

ABANDONED 511

Chapter 511 The next evening, Roxanne planned to leave work early to pick the children up from school.

It had been a long time since she did so as she had been trying to avoid Lucian. Now that meeting him was inevitable, there was no need to hide from him.

Holding that thought, Roxanne gave Lysa a call, letting the latter know that she would pick up the children herself.

Lysa agreed at once.

Upon ending the call, Roxanne threw herself back into work.

Even though the Damaris family's research institute was still in the planning stage, a lot of details still needed to be confirmed with Roxanne's research institute. Furthermore, Roxanne, not wanting to disappoint the Damaris family, had to make sure that her preparations were comprehensive enough.

Meanwhile, Colby had finished his work in the research facility and came over to provide her with a progress report. The moment he stepped in, he sat quietly opposite her when he saw how engrossed she was in work, hoping to speak to her when she was done.

It wasn't until a long while later that Roxanne shifted her attention away from the screen. At the sight of Colby, she was stunned. "Dr. Galloway, why are you here? When did you come in?"

Colby grinned. "I just got here. Since you were busy, I didn't want to disrupt your work."

Roxanne gave him a slight nod. "What is it? How are things at the research facility?"

Colby replied, "I was just going to talk to you about it. The projects over the last few days have been going smoothly. Therefore, you can prepare for our collaboration with the Damaris family without worry." Colby had barely finished when he added in admiration, "Everyone in the research institute is talking about the upcoming collaboration. They are looking forward to it and feel grateful to you for securing such an opportunity."

Roxanne got up to pour him some coffee before smiling humbly at his words. "The credit for securing the collaboration goes to everyone here. After all, they are the ones who have kept this place running. Regardless of how smart I am, there's no way the Damaris family chose to work with us solely on my account."

Roxanne was certain that the Damaris family had conducted a thorough background check on their research institute before choosing them as their partner.

After thanking her upon receiving his drink, Colby inquired about the progress of her preparations. "How are things coming along at your end?"

Roxanne casually turned her screen around in order to show him.

Even though the collaboration details had been decided, the Damaris family's research institute wasn't on track yet. Thus, Roxanne could only spend the last few days identifying the direction of the family's research and reading up on the latest information in an effort to prepare ahead of time.

After going through it, Colby knitted his brows. "This is a field that our research institute has not explored before. Thus, I'm not sure if we can meet the Damaris family's expectations."

Roxanne curled her lips into a smile. "That's the reason why I'm preparing for it as much as possible. Furthermore, if the collaboration goes well, our research institute will be able to expand the fields that we're involved in, which will be extremely beneficial to our future development."

Colby responded with a thoughtful nod. "I understand. I'll make sure everyone is well prepared."

In the midst of their discussion, there was a sudden knock on the door.

When Roxanne opened it, she saw one of the researchers, dressed in a lab coat, standing at the door.

When he saw Roxanne, the man reported awkwardly, "Dr. Jarvis, excuse me for troubling you before you leave, but we have encountered a problem with our experiment. Can you help us take a look at it?" | Roxanne agreed without hesitation while Colby, too, followed them back to the research facility.

Chapter 512

Meanwhile, class had ended at the kindergarten. With most of the students gone, only the three children were left waiting at the school field.

They were in a particularly good mood as they were looking forward to the rehearsal later

While Archie and Benny would chat occasionally, Estella sat obediently by the side with a smile on her adorable face.

"Why isn't Ms. Lane here yet?" Benny began to grow curious when he noticed the sky turning dark.

Ms. Lane has always arrived early, so why is she late today?

Despite furrowing his brows, Archie reassured his brother, "Perhaps she's occupied with something. Let's just wait for a while longer."

At that moment, Lucian strode through the kindergarten entrance and was greeted by the sight of the three children sitting in a row

"Daddy!" Estella, the first to see him, waved at Lucian.

After hurrying up to her, Lucian knitted his brows while staring at the brothers.

