

ABANDONED 891

Chapter 891 Stay

To her surprise, she didn't see anyone on the intercom screen. "Who's there?" Catalina asked in confusion. After a while, a cute voice rang out, "Hi, Ms. Catalina. We're Archie and Benny. Can we go in to see Essie?"

As soon as those words fell, Archie and Benny stood on their toes to show two pairs of eyes on the intercom. Catalina had taken care of Archie and Benny before, so she remembered them well.

In fact, Catalina's heart melted a little when she heard their voices. Still, she remembered to turn toward Lucian to get his permission.

Seeing that Catalina wasn't responding, Archie and Benny added, "It's just the two of us. Mommy isn't here!"

Lucian and Estella heard those words loud and clear. Lucian frowned slightly and nodded at Catalina, letting her know it was okay to let the boys in.

On the other hand, Estella's expression turned slightly gloomy. thought Ms. Jarvis would be here as well. Since Archie and Benny are here, why didn't Ms. Jarvis come to see me?

Seeing that the gates to the manor were slowly opening, Archie and Benny's eyes lit up, and they breathed a long sigh of relief inwardly.

They had thought Lucian wouldn't let them in. Luckily, Daddy let us in!

Archie and Benny were holding hands when they ran toward the main entrance.

By then, Catalina had already opened the door for them.

Archie and Benny ran straight into the living room and saw Estella sitting on Lucian's lap.

Archie and Benny suppressed their urges to see Estella straightaway and greeted politely, "Hi, Mr. Farwell." Lucian then raised his gaze toward the entrance behind Archie and Benny.

Sure enough, he didn't see Roxanne coming through the door.

Moments later, Lucian retracted his gaze and nodded at Archie and Benny indifferently. In a deep voice, he asked, "How did you guys get here?"

Archie and Benny looked at each other before replying evasively, "We hailed a taxi! The driver was kind to us."

In fact, they were right. When they wanted to pay the taxi fare upon arrival, the driver demanded less money because they were kids. He had even waited until the boys got into the manor before leaving.

Lucian furrowed his brows when he heard the response. He then rephrased his question. "Does your mommy know you guys are here?"

Archie and Benny pretended to feel guilty and asked timidly, "Is it not okay? We were really worried about Essie."

With that, the boys looked at Estella, who was sitting on Lucian's lap.

Estella felt a lot better after she found out that Roxanne had asked the boys to visit her. She then turned toward Lucian and grabbed his arm. "Daddy, want to play with Archie and Benny!"

Lucian patted Estella's head and agreed to it, "Since your mommy knows you guys are here, stay and have fun." With that, Lucian set Estella down. Estella immediately scampered toward Archie and Benny.

When she got closer to them, Archie and Benny saw Estella's reddened eyes, and they were heartbroken. Essie must've cried a lot just now. Otherwise, why would her eyes be swollen and reddened?

Estella didn't know what was on their minds, so she just grabbed their hands and said, "Let's play upstairs!"

Archie and Benny nodded before asking for permission from Lucian politely. Seeing that Lucian had nodded back at them in response, they went upstairs with Estella.

Chapter 892 Am Fine

Lucian watched the kids go up the stairs as a myriad of emotions rushed through him. Just now, Archie and Benny said Roxanne told them to come. She kept calling me throughout the day, but haven't picked up any of her calls. thought she would've given up since she knew was angry. Who would've known that she would use the boys against me?

At first, she told the boys to call me. After that, she even told them to come and see Essie. Undeniably, she's gotten smart. However, why didn't she just come when she has already done so much? She knows that wouldn't refuse her if she were to come with Archie and Benny. Could it be that she's also angry at me? But why should she be?

Catalina sensed Lucian's anger and uttered carefully, "Mr. Farwell, I'll send some snacks up for Ms. Estella and the boys." Upon hearing that, Lucian regained his senses. In order to push those thoughts aside, he rubbed his temples forcefully. He then rose to his feet from the couch and uttered in a hoarse voice, "I'll go."

Catalina nodded and gave him the plate in her hands.

Lucian took the plate and went upstairs.

At that moment, Estella, Archie, and Benny were sitting in a circle in Estella's room.

