

ABANDONED 521

Chapter 521

After several days of rehearsal, it was finally Friday.

When Roxanne went to pick the little ones up in the evening, she saw the children carrying a pile of clothes in their arms. Excitement was written all over their faces,

"Look, Mommy! These are our costumes!" Benny showed her the costumes as Roxanne walked toward him.

Roxanne nodded gently in response and took over the outfits from the boys.

Meanwhile, Estella was also waiting at one side while carrying two pairs of costumes

-one for her and one for Lucian.

Estella had always been physically weak. That was why she seemed to have difficulties carrying the costumes and a bag on her back.

Once Roxanne took over the costumes from Benny and Archie, the boys ran to her and helped her with the clothes.

Estella gratefully passed the garments to the boys and thanked them.

The three children then lined up in front of Roxanne, waiting for her to lead them to the car.

In the last couple of days, Roxanne would always take them back together. Estella thought it would be the same for today.

Seeing how excited the children were, Roxanne leaned forward, stroked Estella's head, and said awkwardly, "Since the rehearsal is tomorrow, we won't be rehearsing today anymore." That answer took Estella by surprise. Feeling disappointed, the little girl lowered her head.

Since there would be no rehearsal today, Estella would not be able to go to Roxanne's place to play with the boys.

Roxanne's heart melted when she noticed how upset Estella was. She looked at the girl and said softly, "But Essie, you can wait for your daddy in our car."

With that said, she straightened her back and reached out her hand to Estella.

Though still upset, Estella grabbed Roxanne's hand and climbed into her car.

Lucian arrived after a short wait.

Roxanne noticed the man walking toward Pippa. After finding out where Estella was, he walked in their direction.

"Daddy!" Estella opened the car door and greeted Lucian.

Lucian responded with a curt nod. When he was about to ask Roxanne why she did not bring the children home, Estella muttered softly, "Ms. Jarvis said there'll be no rehearsal today."

Lucian frowned and looked at the woman in the driver's seat.

Roxanne explained casually, "They shouldn't be rehearsing anymore since the performance is tomorrow. I hope they can get enough rest today and not be anxious over tomorrow's performance." Lucian had no choice but to agree with her.

Despite that, Estella was unhappy with the arrangement as she wanted to stay with Roxanne.

She was afraid that after the performance, Roxanne might avoid them like how she had done previously.

Estella could not help but look at Roxanne with her puppy-dog eyes.

Roxanne had her back to Estella, so she did not notice the expression on the little girl's face. She just carried on saying, "Here's Essie. You can take her home now. I should go home with my kids now too." Suddenly, she heard the man's voice from behind her. "Please let Essie stay a night at your place."

Roxanne was taken aback by the request.

"I won't be able to help her with the makeup and costumes since the performance is tomorrow. I would be relieved if you could help them with all the preparations at home because I'm afraid everyone will be extremely busy at the kindergarten," Lucian explained in a calm voice.

Upon hearing his justification, Roxanne hesitated for a while but finally agreed with the arrangement,

After knowing that she could sleep over at Roxanne's place, Estella broke into a wide smile.

After grabbing Lucian's costume and handing it to him, they bid each other farewell and drove home.

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Estella had not slept over for quite some time, so she was thrilled when she stepped into the house and started running around with the two boys. They only stopped chasing each other when Roxanne called them over for dinner.

After dinner, Roxanne played with the children for a while before asking them to try on their costumes.

The kindergarten was indeed an elite establishment. It looked like they had put a lot of effort into the costumes for the anniversary celebration. The little ones instantly transformed into their characters when they wore the garments.

Archie and Benny both had the same costumes but came in different colors-one in blue and one in green. Not only were they given garments that came with a pair of wings, but they also received a pair of pointy ears.

Despite not having any make-up, the two boys already looked like a pair of elves after putting on the costumes

On the other hand, Estella was given a long, black witch's dress, a black hat, and a magic wand.

Yet, she looked so out of place when she put on the costume because of the innocent look on her face. It was as if an angel had accidentally worn a witch's outfit.

The children were amused to see each other in their respective costumes. They tilted their heads and urged Roxanne, "Where's your costume, Mommy?"

They looked as if they had just walked out of a fairytale when they had the costumes on.