Over the last few days, Lysa had been picking up the boys since Roxanne was avoiding Lucian. Thus, they were usually gone by the time he arrived.

What's going on today?

"Where's Ms. Lane?" Lucian asked in a gentle tone.

Propping their chins up with a hand, the boys were equally clueless. "We don't know."

"Archie says that Ms. Lane might be busy," Benny explained in his squeaky voice.

Frowning, Lucian checked the time and suggested, "I'll send you home."

The boys exchanged a glance.

Even though Benny was tempted, Archie shook his head with an expressionless face. The look in his eyes was just as distant as Roxanne's. "You don't have to. We'll just wait for Ms. Lane. Otherwise, she'll worry if she doesn't see us here."

Lucian replied at once, "I'll give your mommy a call and tell her to inform Ms. Lane."

With the boys still appearing reluctant, Luciani added, "I'm going to send Essie over to your house for the rehearsal anyway."

Estella, too, urged them, "Let's go together. Daddy will let Ms. Lane know. Since it's already late, let's leave quickly!"

As she spoke, she tugged the boys' bags with a look of anticipation.

However, the brothers merely hugged their bags tighter. Their resentment for Lucian couldn't be any more obvious.

Estella then turned around to look to her father for help.

After giving her head a reassuring stroke, Lucian returned his attention to the boys who were sitting on the bench. "If you continue to wait here, Ms. Ward will also have to wait with you. Have you thought about that?"

At that, Pippa's first reaction was to say that it was fine. However, the look on Lucian's face caused her to swallow her words in fear. Instead, she wore an awkward expression in front of the children

The brothers stared at their teacher before thinking about their mother. Identical conflicted expressions dominated their faces.

At that moment, Estella rubbed her stomach pitifully with a pout. "I'm hungry."

Lucian raised his brows slightly. "We'll have to wait for the brothers."

Upon hearing his words, the boys finally got off the bench with their bags and trudged up to Lucian's side.

After motioning for Estella to hold the brothers' hands, Lucian took his leave from Pippa before leading them out of the kindergarten.

Once all of them got into the car, Lucian started the engine and drove toward Roxanne's home.

Since the three children were sitting at the back, Estella would occasionally speak to the boys. Before long, all of them dropped their guard and began to play in the back.

The sound of the children arguing caused Lucian's expression to soften slightly, and there was even a hint of amusement in his eyes.

Chapter 513

By the time Roxanne came out of the research facility, it was already past seven in the evening

Checking the time, she felt as if she had forgotten something.

In the midst of her trying to recall what it was, she received a call from Lysa, which she picked up with a frown.

"Ms. Jarvis, are you on your way?" Lysa's voice rang out the moment she answered.

Her words had Roxanne instantly thinking of the boys. She replied at once, "I forgot about them! I'm heading over right away!"

Ending the call in a hurry, she sped toward the kindergarten.

Upon her arrival, she was greeted by the closed gate at its entrance. Evidently, the brothers were no longer inside. Overwhelmed by panic, Roxanne froze momentarily before it occurred to her to give Pippa a call.

"Mr. Farwell has picked Archie and Benny up. Didn't he inform you about it?" Pippa asked curiously.

Lucian picked them up...

Roxanne breathed a sigh of relief. After thanking Pippa, she ended the call with mixed emotions.

While staring at the empty kindergarten, she was filled with guilt and self-blame.

She had grown so used to Lysa collecting the boys that she ended up allowing such an important matter to slip her mind. Luckily, Lucian was there.

Suddenly, her ringing phone jolted her out of her thoughts.

After getting a grip of herself, she glanced at the caller ID,

Seeing Lucian's name, she figured that it must be about the children.

Hence, she answered without hesitation,

"When are you coming back?" When Lucian's magnetic voice rang out, Roxanne was

stunned by his words.

It took her a few seconds to realize he was likely waiting at her house, as they were due to rehearse for the play.

It was just that his words drove her imagination wild, for he made it sound as if they were a family.