"Where's Ms. Jarvis? Is she still busy working?" Estella asked Archie and Benny in her adorable voice.

Archie and Benny were stunned for a moment before asking warily, "Who told you Mommy is busy at work?"

“Daddy. Even Ms. Catalina said so,” Estella answered innocently.

Besides, when Lucian called Roxanne earlier in the morning, Estella also heard the latter saying the same thing.

That was why Estella thought that was really the case.

Upon hearing Estella’s response, Archie and Benny exchanged a look before coming up with a white lie. “Mommy has her hands full. That’s why she told us to visit you first.”

The boys could tell that Estella had been crying. If she knows Daddy and Mommy are still arguing, she’s going to get emotional again.

Estella nodded understandingly before saying in a cheery tone, “Daddy has forgiven Ms. Jarvis!”

Again, Archie and Benny were stupefied. With mixed feelings surging within their hearts, they only nodded a few seconds later. It seems like Daddy has told Essie a lot of lies to calm her down. Fortunately, we asked her the question first just now. Otherwise, we would've exposed everything.

With that in mind, Archie and Benny both breathed a sigh of relief inwardly.

“Are you still feeling unwell?” Archie asked caringly.

Estella shook her head in response. “I’m fine! was just angry at Daddy this morning. However, Daddy has already promised to stop fighting with Ms. Jarvis.”

Archie and Benny felt relieved when they heard that. We almost told her the truth accidentally.

“When will Ms. Jarvis be done with her work?” Estella suddenly asked.

Archie and Benny were getting overwhelmed by Estella's continuous questioning. Well, that depends on when Daddy stops being angry. How would we know when that will be?

Upon being put in a tight spot, Archie and Benny could only stare at each other helplessly.

As they were racking their brains to come up with an answer for Estella, someone knocked on the door. Estella retracted her gaze from them and got up to open the door.

"Hi, Daddy!" Estella smiled and greeted obediently when she saw the person standing at the door.

Right then, Lucian was looking right back at her as he stood at the door while holding a plate of snacks and drinks.

Chapter 893 Will Look For Them With You

"Mr. Farwell." At the thought that they had almost given their father's lie away earlier, Archie and Benny stood up and greeted Lucian guiltily.

Inclining his head a fraction, Lucian swept a dark look over them both. A sense of warning seemingly hit Archie and Benny through the air, upon which the expressions on their faces turned much more docile.

They could surmise that he was cautioning them against saying something they shouldn't be saying. Seeing that they had grasped his meaning, Lucian nodded slightly and placed the snacks meant for them on the table.

"Just tell Ms. Catalina if you need anything. I'm going to settle some things." All three children bobbed their heads in unison. Without saying anything further, Lucian whirled around and left.

He was so absorbed in brooding over Roxanne's thoughts just now that he forgot to remind Archie and Benny to be mindful of their words.

For that reason, he offered to do it instead when Catalina said she was going to take some snacks upstairs. Watching as the bedroom door closed once more, Archie and Benny inwardly breathed a long sigh of relief. Phew! Daddy was really scary earlier!

Following Lucian's interruption, Estella forgot all about their conversation just now. She proceeded to share the snacks with Archie and Benny.

Soon, they all played together while munching on the snacks.

The matter about Roxanne was thrown at the back of Estella's mind.

Meanwhile, Roxanne had finally forced herself into working mode after much effort. Engrossed in work, she accidentally lost track of time.

By the time she came out of the study, it was already growing dark.

Recalling the failed lunch at noon, she thought of making it up to Archie and Benny by going downstairs early to prepare dinner. She initially reckoned that they would be playing downstairs, but there were no signs of them when she went to the floor below. "Archie? Benny?" she called in a raised voice, giving their absence little thought.

When a while passed without any response, her heart sank.

She swiftly went upstairs and peeked into Archie and Benny's room by the door, but they weren't there. Neither were they in the backyard.

Only then did she realize that they had left at some point in time.

For a moment, sheer panic swamped her.

They had just returned to the country not long ago, so she couldn't figure out where Archie and Benny could have gone. After racking her brain for some time, she took a chance and knocked on Madilyn's door.

Her best friend's house was the only place she could think of where Archie and Benny might have gone.