The little ones could not wait to see what Roxanne would look like when she put on hers.

Roxanne smiled faintly and went to her bedroom with her outfit.

Not long after, she walked out of the room.

Brimming with excitement, the children looked over when they heard the sound of the door opening

To their confusion, they noticed Roxanne was still wearing the same clothes as earlier

*The costume fits me well." Upon noticing the expressions on their faces, Roxanne grinned, "I'll only wear the costume tomorrow. All right, kids. It's time for bed. Change back to your clothes now."

Archie, Benny, and Estella reluctantly ran their fingers over their costumes and went to their rooms.

When Roxanne was about to take Estella to the shower after helping her remove her outfit, the girl popped a question. "I wonder what Daddy's costume is?"

Upon hearing that, Roxanne paused and kept mum for a few seconds. She then gave Estella a smile and said, "It will be a prince's costume, of course. I'm sure you'll see what he looks like tomorrow." Estella nodded, but she seemed a little distracted.

Roxanne could not tell what was on the girl's mind, but she decided not to pry and took her straight to the bathroom.

During the shower, Roxanne told her the Sleeping Beauty story.

Estella raised a doubt after listening to the story, "Does Sleeping Beauty like the prince, Ms. Jarvis?"

That question rendered Roxanne speechless.

According to the fairytale, Sleeping Beauty lived with the prince after being woken up by his kiss. However, it did not clarify anything about their relationship.

She had no clue if Sleeping Beauty was fond of the prince.

While Roxanne was still trying to think of an answer, Estella asked her another question, "How about you, Ms. Jarvis? Do you like Daddy?"

Estella kept bombarding her with burning questions to the point where Roxanne could not react to them.

"Can you stop running away from us, Ms. Jarvis?" Estella's voice echoed in the bathroom. "I like you very much, but you don't seem to like Daddy. What did Daddy do wrong?"

Roxanne stayed silent for quite some time before answering hesitantly, "No, he didn't do anything wrong.

"Then why are you avoiding us?" Estella insisted on getting to the bottom of the matter.

Roxanne responded with a cursory grin. "I'm not avoiding anyone. I was just caught up with work. Besides, I don't hate your daddy, We've been getting along well in the last few days, haven't we?"

Chapter 523

Estella was going to say something else, but Roxanne interrupted her, "It's late. We have to get up early tomorrow. Let's hurry up and wash up and go to bed."

It was obvious that Roxanne didn't want to continue with the topic.

Estella's eyes turned dark, but she listened to Roxanne obediently and said nothing else.

She slept with Roxanne. As she rarely had the chance to sleep with Roxanne, she slept soundly that night.

Roxanne, however, couldn't help but recall Estella's innocent question..

What did Lucian do wrong?

There was only one answer that she could think of to that question. Other than the fact that he didn't like her, he didn't seem to have done anything else to hurt her. However, that alone was enough to make Roxanne keep a distance from him.

Besides, Sonya and Aubree had also been keeping an eye on her.

Roxanne did not sleep well that night as thoughts flooded her mind, and she woke up very early the next day.

Meanwhile, Estella was still snuggled next to Roxanne, sleeping soundly.

Roxanne's gaze softened and her heart ached as she looked at Estella by her side.

She didn't know why Estella was so dependent on her right after their first meeting.

At one point, she felt as if she had done something wrong to Estella because she couldn't be hard on Estella no matter what.

"Ms. Jarvis." Just as Roxanne was lost in her thoughts, Estella woke up in a daze.

Roxanne returned to her senses and stretched out her hand to touch Estella's tiny little face. "You're awake."

Estella nodded in response, struggling to open her sleepy eyes.

Roxanne couldn't help but laugh at the sight of that.

She had wanted to let Estella sleep for a little longer, but when she thought about helping the children to change into their costumes and do their makeup, she had no choice but to wake Estella up.

Estella obediently followed Roxanne into the bathroom to wash up.

After that, Roxanne gave Estella simple make-up. Then she applied some heavier colors to Estella's face and drew some patterns at the corner of Estella's eyes, which made the latter look more like a little witch.

Once that was completed, Roxanne braided Estella's curly hair into a thick braid and secured it at the back of Estella's head before helping her to put on the witch's black hat.