Suppressing the turbulent emotions within her, Roxanne plainly replied, "I'm on my way. Thanks for picking Archie and Benny up."

After grunting in acknowledgment, Lucian reminded casually, "Be careful while driving. The kids are playing, so there's nothing to worry about."

As another strange sensation crept into her heart, Roxanne mumbled a response before ending the call.

Lucian's tone just makes it all too easy for me to get carried away with my thoughts.

After lingering at the kindergarten entrance to calm her nerves, Roxanne departed for her mansion.

The moment she stepped into the house, she was greeted by the sight of Lucian working on the couch. The children were nowhere to be seen.

"Ms. Jarvis, what held you up tonight?" Lysa welcomed her with a concerned tone.

Roxanne, in an apologetic tone, explained, "I had wanted to go get them but was delayed by work."

After acknowledging her answer, Lysa threw Lucian a glance and added, "Luckily, they didn't have to wait as Mr. Farwell sent them home."

Just as Roxanne trailed Lysa's gaze, she saw Lucian wrapping up his work and approaching them after keeping his phone.

"Thank you." As Lucian came up to her, Roxanne averted her gaze and thanked him softly

Lucian, with a cursory nod, suggested in his deep voice, "Since you're back, you should have your dinner first as the children have been complaining about being hungry. Even though Lysa has already prepared dinner, they still insisted on waiting for you"

Roxanne's heart melted as she pursed her lips and nodded.

In response to her agreement, Lucian turned around and headed to the backyard.

Roxanne followed him, knowing that the children were likely there.

Chapter 514

In the brightly lit backyard, the boys were kicking a ball around while Estella, holding up her skirt, ambled behind them. Even though she didn't manage to get a kick in, she smiled widely the entire time.

"Mommy!" Benny, who had just kicked the ball in the direction of the door, was given a fright when he suddenly saw Roxanne emerge from the house.

The moment she stepped out, Roxanne was stunned to see the ball flying straight at her face.

Just when it was inches away from her, she felt a hand reach out from behind and pull her to the side.

In the next second, the ball brushed past her body before falling onto the ground.

As Lucian appeared from behind Roxanne, he looked at the dumbstruck children and instructed in a deep voice, "Come back in for dinner."

It wasn't until they gradually gathered their wits that they hurried up to Roxanne's side.

"Mommy, I'm sorry for scaring you. Are you all right?" Benny apologized meekly. Contentt belongs to N0ve/IDrâ/ma.O(r)g!

Roxanne gave his hair a reassuring tousle. "I'm fine, but you have to be more careful next time."

Just as she spoke, something else occurred to her. Giving Estella an amused yet helpless look, she reprimanded the brothers, "How could you play ball with Essie? She's wearing a dress, for goodness sake. What if she had fallen?"

Having heard Roxanne's words, the boys exchanged glances before scratching their noses to hide their guilt. Suddenly, Estella's high-pitched voice rang out. "They didn't ask me. It was I who wanted to play with them."

Roxanne's brows jumped in surprise, for she didn't expect Estella to speak out on behalf of the brothers.

Nonetheless, it was still dangerous for her to be running wild with the boys while wearing a dress. On top of that, she barely had any energy left given how hungry she was.

It was one thing for the children to be playful but another for Lucian not to stop them.

With that thought in mind, Roxanne subconsciously threw Lucian an accusatory glance,

As if he could sense the attention she placed on him, Lucian explained without turning around, "Essie rarely gets the opportunity to run. Since she's having fun, there's no reason to stop her." Roxanne had no further comment after hearing his response. She then took the children to wash their hands before leading them into the dining room.

As the food had already gotten cold, Lysa reheated them.

Considering how famished they were, the boys began wolfing down their food once everyone took their seats at the table.

The innocent Estella, after observing them, picked up her cutlery and ate just as aggressively

Watching the scene unfold, Roxanne just couldn't hold back her laughter. She then patted her boys on their backs. "Slow down. You're setting a bad example for Essie."

