mind is James Lann. He's more than just a psychologist. He earned several accolades and awards for his achievements in business school then. It was only after he developed an interest in psychology that he started to pursue that path. That guy is a genius."

However, the moment Lucian thought of James, he suddenly felt infuriated.

## Chapter 1899 A Proper Chat

After Estella's illness had taken a turn for the better, James disappeared for six months. He had been idle and spent his time globe-trotting.

He contacted Lucian intermittently and occasionally sent photos of beautiful scenery from his travels.

He also hopped between Alendor and Archulea, saying he was researching the objective laws of human psychological evolution. He did go about it very professionally and even published many research papers.

Nonetheless, only Lucian knew he just wanted to take it easy and wanted no part in shouldering his family's burdens.

The Lann family ran a fairly large business in Xendale that dealt in tea leaves, coffee, lumber, dry cargo, and many others. Over the past few years, it had begun collaborating with Farwell Group on foreign trade, which led to the business expanding by leaps and bounds.

However, James was content being a laid-back psychologist, enjoying traveling to every corner of the world.

Once Roxanne heard James' name, she nodded eagerly in agreement and barely even paused to think about it. I'm sure there won't be any error in judgment as long as the candidate is someone Lucian recommends.

“What good timing. He'll surely return to attend our wedding, so you can take that opportunity to force him to stay and get him to help you manage Flora Verba Group.”

As Lucian's thoughts lingered on Jonathan and James, he could not help but think that the two seemed to have swapped lives.

The trio used to be schoolmates. Back then, James was like a careful and meticulous robot who could answer every question. He never stepped out of line and was the top in every subject.

Meanwhile, Jonathan was the polar opposite. He was always boisterous and liked to play many different sports. As for studying, he did not have much interest in it.

Later on, both of them made very different choices upon encountering family responsibilities. As a result, their personalities and lives changed drastically.

After listening to Lucian's detailed introduction of James' background, Roxanne could not help feeling doubtful. “But if he doesn't even want anything to do with his family's business, what makes you so sure he'll be willing to take over Flora Verba Group?”

“I believe he'll agree to it because he covets your medical expertise. You just need to agree to teach him some of your medical skills.”

She had no issues with that. After all, any medical practitioner would be pleased to see medical knowledge and skills being passed on and continuing to flourish.

After deciding on a suitable candidate, the couple left the house and headed to the wedding venue to finalize a few plans.

Over at the hospital, Madilyn was busy working in her office when she heard a knock on the door. She called for the person to enter and smiled upon seeing that it was Jonathan.

“Mr. Queen, don't tell me your stomach pains are acting up again?” she asked, her tone lighthearted. During the last follow-up check, his gastritis was better, and the gastric erosions in his stomach had healed. Hence, she did not think there would be any major issues.

Shaking his head, he pointed at his heart and replied frankly, “Madilyn, | feel as though there's something wrong with me here.”

That shocked her, and she sprang to her feet at once. “A heart condition? No way. The last time | checked on you, your heart rate, blood pressure, and arteries were all fine.”

Madilyn's mother had a close brush with death due to a heart condition not long ago, so it was still a very stressful topic for her.

Jonathan shook his head again. After a while, he walked over to her desk and sat in front of it. “You should sit down, Madilyn. | want to have a proper chat with you.”

Observing his calm demeanor, she nodded and sat down.

She quickly guessed that he was referring to his depression, and her heart grew heavy. This means he hasn't completely dealt with his depression. What's more, the relapse is more severe than before.

## Chapter 1900 The Life Of Jonathan

Jonathan and Madilyn had a long conversation that lasted for two whole hours.

It never crossed her mind that he had lived a life like that.

When Jonathan was little, probably when he was still in kindergarten, he fell behind in his speech and language abilities. That led him to be considered intellectually disabled at one point. From then on, he had to deal with gossip and people questioning his abilities.

If not for his parents' persistence, he would have been sent to a psychiatric hospital for treatment.

To some extent, the birth of Frieda took some of the adults' attention off him. His sister was a ball of energy, which made her well-loved by many.

Hence, as a child, he gradually grew averse to communicating his thoughts with others.

Jonathan slowly grew older, and during that time, he met Lucian and they became best friends.

That was probably the time when he was happiest. He had less attention from the adults in his life, but that allowed him more opportunities to do whatever he wanted.

It was also then that his trust in Lucian was solidified. Even now, he still believed that whatever Lucian decided had to be the right decision. There was no need to doubt it, and he only had to do as he was told. Never once did he pause to consider his own wishes.

Eventually, he realized that even if he did not express his thoughts or feelings, that did not seem to affect anything.

In middle school, his grades started slipping. Lucian and Elektra would always quietly help him, and later on, he even got to know the whiz-kid, James.



Jonathan envied James as the latter was a veritable genius who could learn anything very quickly. During those days, Jonathan felt dejected and refused to go home because everyone at home, with the exception of his parents, was disappointed with his academic performance. They accused him of disrupting their plans, and his uncle even questioned his abilities to his face, saying he was unqualified to inherit the Queen family's businesses in the future. That period was when he was the most vulnerable yet also the strongest. After taking the high school entrance exams, he encountered the most painful experience in his life. Due to his bad grades, he had to separate from Lucian and Elektra because they could not continue attending the same school. Instead, they enrolled in two different high schools catering to different academic abilities. Jonathan's parents wanted to spend a little money to make a few connections and get him into a better private high school, but he refused. He became a loner once he was in high school and rarely spoke with others. Although Lucian would call and invite him out during the weekends, he slowly discovered that he seemed to be withdrawing further into his shell. Finally, on one random night, he suddenly snapped. He decided that if he could not remember a word after one try, he would memorize it a hundred times. If he could not understand a formula, he would force himself to commit it to memory. And when all else failed, he pricked his arm with a needle. Every time Jonathan did that, he found he could remember whatever he needed to memorize. In the end, he came to realize that the feeling of pain could help spark his potential. Fortunately, Lucian discovered his harsh study method. Lucian forced him to give up on it and do push-ups instead. Hence, Jonathan started exercising while memorizing. Thanks to Lucian's guidance, Jonathan found he was physically quite fit and good at sports. He dreamed of perhaps becoming an athlete, participating in national competitions or even at an international level. Alas, that dream ultimately fell through. That was because after Jonathan's academic performance improved rapidly, he secured a spot at the top business university. Ecstatic, his parents kept encouraging him to study hard so he could one day inherit all of the Queen family's businesses. He should have been happy since he had finally realized his parents' hopes. However, he slowly changed into someone who was emotionally detached and only memorized things mechanically. Not only did he remember facts on numerous successful business case studies, but also various plots and schemes. He was not trying to understand what he was learning at all, and his limited comprehensive skills were the result of all those years of forcing himself to memorize.