"Okay. Let's wake Archie and Benny up!" Roxanne brought Estella with her to knock on Archie and Benny's door.

Archie and Benny were already awake and had already changed into their costumes.

When they opened the door and saw the little witch in front of them, they were astonished. "Essie looks like a real witch!"

Estella shyly moved to Roxanne's side when the two boys complimented her.

Roxanne touched Estella's soft face and urged Archie and Benny, "It's your turn now. We're running out of time. We must be quick."

Archie and Benny quickly agreed and followed Roxanne to do their make-up.

After helping Archie and Benny with their make-up, Roxanne did simple make-up on herself and changed into her costume. Then she had a quick breakfast before rushing toward the kindergarten with the three children.

When they arrived, Lucian's car was already stopped in front of the kindergarten

entrance.

Lucian got out of his car calmly when he saw them getting out of the vehicle.

Instead of doing his makeup, Lucian had only changed into his costume and styled his hair. There was also a brilliant-looking sword attached to the waist of his costume, which made him look like a prince from a fairytale.

Archie, Benny, and Estella were dumbfounded by his appearance.

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Chapter 524

"Daddy!" Estella ran into Lucian's arms the moment she saw him. She was charmed by his striking appearance.

Lucian squatted down to hug Estella and held her up while looking at Roxanne in front of him.

Roxanne had on only simple make-up and was wearing a white princess dress. Her long hair was pulled up and secured by a tiny crystal crown. Her eyes seemed to sparkle, and she looked dazzling. Roxanne smiled at him faintly when she met his eyes, and he couldn't turn away.

Archie and Benny were standing behind Roxanne quietly as they looked at Lucian before them, imagining how they would look like when they grew up.

Although they didn't like him, they couldn't deny how handsome Lucian was.

Will we be as handsome as him in the future?

"Let's go inside." Lucian broke the silence and turned to lead the way.

Roxanne nodded slightly and walked behind him along with Archie and Benny.

The anniversary celebration had yet to begin. The children and their parents, who had already done their make-up, were looking around the kindergarten.

The theme of the anniversary celebration was fairytales, so the entire kindergarten was decorated such that it resembled the places in fairytales. At first glance, Roxanne thought she had walked into a fairytale world.

When they first walked into the kindergarten, they first entered a world of snow and ice. There were pumpkin lanterns everywhere and several pumpkin carriages by the roadside. One of them had a glass shoe on it.

As they walked further into the kindergarten, they saw a colorful candy house. Several exquisite-looking baskets were placed at the doorstep, and half of the candies inside had been taken away.

At the sight of the candies, Archie and Benny stopped in their tracks.

Just as Roxanne was about to get two candies for Archie and Benny, Lucian had already walked toward the candy basket. He returned not long after with his hands full of candies.

"Isn't this too much? What about the kids after us?" Roxanne asked,

Lucian looked at her in amusement. "Someone will fill up the baskets later."

Realizing how stupid she was, Roxanne pursed her lips while smiling awkwardly

Although Archie and Benny were averse to him, they couldn't resist the temptation of the candies. After hesitating for a few seconds, they carefully took two candies from Lucian's hand and said sweetly, "Thank you, Mr. Farwell."

Lucian nodded slightly and took two candies for Estella. After that, he put the rest of the candies into the big pocket of Estella's witch costume.

In an instant, Estella's pocket bulged.

Along the way, they saw that many parents and children were also dressed in fairytale costumes.

The children were held by their parents as they skipped forward.

From afar, Roxanne saw a child looking like Little Red Riding Hood. That little girl looks really cute...

Right when she was staring at Little Red Riding Hood, the adult next to the little girl suddenly looked in Roxanne's and Lucian's direction.

Roxanne couldn't help feeling surprised when their eyes met. She greeted the woman with a smile, "Ms. Clark."

Cassandra held little Chloe's hand as they walked toward Roxanne. The former was stunned when she saw Roxanne, Archie, and Benny. "Ms. Jarvis, you're really beautiful today! Archie and Benny look really adorable too!"

Roxanne smiled. "There I was wondering who the cute Little Red Riding Hood was. I can't believe it's Chloe."

Cassandra's role was Grandma Wolf, so she had dressed up like an old lady on purpose. As a result, Chloe looked even more energetic and adorable by her side.