After giving Estella a glance, the boys burst out in laughter before complying.

"Mommy, why did you come back so late today?" Benny asked curiously halfway through dinner.

She gave his head an apologetic tussle. "I'm sorry. I did plan to pick you up today and even told Lysa about it. Unfortunately, something unexpected came up at work, causing me to forget." Upon hearing her reason, the boys gave her an understanding nod. "It's all right. However, the next time you want to pick us up, please let us know. Otherwise, we'll worry about Ms. Lane." Feeling as if her heart had melted, Roxanne agreed with a smile.

At that moment, Benny added, "To make up for letting us wait for such a long time, why don't you pick us up every day from now on? How about that?"

Chapter 515

Roxanne's brows furrowed in reflex. Right as she was about to say something, Benny, as if he could read her mind, changed his request. "You don't have to do it every day; just until the anniversary celebration will do."

In response to Benny backing down, Roxanne sighed in relief and agreed, "All right."

Her answer filled the children's faces with elation.

Meanwhile, displeasure flashed across Lucian's face when he noticed Benny wavering in his stance

He was cognizant of why Benny did it and the reason why Roxanne could readily agree.

Since they were going to be rehearsing for the play, there was no point in her avoiding him for the time being.

Once the anniversary celebration was over, she would then stay as far away from him as she could

Given that Roxanne had come back late, it was already well past eight by the time dinner was done. With limited time left, they could only rush through the rehearsal before it was time for Lucian to take Estella home.

When she was reluctant to leave, Roxanne coaxed her with a smile, "Be a good girl, Essie. I'll be collecting all of you from school tomorrow, and we can have fun then, all right?"

Only after hearing Roxanne's reassurances did Estella nod in compliance.

Just as Roxanne looked up to bid Lucian goodbye, his phone suddenly rang.

Holding her tongue tactfully, she watched as Lucian answered the call with an emotionless expression.

As it was related to work, Lucian stopped to inform Roxanne before heading off to the balcony to take it, leaving her alone with the three children in the living room,

When the kids saw Lucian going off to answer his call, their eyes lit up at the opportunity to play,

Thus, the three of them ran off before Roxanne could even say a word.

Roxanne, smiling in resignation, went along by playing hide and seek with them.

As their house wasn't big, Archie and Benny would always end up hiding in the same few places. Once Roxanne found them with little effort, the three of them set off in search of Estella "Mommy." Benny gave Roxanne's sleeve a gentle tug.

Trailing the trajectory of his gaze, Roxanne saw a dainty pair of legs underneath the curtain. In fact, it was still trying to wiggle its way toward the corner. Unaware that she had been discovered and clueless about how obvious her hiding spot was, Estella was still trying to get into a better location.

After watching Estella's adorable movements, Roxanne instinctively looked at the man on the balcony.

Lucian, with his back facing them, was still on the phone. Looks like it will be a while before he finishes.

Retracting her gaze, Roxanne gestured at Archie and Benny to be quiet so that they could continue the game with Estella for a little longer.

The boys, aware of their mother's intention, played along by calling out Estella's name while walking back and forth in the house.

As the figure behind the curtain moved a little, Roxanne could hear the sound of a faint giggle. Nonetheless, it was quickly suppressed by Estella.

When she saw how happy the little girl was, Roxanne treaded silently toward her.

"I found you!" Upon reaching Estella's side, she gently pulled the curtain away.

Estella was momentarily stunned before running away and laughing at the same time.

Tickled by Estella's response, Roxanne calmly followed behind her. "I'm going to Catch you now!"

At that moment, Archie and Benny joined in the fray by surrounding Estella.

Left with no way out, Estella fled toward the balcony in her panic,

Meanwhile, Lucian had just ended his call and was oblivious to what was going on, No sooner had he turned around than he saw his daughter crashing into him while panting heavily. As if by instinct, he managed to get a hold of her,

Chapter 516

At the sight of Estella throwing herself into Lucian's arms, Roxanne stopped awkwardly and held back the two boys running behind her.