Coincidentally, Madilyn was on leave at home. She happened to be napping when she heard the knock, so she was still pretty groggy when she opened the door.

"What is it, Roxanne? Are you here to invite me to dinner? I'll pass since I still want to sleep."

Having said that, she made to close the door without standing on ceremony with Roxanne.

Roxanne, on the other hand, frowned. "Did Archie and Benny come over to look for you?"

At that, Madilyn screeched to a stop in her tracks, her drowsiness disappearing into thin air. "No. Have they gone missing?" In truth, Roxanne had a sinking suspicion of the answer the moment she laid eyes on her best friend earlier.

She only went ahead with that question because she still harbored a shred of hope within her.

Her hope finally died when she received Madilyn's negative answer. Consequently, her heart sank even further.

Realizing that something had happened, Madilyn hurried back into the house and snagged a coat, draping it over herself. "I'll look for them with you!"

Archie and Benny aren't familiar with the environment in the country. really hope they didn't get lost! Worried beyond words, Roxanne didn't decline the offer.

They first searched around the neighborhood. When there were no signs of Archie and Benny, they climbed into the car to look somewhere farther.

Unfortunately, they were both at a loss after doing so, for they had no idea where Archie and Benny could have gone.

Chapter 894 What Should We Do Now “Were they wearing their watches when they left?” Madilyn, who was calmer than Roxanne, asked with a frown. At once, a light bulb went off in Roxanne’s mind. At the same time, regret and frustration inundated her.

Too many things had happened today that everything else fled my mind when realized that Archie and Benny had gone missing, leaving panic all that remained. Luckily, went over to look for Madilyn!

Following Madilyn’s reminder, she called Archie and Benny without delay.

Alas, Archie didn’t answer even after a long while had passed.

She then called Benny, but still, no one picked up.

As Roxanne and Madilyn listened to the ringing tone drifting out of the phone, their hearts sank to the bottom. There were too many reasons that Archie and Benny weren’t answering the calls.

The worst possibility flashed across their minds...

Roxanne dug her nails into her palms to force herself to remain calm. Unlocking her phone, she checked the GPS location of Archie and Benny’s watches.

Only when she saw the two tiny green dots on the screen did a sliver of relief creep into her. Phew! Fortunately, can still track them! “I’ll drive.” Likewise, having seen the GPS location, Madilyn immediately started the car engine.

Roxanne nodded weakly while staring at the two tiny green dots that were seemingly overlapping, not daring to take her eyes off for even a second.

Fortunately, the two tiny green dots remained stationary. Thus, they wouldn't have any trouble tracking Archie and Benny down.

An inexplicable sense of familiarity flooded Roxanne as she scrutinized the distance between her current location and the tiny green dots. But on second thought, she found that absurd.

In her bedroom at the Farwell residence, Estella tilted her head in puzzlement at the sight of Archie and Benny's watches flashing incessantly.

"It seems that someone is calling you, Archie."

Archie glanced at the caller ID before he shook his head guiltily. "No, it's just my alarm." After saying that, he hid his wrist away.

Mere moments later, Benny's watch started flashing.

Similarly, he brushed it off with the same lie.

As their watches kept flashing, Archie and Benny exchanged a look brimming with craftiness.

Mommy will definitely come looking for us according to our GPS location when we fail to pick up her calls! At that time, she'll undoubtedly meet Mr. Farwell!

Twenty minutes later, Madilyn brought the car to a stop at the gates of the Farwell residence.

At the sight of the grand building and door plate above, her expression changed, and she instinctively cast a look at her best friend.

Roxanne's expression was far more intriguing.

Dear Lord! My mind was truly a mess that didn't even realize that the GPS location was evidently the Farwell residence!

"I've always wanted to ask you this, Roxanne. Have Archie and Benny learned of their identities?" Madilyn couldn't help venturing.

The instant Roxanne heard that question, her pupils abruptly constricted. A while later, she shook her head in feigned calmness. "No. I've never told them about it. Even Lucian isn't aware of that."

They can't possibly have learned the truth ahead of Lucian when even he has no idea about this matter.

Helplessness washed over Madilyn as she studied her best friend's expression.

She could tell that Roxanne couldn't be sure of the answer. Instead, the latter was merely trying to convince herself.