"The kindergarten gave her a good cloak." When Cassandra spoke, she subconsciously glanced at Lucian walking in front of her.

Lucian had walked forward without looking at her at all.

Chapter 525

Chloe, who was holding onto Cassandra's hand, suddenly saw that Archie and Benny were eating something. She asked curiously, "Archie, Benny, what are you two eating?" "Candy." Archie and Benny opened their mouths to show her.

After that, they touched their pockets and looked at Chloe apologetically. "We've finished ours. Otherwise, we could have shared two with you."

The disappointment was written all over Chloe's face when she heard that.

Roxanne's heart softened when she saw how sad Chloe looked. She remembered the candies inside Estella's pocket and called out to Estella, "Essie, can you give two candies to Chloe?"

Estella turned at the sound of Roxanne's voice and nodded, trying to take a few candies from her pocket.

However, as she was being carried by Lucian, she couldn't move her hands much. Besides, the pocket of the witch costume was deep. After trying for a long time and still couldn't reach the candies, she looked at Lucian for help.

Lucian did not seem to notice Estella's movements at all as he continued moving forward.

Chloe looked at Estella pitifully. After she waited a long time for the candy and couldn't see any, her face fell even more.

Roxanne was in a dilemma.

If I called out to Lucian, he'd definitely give Chloe the candy, but we would look too intimate in front of Ms. Clark. But poor Chloe... Upon deliberation, Roxanne called out to the man in front of her, "Mr. Farwell, could you help Essie with the candies?"

Hearing that, Lucian stopped in his tracks.

Everyone behind him became nervous all of a sudden.

A few seconds later, Lucian had a few colorful candies in his hand. He walked toward Chloe and asked the latter to open her palm.

Lucian's aura frightened Chloe, Chloe tried to stretch out her hands a few times, but she didn't dare to. Yet, her eyes were filled with longing for the candies.

Naturally, Cassandra was embarrassed to take the candies straight from Lucian's hands.

At that moment, the atmosphere was somewhat awkward.

Roxanne noticed the awkwardness in the air. After a short moment of hesitation, she walked toward Lucian and took the candies from his hand. Then she squatted down and took Chloe's hand. "Here are some candies for you, Little Red Riding Hood," she said softly.

Chloe's eyes gradually lit up. "Thank you, Ms. Jarvis!"

Roxanne smiled. Afterward, she turned sideways to remind Chloe, "Don't forget to thank Mr. Farwell too. He's the one who gave you the candies."

Looking at Lucian, Chloe became timid again. She mumbled, "Thank you, Mr. Farwell."

Lucian nodded slightly in response, then glanced at Roxanne, who was still squatting down with a meaningful look before turning around and walking forward.

Seeing that Lucian had walked some distance away from them, Cassandra asked cautiously, "Ms. Jarvis, are you close to Mr. Farwell?"

Roxanne was taken aback when she heard that. She tried to stay calm as she explained, "Essie gets along well with my boys, so I interact with Mr. Farwell more than you guys. That's probably why we look a little close."

Cassandra nodded understandingly with a smile. "Mr. Farwell and Estella have never participated in events like these, not to mention performing in fancy costumes, because of Estella. Thanks to you, Archie, and Benny, or we may not have had the chance to be blessed with such a wonderful sight."

Indeed. Ever since Archie and Benny appeared, Estella had started accepting group activities and playing with other kids.

Roxanne's heart softened when she thought of Estella, and she didn't deny what Cassandra said.

Chapter 526

Roxanne and Cassandra chatted all the way to the hall of the kindergarten.

The hall was also filled with fairytale-like decorations, and the seats were occupied by children and parents.

Pippa was waiting at the entrance. She saw Lucian first and greeted him politely. When she was about to tell him where to sit, she saw Roxanne and the others behind him.

"Ms. Jarvis. Ms. Clark." Pippa figured that Roxanne was probably there with Lucian, so she greeted them together.

Roxanne and Cassandra smiled in response.

"Did you help your children to do their make-up? They're so adorable!" Pippa couldn't help but exclaim in awe when she saw Archie, Benny, Estella, and Chloe.

Although she was well aware of her students' good looks, only when the children were dressed up as fairytale characters during the anniversary celebration did she realize how beautiful they were. The children beamed when they heard Pippa's compliments.