"Daddy!" Unaware of the change in Roxanne's mood, Estella tugged ecstatically at Lucian's sleeve. "Let's play hide and seek for a while before going home!"

Lowering his head to gaze at Estella, Lucian then shifted his attention to Roxanne with an indiscernible look in his eyes.

When she met his gaze, Roxanne felt a sudden sense of guilt.

She had just reprimanded the brothers for running wildly with Estella. But now, she was the one doing it instead.

After an awkward silence, Lucian remarked in a deep voice, "It's getting late. I'll be taking Essie home now."

He had barely finished when he turned toward Estella and said, "We have to go now, but we'll come back again tomorrow."

Despite puffing her cheeks up to express her unwillingness, Estella recognized that she had had a lot of fun that evening already. After a brief hesitation, she demonstrated her acquiescence by holding her father's hand.

When she reached the mansion's door with Lucian, Estella turned around and waved at Roxanne with a reluctant expression. "Bye, Ms. Jarvis. Bye, Archie, Benny."

Roxanne, too, bid the little girl farewell. "See you tomorrow."

All of a sudden, Lucian looked down at Estella and surprised everyone with his next words. "Let's go. We'll play hide and seek again with Ms. Jarvis tomorrow."

The mere mention of the game caused Estella to smile so happily that her eyes couldn't be seen.

As for Roxanne, the sound of Lucian's voice caused her to blush faintly.

After watching his car disappear into the distance, Roxanne led the boys back into the mansion,

The next evening, she went to school to pick them up just as she promised.

When she arrived at the kindergarten entrance, she saw the three of them standing in front of Pippa. Unable to hear the exchange between them, all she could see was Estella bursting into gleeful laughter. Upon her arrival, the children looked at her in unison, their faces glowing with joy.

The heartwarming sight melted Roxanne's heart as she hurried over to their side.

"Mommy!"

"Ms. Jarvis!"

The children called out to her in their squeaky voices.

After giving their heads an affectionate pat each, Roxanne's attention fell on Estella. "Essie, is your daddy not here yet?"

Estella nodded, as Lucian would usually arrive later.

Pondering for a moment, Roxanne then suggested with a smile, "In that case, do you want to come home with me first?"

Estella nodded in agreement without giving it a second thought. In fact, she even reached out to hold Roxanne's sleeve of her own volition.

Roxanne then held Estella's hand before bidding goodbye to Pippa and herding the children into her car.

As the children climbed into the backseat obediently, they felt as if they had returned to the time when Estella was living with them. The only difference was that she could now interact with them normally, injecting further dynamism into their relationship.

Consequently, the car, filled with their excited voices, felt especially lively.

When Roxanne saw how they were fooling around in the backseat through the rearview mirror, a gentle smile emerged on her face. As she took her phone to give Lucian a call, it rang with a call from him instead. Contentt belongs to N0ve/IDrâ/ma.O(r)g!

Roxanne proceeded to answer.

"Are you picking Archie and Benny up today? I'm tied up with something right now. If you can, please bring Essie along to your place."

Lucian's deep voice rang out the moment she answered.

Even though his words were consistent with her intention, she had an indescribable feeling after hearing what he said.

Chapter 517

Meanwhile, before Roxanne had the opportunity to answer, Lucian furrowed his brows and added grimly, "If it's not convenient, I'll send Cayden over."

Regaining her senses, Roxanne calmed herself down and replied, "It's all right. Essie is already in my car. I was just about to give you a call to tell you." Her words eased the tension on his face. "Thanks for that. Anyway, I have to go off now."

Before Roxanne could even react, Lucian ended the call.

All she could hear was the call-end tone.

After spacing out for a few seconds, Roxanne put her phone aside. Nonetheless, Lucian's voice continued to reverberate in her mind.

She was unsure if she was overthinking it, but it felt as if he was warming up to her after spending the last two days rehearsing together.