Nonetheless, she didn't plan on saying anything further to put more pressure on her best friend since the latter seemed weighed down with troubles. She merely queried, "So, what should we do now?"

Hearing that, Roxanne lifted her eyes and stared at the manor gates. A glimmer of exasperation flittered across her eyes.

It's all too clear that Archie and Benny deliberately didn't pick up my calls, intending for me to hunt them down. But right now, I've got no other choice.

"Go home first. I'll go in and have a look at things," Roxanne murmured apologetically.

Turning, she opened the car door and alighted from the vehicle.

Chapter 895 How Is She Doing

It wouldn't be appropriate for Madilyn to poke her nose into Roxanne and Lucian's relationship, so she ultimately turned around and drove off after a moment's hesitation.

Roxanne watched until the car had gone far into the distance before she pivoted and rang the manor's doorbell. This is already the third time today. wonder if can get in this time.

In the mansion, Archie and Benny had Catalina stay in the room and play with them. As such, the latter didn't hear the doorbell downstairs.

Conversely, it was exceedingly quiet in Lucian's study, so he could distinctly hear the sounds from downstairs. When the doorbell continued ringing even after a while had passed, he stepped out of the room for a look. Catalina's voice drifted out of Estella's bedroom.

He didn't bother interrupting them, going downstairs and switching on the video intercom instead.

"Cat..." Roxanne habitually greeted Catalina, but no sooner had the first syllable fallen than she made out the person on the screen. Her voice suddenly tapered off.

In the mansion, Lucian's eyes darkened frightfully.

Sensing the change in his mood, Roxanne furtively clenched her fists and started, "I saw that Archie and Benny are here, so came."

Aslight frown marred Lucian's countenance. "Indeed, they're here." While he was saying that, a hint of bemusement flashed across his eyes. What trick is she up to now? She instructed Archie and Benny to come over, and now she wants to use that excuse to gain entry.

At his affirmative answer, Roxanne breathed a sigh of relief. "Sorry, they must have given you much trouble, huh? Can you please tell them I'm here to pick them up and will be waiting for them at the gates?"

Because she had been refused entry twice in the morning, she was very cautious when she spoke. In fact, she didn't even request to be allowed into the house.

Again, Lucian's eyes darkened. He didn't bother saying anything but raised his hand and pressed a button on the screen. A few seconds passed. Just when Roxanne was about to press him for a reply, the gates slowly opened.

On the heels of that, Lucian's low and deep voice rang out unhurriedly. "I haven't got the time, so you should talk to them yourself, Ms. Jarvis."

When he said that, he turned the video intercom off right away.

Roxanne mulled over the meaning of the man's remark for some time before she hesitantly walked in.

By the time she reached the mansion's door, she saw that it was already open.

Her heart clenched for no apparent reason, and she reflexively treaded lighter.

As soon as she stepped into the house, she was greeted by the sight of Lucian sitting on the couch.

"Thank you, Mr. Farwell," she stated in an aloof tone while lowering her eyes.

She initially thought that he wouldn't say anything, but his voice unexpectedly rang out once more in the next heartbeat. "What for?"

Roxanne wasn't sure whether it was merely her imagination, but Lucian's voice was seemingly tinged with a trace of scorn. A mixture of emotions brewed within her, and her gaze flickered. "For... allowing me entry."

After saying that, she lifted her eyes to him and inquired hopefully, "Can go and look in on Essie? How is she doing?" The moment her words fell, Lucian's expression visibly darkened.

Following that, Roxanne's heart sank to rock bottom.

"I'm pretty sure you know why you were denied entry today, Ms. Jarvis."

Lucian's voice was cold and indifferent.

At that, Roxanne balled the hands hanging by her sides into loose fists.

Indeed, know the reason. But already know what did wrong, and I'd like to make amends. Regretfully, he obviously doesn't intend on giving me that opportunity.

In the meantime, Lucian continued mocking, "It looks like you've learned quite a few tricks while you're with Mr. Damaris, Ms. Jarvis."

That comment of his had Roxanne's brows knitting together and her eyes brimming with perplexity.

Chapter 896 A Hint Of Wariness

Slowly getting to his feet, Lucian pinned a dark look on Roxanne, who stood at the door. "I really don't know when you learned to use your kids to set me up, Ms. Jarvis."