"Our class will be sitting at the front. Please make your way there." Pippa pointed them to their seats.

They nodded and walked forward.

As they walked down the aisle while making their way to their seats, Roxanne could feel everyone's eyes on them.

The crowd was stunned by the scene.

Although everyone present had dressed up as characters in fairytales, Roxanne and Lucian looked like a princess and a prince, while Archie, Benny, and Estella had the elegance of royalty. Roxanne and the others were used to being stared at by others. Despite being stared at, they continued to make their way to their seats with straight faces.

Archie, Benny, and Estella sat between Roxanne and Lucian. They looked like a family

Soon, the anniversary celebration began.

One fairytale after another was presented on the stage.

The kindergarten had indeed put a lot of effort into the anniversary celebration.

The stage design was highly realistic, which made the fairytale look even more vivid and lifelike.

Archie, Benny, and Estella were exceptionally drawn to many of the performances because the stories were new to them.

They teared up when the Little Match Girl froze and died on the streets, and they covered their eyes out of fear when they saw Grandma Wolf from The Little Red Riding Hood. The three looked pitiful because of the change of emotions on their faces.

Roxanne's emotions were stirred up a little too, but when she saw how funny they looked, she couldn't help but feel amused.

"Mommy." When the play was about Pinocchio, Benny cautiously tugged Roxanne's sleeve.

Roxanne lowered her gaze and looked at Benny.

Benny was anxiously touching his nose as he asked in a muffled voice, "Will my nose really get longer if I lie?"

Hearing that, Roxanne chuckled softly.

Benny's eyes were filled with confusion.

Roxanne didn't expect him to ask that question. He's usually intelligent, and computer programming isn't even complex for him. I can't believe he actually believes in things like this.

However, when she saw how nervous he looked, she couldn't help teasing him. She smiled and said with certainty, "That's right. Look at Pinocchio's nose."

Benny pouted and turned to Archie and Estella to check his nose.

No one knew what he said to Estella. But when she heard what he said, she couldn't stop giggling as she covered her mouth.

When Roxanne saw the little ones whispering to one another, she was full of smiles.

Chapter 527

It was dimly lit below the stage.

Lucian could feel the children smiling beside him. Feeling curious, he gazed in their direction. The three children were whispering to each other about who knows-what with secretive looks on their faces. Every so often, they would cover their mouths to muffle out their soft giggles.

From beside them, Roxanne was looking at the children with a gentle smile on her face.

It was quite a tender moment.

However, the moment her eyes met Lucian's, her loving smile turned stiff ever so slightly

Roxanne lowered her gaze and composed herself before turning her face away so that Lucian could only see her side profile.

Lucian's gaze darkened. With his brows knitted tightly together, he, too, turned his gaze away.

They were the last ones to perform.

When the second-last performance was about to come to an end, Lucian and Roxanne directed the children backstage and got ready to perform.

They had thought the children would feel at least a little nervous, as it was their first time performing in front of an audience.

Unexpectedly, the three children were buzzing with excitement. A huge grin hung on their faces as their eyes shone in delight, much to Roxanne's relief.

After the host introduced them, Roxanne led the children onstage.

The first few scenes were flawless. Everything was exactly as they had rehearsed. As they carried out the scene, the children showed no signs of stage fright. In fact, they were far more confident than all the other children.

Roxanne could even hear the audible gasps of the audience,

When it was Estella's turn, the crowd erupted with applause the moment her childish voice rang out as she recited her first line,

Everyone was aware of Estella's condition. She was even known as Little Mute in the outside world. At that moment, when they heard Estella speak so fluently with their

own ears, they were both surprised and overjoyed.

Likewise, the memory of her first encounter with Estella surfaced in Roxanne's mind. She recalled how shy Estella had been when they first met and how the former would not even say a single word. Roxanne looked at the tiny silhouette standing onstage at that moment, her heart swelling with emotions and pride when she saw Estella performing with such confidence in front of so many people. Before long, it was time for the scene where the princess pricked her finger on the spinning wheel and fell into a deep sleep.

When the curtains rose, Roxanne was lying quietly still on an exquisitely crafted wooden bed. Her long locks, which were originally held in place by a tiara, were now hanging loosely over the bed, fully exposing her perfect side profile to the audience.