In fact, she would sometimes be mired in the illusion that they were a family, and that was the exact sensation she felt a moment ago.

Unfortunately, the thought of Sonya alone caused her to snap back into reality.

"Mommy?" Curious as to why she hadn't yet driven off, the children checked on her.

Roxanne, gradually gathering her thoughts, mumbled a response before starting the drive back home.

By the time they arrived, the dinner Lysa prepared was already waiting for them.

When Lysa only saw the four of them, she was surprised. "Where's Mr. Farwell?"

Used to having dinner together with him over the last two days, Lysa felt out of sorts when she only saw Estella and not Lucian.

When she looked behind them to check, Lucian was still nowhere to be seen.

Lysa then gave Roxanne a quizzical look as if he was a member of their family.

Noticing Lysa's strange expression, Roxanne knitted her brows but quickly realized that the niggling sensation she felt wasn't imagined. At the same time, for some inexplicable reason, her mood plummeted. "He... is tied up with work."

Lysa nodded in acknowledgment. "In that case, should we wait for him, or shall we

start first?"

Roxanne fell into deep thought again.

Lysa's question sparked a glint in Estella's eyes as she turned around and gave Roxanne a pitiful look. "I want Daddy..."

She had barely spoken when she gave Roxanne's sleeve a gentle tug and whined, "Daddy doesn't eat when he's busy."

After hearing Estella's words, Roxanne had no choice but to nod at Lysa. "Let's wait for a while then."

Lysa bobbed her head in acknowledgment. Contentt belongs to N0ve/IDrâ/ma.O(r)g!

Roxanne, with conflicted emotions, ushered the children to wash their hands.

"Mommy, are we waiting for Mr. Farwell to have dinner together?" Benny asked while the water was running down his hands.

He had heard what Roxanne promised Estella but was also aware that she was trying to avoid Lucian.

In the end, Roxanne mumbled an affirmative.

Sensing his mother's reluctance, Benny tilted his head in confusion.

Since Mommy doesn't like Daddy, why did she agree to wait for him to have dinner?

Oblivious to what was going through Benny's mind, she waited for them to finish washing their hands before leading them out of the bathroom. It was then that they heard a knock on the door. Everyone could guess that Lucian had arrived.

With that thought in mind, Roxanne put on an aloof expression as she opened the door.

When she did, she was greeted by the sight of Lucian in a suit and a neatly tied tie. He looked as if he had just come out of a meeting and was still exuding an authoritative air.

Roxanne, after being briefly stunned by his appearance, stepped aside to make way. "Come in."

Lucian gave her a slight nod before brushing past her to enter the living room.

W

Chapter 518 "Daddy!"

At the sight of her father, Estella ran up to Lucian's side and pointed to the untouched food on the table. "You're finally here. All of us are famished!"

As Lucian followed the trajectory of Estella's gaze, he saw Archie and Benny at the dining table, looking at him while supporting their heads with one hand. Their eyes still reflected the resentment they felt for him.

As for the five sets of dinnerware on the table, they remained untouched.

Evidently, everyone was waiting for him to have dinner together.

Realizing that fact, Lucian felt a complex range of emotions as he glanced at Roxanne, who had just come up to his side.

When their eyes met, she briefly froze before explaining by reflex, "Estella wanted to wait for you."

Raising his brows slightly, Lucian looked down at his daughter, who nodded with a gleeful grin as if she was taking credit for it.

In response, Lucian stroked her head and apologized to Roxanne and the boys, "I'm sorry for holding you up. I didn't realize you were waiting for me to have dinner."

Roxanne pursed her lips. "It's no big deal. Now that you're here, let's dig in and then continue with our rehearsal."

After giving her a nod, Lucian washed his hands before taking a seat at the table opposite her.

When dinner was over, everyone began rehearsing.

After practicing a few times, Roxanne had come to accept Lucian's lack of talent in acting. Therefore, she simply went along with the flow.