Roxanne's eyes flickered, her gaze mystified. When had ever done such a thing? Glimpsing the innocent expression on her face, Lucian frowned and started to head in her direction slowly.

The instant Roxanne noticed his intentions, her heartstrings drew taut, and she backed away warily. Throughout it all, she kept a distance from him.

"Why are you drawing away if you're not feeling guilty, Ms. Jarvis?" Lucian sneered.

Upon hearing that, Roxanne hesitantly stopped retreating, her brows furrowing imperceptibly. "I don't know what you're talking about."

His gaze gloomy, Lucian demanded lowly, "Don't tell me it wasn't because you were sure I wouldn't ignore the kids' calls that you had Archie phone me, Ms. Jarvis?"

Again, Roxanne clenched her hands by her sides and remained silent.

It's true that I did such a thing, but... how was that considered setting him up? In fact, it was nothing compared to the methods he used against me previously!

Lucian's eyes narrowed dangerously. "Since you knew full well that I wouldn't deny you entry with the kids present, Ms. Jarvis, why didn't you come with them instead?"

When he spoke of that, he swept a probing gaze over her, his voice low and terse.

Subsequently, he continued, "Or did you take advantage of the interval to handle some 'work' with Mr. Damaris, Ms. Jarvis?" In a seemingly inadvertent manner, he placed extra emphasis on the word "work."

By the time his words fell, he was already standing before Roxanne.

At his words tinged with sarcasm, Roxanne was reminded of her anxiousness that entire day and frowned deeply. A faint spark of anger started blazing in the depths of her eyes.

"I wonder what kind of important work you've still got with Mr. Damaris, Ms. Jarvis."

Lucian stared down at the woman in front of him, his voice going even lower when he clocked the fury in her gaze. Forcibly suppressing the rage within her, Roxanne dipped her eyes and masked all the emotions within them. "Our matters have nothing to do with you, Mr. Farwell. Please help me get Archie and Benny down."

At the bland detachment in her voice, Lucian mistakenly thought he had hit the nail on the head. Immediately, the fury within him flared into an inferno.

Roxanne waited for a while with her eyes lowered. When the man before her remained passive, she made to circle around him. Admittedly, was in the wrong, but only wronged Essie. don't think owe him anything.

Thanks to the hindrances from him throughout the day, she was already bone-tired from worrying about Estella.

Thus, she really hadn't the energy to bicker with him then.

Since he's unwilling to help me out, I'll go upstairs by myself.

However, she had only taken a step when Lucian grabbed her wrist.

Halting in her tracks, she uttered in a cool voice, "Please let go of me, Mr. Farwell." Alas, the grip of the hand grasping her wrist merely tightened following her request.

Pain shot through her, and her brows gradually creased. The look in her eyes as she regarded Lucian also carried a hint of wariness.

"What are you doing?"

Lucian had anger written all over his face. "What are you being guilty about? Could it be that you were still settling so-called work matters with Jack despite claiming that you were worried about Essie?"

Left with no other choice, Roxanne turned back and met the man's gaze with a frown.

"Since you don't believe me, Mr. Farwell, you can ask Archie and Benny what did in the afternoon. There's no need for you to be so adamant about getting an answer from me."

Chapter 897 Rather Disgraceful Upon hearing her reply, Lucian snorted. "Was it not you who arranged for Archie and Benny to come over?" Hah! She arranged for the two boys to come and placate Essie first while she spent the time with Jack!

As that possibility occurred to him, the temperature around him plummeted frightfully. “Do you find Essie all too easy to fool, Ms. Jarvis?”

Roxanne, on the other hand, merely found him unreasonable. “I can’t do anything about it if you insist on thinking so, Mr. Farwell.

After saying that, she struggled vigorously, hoping to go upstairs to get Archie and Benny down.

He has already made up his mind about things, so it'd be futile no matter what say further.

Verily, she didn’t want to waste any more time. Instead, she wanted to see Estella sooner.

Sensing her aversion, the rage in Lucian’s eyes blazed all the hotter. “It was some matter related to Herbscape Group, right?” At that remark, Roxanne abruptly stilled, shock flashing across her eyes.