The stage light softened, giving the scene a sense of serenity. The warm lights shone on Roxanne's fair skin, giving it a faint glow. Under the spotlight, she truly looked like a princess from a fairytale—a gentle princess who was in a deep sleep.

When the curtains rose again, Lucian and Estella appeared on the stage. The crowd watched on as the two stared each other down.

Lucian had a tall build and long legs. He was wearing a form-fitting knight costume and was holding a sparkling sword in his hand, showcasing the nobleness of his character.

On the other hand, Estella was glaring menacingly at Lucian. Her stance indicated that she was about to lunge at him.

The pair pretended to fight, throwing fake punches and kicks at each other before Estella ultimately fell to the ground, defeated. Once the girl lay down on the ground, Lucian made his way backstage in huge strides.

The curtains closed gently. When it reopened, only the prince and the sleeping princess were left onstage.

At the sight of the two of them in the same scene, the crowd fell silent. The scene was so breathtaking that the audience almost did not want to move for fear that any motion would disrupt the atmosphere. Onstage, the prince stood by the wooden bed and gazed at the sleeping princess lovingly. With the sword in one hand, Lucian held the headboard with his other hand and slowly leaned in.

The distance between the two beautiful side profiles got closer and closer. By then, the crowd had held their breath. Their eyes were brimming with anticipation.

As Roxanne lay still on the bed, she could feel Lucian's breath inching closer and closer to her face.

Even though they had rehearsed that very scene twice, Roxanne could still feel her heart rate picking up as the scene played out at that moment.

On top of her nervousness, Roxanne could vaguely sense that Lucian did not turn away as rehearsed.

Instinctively, Roxanne's brows twitched. However, at the thought of the audience below the stage, she forced herself to maintain a calm complexion and resisted the urge to open her eyes and see what was happening.

In the next second, she felt something warm and gentle on her lips.

Chapter 528

Roxanne was stunned.

Lucian seemed to have decided that she would not make a fuss onstage. He kept her lips on hers for a full three seconds before slowly moving away and straightening his posture. Roxanne quietly clenched her fists to calm herself down and stop herself from losing control in front of the audience. Her eyelids fluttered gently before she slowly opened her eyes. As Lucian stood by her side, a small smile appeared on his lips. However, all traces of the smile vanished into thin air the moment she looked over at him. "

At an angle where the audience could not see her face, Roxanne allowed herself to frown slightly before getting down from the bed.

For the rest of the play, Roxanne had no idea how she managed to keep her composure.

The sudden kiss by Lucian had completely wrecked her mind, leaving it in a pile of chaos.

Only when the children led her to the edge of the stage by her hand did Roxanne manage to snap out of her daze. Recollecting herself, Roxanne gave the audience a bow. Thunderous applause rang out from below the stage.

The audience was completely mesmerized by the fantastical ambient of the scene, and no one noticed whether the kiss was real or fake. All they knew was that the scene was undeniably beautiful. Listening to the thunderous applause below the stage, Roxanne fluttered about, then quickly walked off the stage and returned to her seat.

"Ms. Jarvis, the two of you were absolutely stunning!" Cassandra exclaimed from behind

Roxanne had finally calmed herself down slightly. However, when she heard Cassandra's comment, Roxanne's mind went berserk once again,

The warmth of Lucian's kiss still lingered on her lips.

Tossing an apologetic look at Cassandra, Roxanne excused herself. "Sorry, I'm feeling a little unwell. I think I need some fresh air. Please excuse me."

"Do you need me to come with you?" Cassandra offered with concern.

Before she could hear what Cassandra was saying, Roxanne had already turned to leave.

The host was still giving concluding remarks on the stage.

Archie and Benny glanced over in the direction Roxanne had just left. Looking worried, they wanted to chase after her.

They had clearly seen what had happened onstage. They knew that Lucian had not followed through with what they had rehearsed and had kissed Roxanne for real.

They concluded that Roxanne's sudden weird attitude was because of Lucian's kiss.

Just as Archie and Benny stood up, however, a tall figure stood in front of them, preventing them from advancing any further.

Lowering his gaze, Lucian looked at the two boys. "You boys stay here. I'll go see how she's doing."