As for the three children, their acting skills were better than she had expected. Initially, she was worried that they wouldn't even be fluent with their lines. However, they impressed her not just with their eloquence but also with their convincing expressions,

Once rehearsal was over, the confused Estella tilted her head as she stared at the two adults.

Noticing how she was looking at them, Roxanne crouched by her side. "Essie, what is

it? Is there a problem?"

Knitting her brows, Estella asked hesitantly, "Oh, Ms. Jarvis, does Sleeping Beauty sleep till the end? I remember..."

I remember that she was awoken by a kiss from the prince! However, the rehearsal always ends after the prince defeats the witch.

Roxanne didn't have to wait for Estella to finish her sentence before she understood what the girl was going to say. She interrupted with a smile, "Of course not."

A baffled look emerged on Estella's face. "But the rehearsal always stops here."

Having heard Estella's question, Archie and Benny came over, for they too were equally curious.

Faced with the children's confounded expressions, Roxanne furrowed her brows, at a sudden loss for words.

Even though Pippa had mentioned that they only needed to look like they were kissing and no physical contact was needed, Roxanne still wanted to avoid any intimacy with Lucian. As a result, she had been neglecting that last scene on purpose.

To be honest, she hadn't expected the children to notice.

Unable to find the words to explain, Roxanne turned to Lucian for help.

However, she saw a strange look on his face instead.

When his gaze met hers, his expression became indifferent once more. He then said something that disheartened her further.

"That's true. I, too, am curious about it. Ms. Jarvis, why do you always skip the last scene? Isn't that where the soul of the story lies?"

The children nodded in agreement.

Stumped, Roxanne took a while to regain her senses before walking to Lucian's side and whispering, "Ms. Ward said that we can just pretend to kiss without making contact."

"All the more reason why we should practice it." Lucian cocked his brows while giving her a thoughtful look.

Chapter 519

Having heard Lucian's words, the frowning Roxanne felt a strong sense of resistance within her

Lucian's deep voice rang out again. "If we don't rehearse it, please don't accuse me of taking advantage of you when I kiss you by mistake."

In that moment, Roxanne couldn't believe her ears.

Nevertheless, she did find the scenario Lucian had conjured up to be entirely possible.

"Besides, neither of us are actors by profession. If we don't practice, how would we know where we should stand to make the kiss realistic?" Lucian, who could sense her wavering, pressed on calmly, causing her to feel ambivalent about the matter.

She admitted that he had a point. However, given that the anniversary celebration was still a few days away, she would have to be in close proximity to him for consecutive days if they were to rehearse the scene.

In the midst of her hesitation, Estella's squeaky voice piped up, "Why are we rehearsing everything but this scene?"

She proceeded to give Roxanne a quizzical yet innocent look.

When she saw the confusion in Estella's eyes, Roxanne sighed in resignation. "Fine. We'll run through it too."

After giving in, she threw Lucian a glance.

Nevertheless, all she saw was a detached expression, as if the comment he made was solely for the sake of the rehearsal.

Shifting her gaze away, Roxanne prayed that it was just her imagination that was running wild

Given that every scene before the kiss had been rehearsed multiple times, Roxanne had no choice but to jump right into the kissing scene.

The children subsequently led her to the couch, wanting her to lie down.

However, when Roxanne didn't move a muscle, Estella urged her, "Ms. Jarvis, lie down quickly!"

Roxanne looked at the children's excited faces and then at the waiting Lucian, still feeling torn over the matter.

It took her a while before she finally felt mentally prepared for it and lay down.

The children smartly made way for Lucian.

A few seconds passed before he walked over to the couch. Supporting himself with his hand on the back of the furniture, he leaned in to look at the woman lying on it.

Roxanne had shut her eyes, though there was a slight furrow between her brows. From the way her eyelashes trembled, she looked as if she was going to open her eyes at any moment.

At the sight of her nervousness, Lucian cocked a brow and sniggered quietly to himself.

The children, who were all watching by the side, were shocked to see the amusement on Lucian's face.