All this while, Jack and Colby had been hinting to her that the trouble in Herbscape Group was Lucian’s doing.

Although she harbored some suspicions, she had been persuading herself not to simply draw conclusions before having any evidence.

However, Lucian’s tone at that moment had the scales within her start tilting. So, he has always known about the problems plaguing Herbscape Group!

In the next second, Lucian verified her conjecture expressionlessly. “If so, I'd advise you two to stop wasting your time and energy. Sooner or later, Herbscape Group will belong to Farwell Group.”

As his words rang out, his eyes glinted dangerously. Due to her utter shock, Roxanne’s struggles gradually ceased. Self-deprecation filled her eyes at the man’s definite tone.

Why exactly did I still convince myself not to doubt him when Jack and Colby had already made things so clear? Besides, Farwell Group is the only one with the motive and ability to do that in the whole of Horington.

“As expected of you, Mr. Farwell. Your methods in the business world are truly astounding.” She corralled her thoughts even as her gaze dimmed and her lips curved into a self-deprecating arc.

Perceiving the peculiarity in her words, Lucian frowned. “You might as well just say it bluntly if you find my methods despicable, Ms. Jarvis.”

To him, the business world was no different from the battlefield. If a method guarantees a win, then it's a good one. Furthermore, I want to take this chance to teach Jack a lesson and warn him

not to approach my woman. That aside, I intend to wake her up and have her consider carefully whether her work or the kids are more important!

Roxanne lifted her eyes and held his gaze. “I merely want to know one thing—why are you doing this?”

When her words drifted into the air, Lucian derisively arched a brow. “As Herbscape Group dared to breach their contract with Farwell Group, Farwell Group naturally has to teach it a lesson!”

Hearing that, Roxanne surreptitiously breathed a sigh of relief. Jack's words back then really left me feeling very much worried. Fortunately, Lucian's reason is in line with my thoughts. “Why did you think I'm doing this, Ms. Jarvis?” Lucian's voice echoed in her ears once more.

Roxanne's expression froze for a heartbeat, but in the next second, she remarked in feigned calmness, “I just find such a method rather disgraceful for Farwell Group.”

Having said that, she forcibly suppressed the guilt within her and turned her head to the side nonchalantly.

Lucian swept a scrutinizing gaze over her face, but she averted her face.

Chapter 898 Force Herself To Calm Down

“As long as find a method effective, it isn’t considered despicable,” Lucian riposted coldly after a while, putting away the scrutiny in his eyes.

Her eyes flickering, Roxanne nodded self-deprecatingly. “Oh well, I’m not far-sighted enough.” Lucian stared at her thoughtfully.

Out of the blue, he offered in a much gentler tone than earlier, “If it’s to your liking, can retain you as the technical advisor of Herbscape Group.”

Upon hearing that, Roxanne snapped her head around with a frown, meeting his gaze in puzzlement.

He was absolutely livid just now, but he’s now extending me an olive branch in the blink of an eye. Is this considered... a chance for me to salvage things?

At that thought, mirth bubbled within her.

Meanwhile, Lucian’s hand tightened around her wrist when he received no answer from her even after a long time had passed. “Farwell Group can likewise give you the same resources as Damaris Group.”

Roxanne could sense that the surrounding temperature was gradually dropping. Her heart inexorably sank as well.

After calming herself for a few seconds, she declined in feigned calmness, “No, thank you. There are many doctors far more outstanding than me. Considering Farwell Group’s financial capabilities, you can unquestionably choose someone of greater repute to take this position.”

She only agreed to be Herbscape Group’s technical advisor back then because of their project.

But then, Herbscape Group wouldn't have anything to do with Damaris Group’s project anymore if it ended up being acquired by Farwell Group.

In other words, there was no need for her to get involved further.

However, to Lucian, he felt that she chose Jack when given a choice between him and the latter.

Following that thought, a murderous rage enveloped him, and a storm brewed in his eyes. "What if insist?" At that, Roxanne's brows furrowed. "There are some things Farwell Group can't give me. Don't coerce me." No sooner had her words fallen than the man suddenly drew closer to her.

In a flash, they were practically standing toe to toe.

Roxanne instinctively took a step back.