With that, Lucian bent down and pressed Archie and Benny into their seats before turning to chase after Roxanne.

Outside the hall, Roxanne was sitting quietly on the slide in the small playground. Her mind was a complete mess.

The kiss Lucian had given her a moment ago still burned in her brain. No matter how hard she tried, she could not shake away the memory.

Back when they were still rehearsing for the play, Roxanne had tried to skip the final scene between her and Lucian.

However, Lucian had convinced her that rehearsing the scene would allow him to fake the kiss more convincingly so that she would comply, and she had naively believed in him. Yet little did she expect Lucian to actually kiss her even after all those days of rehearsing

At that moment, Roxanne felt her head going blank.

If it weren't for the fact that there was an audience watching them, Roxanne did not know how she would have reacted,

Also, Lucian's expression when I opened my eyes was... was...

Roxanne closed her eyes in concentration as she dug through the images in her

brain hoping to catch a glimpse of Lucian's expression at that moment. But no matter how hard she tried, she could not remember.

Lucian's expression seemed to be natural, so natural that it was as though that was how the scene was supposed to go.

Roxanne started to wonder if the kiss was just an illusion.

At that thought, Roxanne touched her lips absentmindedly.

The kiss was real.

Nonetheless, she could not wrap her head around the meaning behind Lucian's kiss.

Or could it be that the kiss was just an accident, and I'm just overthinking this... Just as the thoughts ran wildly in her head, a tall figure approached her slowly. Still lost in thought, Roxanne was completely oblivious to the approaching figure.

Chapter 529

Lucian stood behind Roxanne and stared at her silhouette for a long time.

What is she thinking about? She didn't even notice I was here. She didn't even move an inch the entire time I was here.

After a long while, Lucian raised his feet and walked toward her with a frown on his face.

Only when a shadow cast on her did Roxanne realize that she was not alone. Snapping out of her daze, Roxanne lifted her head to look at the person standing in front of her.

As their gazes met, Roxanne immediately knitted her brows and stood up with solemn guardedness. She took a few steps back, increasing the distance between them. "What are you thinking about, Ms. Jarvis? Why did you leave Archie and Benny behind and come out here alone?" Lucian asked in concern as though nothing had happened.

Roxanne looked at the man standing before her and retorted, "Didn't you leave Essie behind and come out here as well, Mr. Farwell?"

Lucian's expression sank momentarily, but quickly, he flashed a smile at Roxanne. "Essie was worried about you. I'm merely checking on you on her behalf."

A wave of frustration washed over Roxanne as she remembered how distressed she was a moment ago. She could not help but think that she was being played by the man in front of her.

After a few seconds of silence, Roxanne decided to address the elephant in the room. "Thank you for your concern, Mr. Farwell. I was just wondering... Why didn't you follow through with what was rehearsed in the final scene?"

The moment she spoke those words, Roxanne noticed Lucian arching his eyebrows slightly. He looked as though he was surprised.

Roxanne was filled with confusion.

"You felt that?"

Roxanne scrunched up her face, immediately confirming that the kiss was not just a figment of her imagination.

Lucian had truly kissed her in front of an audience,

Did the audience see that? If they did... Lucian has a fiancée, and almost every parent in the kindergarten knows about it. Yet, he still kissed me in front of everyone.

Roxanne was perplexed and dumbfounded. She had no clue as to what Lucian was thinking. Moreover, she did not know what the audience was thinking when they saw the scene.

Panic surged in Roxanne's heart as she imagined all the possible responses of the audience. For a brief moment, she lost control of her emotions. "Did you think I was actually asleep, Mr. Farwell? So, pray tell, why didn't you follow what we had rehearsed when all those people were watching?"

Lucian took in Roxanne's panicked expression, and his gaze darkened. "Looks like it bothers you a lot, Ms. Jarvis.

Roxanne stared at him incredulously. "It does. In fact, it bothers me greatly. So please, Mr. Farwell, I would like a reasonable explanation!"

Lucian nodded. With a calm voice, he asked, "If I tell you it was an accident, will you believe me?"

Roxanne was taken aback. Suspicion was written all over her face.