During their rehearsal over the past few days, they kept hearing Roxanne complain that Lucian didn't have any emotions at all. But from what they were seeing now, they realized that Roxanne's words were a far cry from reality.

While Roxanne lay on the couch with her eyes closed, it was so quiet that she could hear a pin drop. All she could feel was Lucian's breath bearing down upon her.

As he continued to approach, Roxanne's hands clenched into fists while her brows slowly knitted together tightly.

All of a sudden, Lucian's breath stopped at an angle with no further movement.

When Roxanne opened her eyes in curiosity, she was greeted by his annoyed face.

"Ms. Jarvis, there's no need to be so nervous. I will keep my word not to take advantage of you."
Lucian's voice sounded a little cold, causing Roxanne to be stunned. At the same time, the children chimed in.

"Mommy, Sleeping Beauty doesn't frown!"

"Ms. Jarvis, your expression cannot change because you're supposed to be asleep!"

After being reminded by the children and glancing at the displeased-looking Lucian, Roxanne lowered her gaze self-consciously.

Chapter 520

"Close your eyes." Lucian gave her another instruction.

Roxanne's eyelids fluttered before she complied.

She became nervous when she felt the man's warm breath near her once more but tried to stay calm by digging her nails into her palms.

The little ones watched as Lucian got closer and closer to Roxanne. Right as his lips were about to touch hers, Lucian froze for a moment. Then he tilted his head slightly, creating the illusion of a kiss.

Roxanne was aware of how Lucian froze and moved his head away. She held her breath and waited for quite some time, but the man did not step away from her.

It was so quiet that she could hear Lucian's breathing.

Roxanne could not help but knit her brows. When she cautiously opened her eyes, she saw the man in front of her. His gorgeous face left her in a daze for a few seconds.

When she came to her senses, she pressed her palm against his chest to stop him from advancing. "A simple kiss will do. Don't forget to straighten up once you do so as Sleeping Beauty is supposed to wake up."

Lucian's eyes darkened while he scrutinized her face.

Upon hearing that, the man gradually straightened his back and gave Roxanne a baffling smirk. "Thanks for your reminder, Ms. Jarvis."

Roxanne lowered her eyes and stood up. "Let's call it a day. This should be the ending scene for the play."

She then got up and walked to the three children, leaving Lucian alone on the couch.

Lucian was pleased with the development.

As such, he was not bothered by how Roxanne once again distanced herself from him.

Upon hearing what Roxanne said, Lucian got up from the couch, walked to Estella, and said in a deep voice, "I'll see you tomorrow then."

He lowered his eyes and reminded Estella, "Essie, say goodbye to Ms. Jarvis and the boys."

Estella did not throw a tantrum because she knew she would be coming tomorrow. The little girl waved her hand to bid them farewell. "Goodbye, Ms. Jarvis. See you tomorrow, Archie and Benny." Roxanne grinned at Estella and walked them to the door.

After sending them off, she brought Archie and Benny back to their room.

On the way back to the Farwell residence, Estella sat in the passenger's seat and looked at her father in anticipation. "Daddy, do you think Ms. Jarvis will like us?"

Lucian froze at Estella's question.

He merely wanted to use the anniversary celebration to draw Roxanne closer to him and had not thought of anything beyond that.

Thus, he was surprised that Estella had developed that train of thought. Getting Roxanne to like Essie might be a piece of cake, but getting her to like me...

Lucian could not help but smirk and mock himself when he recalled all the incidents six years ago. She left without a trace six years ago. It won't be easy to win her heart over again.

Upon noticing his hesitation, Estella clenched her fists and asked anxiously, "Will Ms. Jarvis start avoiding us again?"

Lucian lifted his eyes to look at the little girl and answered in a solemn voice, "It all depends on what you're capable of."

Roxanne had always had a soft spot for Estella. Lucian always knew he was the only reason she maintained a distance from his daughter.

When she heard that answer, Estella pressed her lips and raised her fist. "Okay! I'll try my best!"