Little did she know that she had already retreated to the edge of the door by an inch. That single step placed her right against the wall behind her.

On reflex, she turned and glanced at her back.

When she turned back again, Lucian had already stepped forward, bringing them so close that they could sense each other's breaths.

Her eyes went wide in panic, and she lifted her hands to push him away. "What are you doing? Let go of me!" Alas, Lucian effortlessly caught her outstretched hands. In a trice, he had restrained both her hands and pinned them above her head.

He stared at her with a smoldering look in his eyes. "I gave you a chance!"

Right after saying that, he leaned toward her.

Having no retreat left, Roxanne could only watch helplessly as the man's face drew closer to her. The instant their noses collided, she unconsciously trembled.

Before she could gather her wits about her, a warm sensation grazed her lips.

Struggling wildly, she wanted to protest, but Lucian shot a hand out and grasped her chin. She was forced to open her mouth, yet she couldn't utter a complete sentence.

As the man's kiss grew increasingly intense, his breath brushing against her face turned all the hotter. Tensed and panicked, Roxanne bit his lip hard.

In the next moment, Lucian grunted. Clapping a hand over the corner of his mouth, he backed away from her. They looked at each other in silence for a long while, different emotions brewing in their eyes.

Lucian stared at Roxanne with a hand over his bleeding lip, his gaze scorching and tinged with a hint of darkness that had yet to fade.

On the contrary, Roxanne dug her nails into her palms to force herself to calm down.

Chapter 899 Threw Herself Into Her Arms

"I'll go and pick Archie and Benny up." An indeterminate time passed before Roxanne lowered her eyes and murmured that in feigned calmness.

She really had no idea how to face the man in front of her, so she could only pretend as though nothing had happened earlier. At the sight of her blasé look, Lucian quirked his lips, deliberately baring the wound at the corner of his mouth. Out of her peripheral vision, Roxanne glimpsed the corner of the man's mouth. Her expression turned awkward.

Lucian proceeded to dab at the corner of his mouth. By then, his gaze had already cooled. In a deep voice, he offered, "I'll bring you upstairs."

Argh! was again irritated by her just now and lost hold of my self-control for a moment. And now, she has aversion etched across her features.

Fury and annoyance simmered within him, but in the end, they all turned into indifference.

Reaching a tacit consensus, neither of them mentioned a single word about the incident just now.

Lucian spun on his heel and headed upstairs. Similarly, Roxanne followed behind him without a word.

Neither said anything until they arrived in front of Estella's bedroom door.

In the room, the three children had gotten somewhat tired from playing and were sitting in a circle, munching on snacks. " need to go downstairs to prepare dinner."

Catalina felt exceedingly gratified after watching them play the entire afternoon. Since it was almost time for dinner, she planned to go downstairs.

Upon hearing that, Archie and Benny exchanged a glance. They both felt a touch perplexed.

Why isn't Mommy here yet when a long time has passed? Don't tell me she hasn't realized that we're at Daddy's place! If she didn't look at the GPS position, she must be in a total panic right now!

While unease haunted them, Catalina turned around and opened the room door. At once, she caught sight of the two people standing by the door.

"Mr. Farwell." Then, she shifted her gaze to the woman beside Lucian. A pause ensued before she greeted, "Ms. Jarvis." Forcing a smile, Roxanne inclined her head at Catalina. "I'm here to pick Archie and Benny up."

When Catalina's gaze swept over the couple's lips, shock flittered across her eyes. But still, she quickly retracted her gaze nonchalantly and shifted her body sideways to make way for them to enter the room.

"They're in the room." Nodding slightly, Roxanne lifted her eyes and cast her gaze into the room.

Archie and Benny had scrambled up and sprinted to the door as soon as Catalina's voice had rung out. Right then, they were both staring at the couple intently.

The instant they glimpsed the mark on the corners of both adults' lips, understanding dawned upon them, and they rejoiced inwardly.

No wonder Mommy took such a long time to come upstairs. This is why...

Sensing their gazes, Roxanne couldn't help feeling guilty.

Just when she was about to explain herself, Estella's juvenile voice split the air. "Ms. Jarvis!" In the next second, the little girl threw herself into her arms. Roxanne instinctively caught her.