"I really did want to follow what we had rehearsed back then. Unfortunately, the lights cast a shadow on your face from where I was standing, obscuring my sight and causing me to miscalculate the distance and accidentally kiss you." Lucian looked Roxanne in the eye. "I was just as shocked as you are when that happened, Ms. Jarvis. But since you did not seem to have much reaction, I carried on. I didn't expect you to mind so much."

In other words, he was saying that Roxanne had allowed him to continue that kiss.

Roxanne stared at him in disbelief. Not only did she find his explanation hilarious, but she also thought it was downright absurd. "Pray tell, Mr. Farwell. How should I have reacted back then for you to know that I mind?"

There were so many pairs of eyes below the stage. Did he expect me to ignore the script and push him away forcefully?

Lucian mulled over it in silence. After a while, he answered matter-of-factly, "To be honest, even I have no idea how you should have reacted back then. However, it's all in the past. There's no need for us to keep discussing it."

Chapter 530 Once again, Roxanne found his words ridiculous. Her expression darkened even more.

He had kissed her in front of so many people, yet now he was telling her that there was no need for them to discuss it since it had all passed.

He made it seem as though she was the one overreacting.

At the sight of Roxanne's anger, Lucian stated seriously, "Whether you believe it or not, the kiss truly was an accident. Besides, I have no reason to kiss you."

When she heard that, she felt as though someone had put away the fire burning in her heart.

Even though she did not want to believe it, she had to admit that Lucian was telling the truth. He had no reason to kiss her.

After all, Aubree was the one Lucian had always been in love with for all those years. The two of them were even engaged. He would not have left Aubree alone and done something that could cause so many misunderstandings in front of a crowd.

However, the more Roxanne followed that train of thought, the more upset she was at herself.

That's the reality. Why was I overthinking about it just now? I must have made a fool of myself in front of Lucian.

Laughing softly at her own absurdity, Roxanne lowered her head.

Meanwhile, Lucian had mistaken her silence for anger. After a moment of silence, he smiled. "I've come out here to apologize to you. If you're so bothered by the fact that I stole a kiss from you, you can steal one from me."

Cocking an eyebrow, he added, "I promise I won't move."

Roxanne jerked her head up to look at him in disbelief. She could not believe what she had just heard.

What is this guy talking about? A few moments ago, he was explaining that the kiss was not intentional. But now he's saying things like this. Doesn't he know that it'll cause a lot of misunderstandings? Roxanne could no longer read what he was thinking.

"So what would it be, Ms. Jarvis? Will you forgive me, or do you want to kiss me

back?" Lucian pressed on.

Seeing how nonchalant he looked, Roxanne almost laughed out loud in frustration. Not wanting to continue the topic, she said, "Since you've already explained yourself, we can pretend it never happened. Thank you, Mr. Farwell. I'm heading back inside."

With that, she turned and headed straight for the hall.

As for the audience, Roxanne could only pray that they did not see the kiss, and even if they did, she hoped they would think it was all for the play.

Behind her, Lucian remained standing by the slide, keeping his eyes on Roxanne's diminishing silhouette. When he saw that she did not even turn back to look at him, a mocking smile appeared on his lips. Then he picked up his pace and followed her into the hall.

By the time the two returned to the hall, it was the prize-giving ceremony.

When the three children saw them entering the hall, their eyes lit up with excitement.

"Mommy, we won first place!" Benny immediately whispered in Roxanne's ears the moment she sat down.

With a smile, Roxanne reached out and rubbed Benny's head. "Thanks to all your hard work! All of you were amazing!"

Benny puffed out his chest in pride. With excitement written all over his face, he turned his gaze toward the stage. "We even received prizes!"

Roxanne did not give much thought to the statement. Thinking that the prizes would be toys for the children, she merely smiled and waited with the rest of them.

On the stage, the host had just finished announcing the names of the winners and was starting to introduce the prizes.

The prizes were given according to the number of families involved in each group. The third place received two mountain bikes for children, the second place received three pairs of limited edition Lego sets, and the first place received two sets of family vacation vouchers to a hot spring—one for Roxanne, and one for Lucian.

Roxanne was dumbfounded when she heard what the prize was.

It was so different from the previous two prizes,

She had assumed that the first prize would also be toys for the children. Yet to her surprise, they were vouchers for a hot spring vacation,