She had been worrying about Estella for the entire day, so she naturally had to check the latter over carefully when she was right in front of her then.

At that thought, she cautiously crouched and looked straight into Estella's eyes. Meanwhile, Estella had waited for Roxanne for the entire day, even bracing herself for the possibility of not getting to see her.

Thus, she was over the moon to see Roxanne there all of a sudden. There were no signs of sorrow on her face. Instead, she beamed from ear to ear.

Yet, Roxanne noticed the redness and swelling that hadn't abated around her eyes. Immediately, a stab of pain assailed her. "Sorry, I'm late." She caressed Estella's head remorsefully. In response, Estella shook her head hard with innocence written all over her face. "You had Archie and Benny visit me instead!"

Behind her, Archie and Benny hung their heads low and furtively inched closer to each other when they heard that.

Chapter 900 Do Not Need To Do So

Lifting her eyes, Roxanne glanced at Archie and Benny. Sensing her stare, Archie and Benny raised their eyes guiltily and flashed her a smile before averting their gazes nonchalantly.

A strange feeling welled within Roxanne. Gradually, realization dawned upon her. No wonder Lucian asked me such a question earlier. It turned out that they used my name to come and visit Essie.

That understanding had a sense of exasperation inundating her. But ultimately, she didn't say anything.

Well, they only did so because they really wanted to come here and visit Essie. Besides, I'm pretty sure Essie's mood only lifted because they came.

"Are you still feeling unwell anywhere now?" Roxanne regarded Estella in concern.

In response, Estella shook her head docilely and replied in a cute voice, "Archie and Benny played with me!"

At that, Roxanne knew that her conjecture was right. Relief suffused her.

"Why did you come so late, Ms. Jarvis? Have you just finished your work?" Estella inquired, concerned about her instead. Hearing that, Roxanne abruptly recalled Lucian's question when they were downstairs just now.

For a moment, she didn't quite know how to answer Estella.

Fortunately, Estella didn't really need an answer from her. She merely urged thoughtfully, "Don't tire yourself out, Ms. Jarvis. You've got to take good care of yourself!"

Touched by her innocence, Roxanne nodded emotionally and her eyes moved. "Okay, will. Won't you allow me to check you over?"

Following that, Estella obediently stretched her hand out.

Taking her wrist, Roxanne took her pulse.

While she couldn't diagnose Estella's mental condition, she could still check her physical condition. Only then, she would be at ease.

After checking the little girl over and ascertaining that everything was fine, she breathed a sigh of relief. "It's late, so I've got to bring Archie and Benny home. We'll come and visit you again another day, okay?" Roxanne stroked Estella's head before she slowly straightened up.

She couldn't bear to part with the latter, but she was all the more averse to facing the man behind her, especially after the incident a while ago.

At that remark, Estella, who was still smiling a minute earlier, promptly withered. She gazed at Roxanne pitifully. Behind them, Lucian's gaze darkened frightfully.

Well, well, well... Despite seeing that Essie cried her eyes out because of her, she still has no qualms about leaving at the drop of a hat!

In a flash, the atmosphere between everyone there turned tense.

Catalina alternated her gaze between them. Then, she bit the bullet and tried to smooth things over. "I'm just going to prepare dinner. Stay and have dinner with us, Ms. Jarvis."

After saying that, she was afraid that Roxanne would decline, so she added, "Archie and Benny must be hungry as well." Archie and Benny bobbed their heads cooperatively.

Seeing that, Roxanne hesitated for a few seconds. But in the end, she still hardened her heart and turned the offer down. "Thank you, but think I'd best bring them home for dinner.

Considering the incident earlier, if were to stay for dinner, Lucian might misunderstand. Moreover, he hadn't said anything despite being the master of this manor, so there isn't any reason for me to accept the invitation.

In truth, Lucian had expected that answer from her.

Nonetheless, he still couldn't help feeling chagrined.

"If you're declining because of Herbscape Group, Ms. Jarvis, you really don't need to do so." Roxanne was promptly stunned, and a myriad of emotions brewed within her.

He clearly knows why I turned the dinner invitation down, yet he accused me of mixing business and pleasure. Now that the kids hear him, they'll likely feel that I'm the one at fault!