

## **ABANDONED 981**

### Chapter 981 Keep That In Mind

Just as the call ended and before Roxanne could recollect herself, someone knocked on the bedroom door. "Mommy!" When she opened the door, she was greeted by two lively boys.

The boys had been waiting in their room for the entire afternoon, but their mother never came out to call them. Thus, they came out themselves.

Suppressing the strange feelings in her chest, Roxanne forced a smile at the two boys. Nevertheless, Archie and Benny were sensitive to her emotions, and they instantly figured out that she looked upset.

Benny carefully tugged the hem of his mother's shirt and asked, "Mommy, what's wrong?" At the same time, Archie was quietly watching her from the side, seemingly trying to decipher something by studying her face.

Roxanne put on a nonchalant smile and said, "It's nothing. just had a nightmare earlier." Hearing that, Benny shared a look with his brother.

It was clear that both boys did not believe her. Roxanne could see their suspicions, but there was nothing she could do about that.

She could never notice when the boys were putting on an act, but the boys could always figure out right away if anything happened to her.

"Is it because of Grandma?" Archie asked, cocking his head to the side. Even though Mommy didn't show it earlier, Grandma's words were indeed quite hurtful.

The way the boy called Sonya made Roxanne freeze for a moment. Grandma. Yes, that's the way the boys should call Sonya if they know about their history. If not for me trying to keep things under wrap, Sonya would not have said such cruel words to the boys.

Roxanne gazed at Archie and Benny with an apologetic look. "Didn't Mommy say not to take Grandma's words to heart? All we need is for Essie to like us.

Archie carefully held his mother's finger and shook it.

Also, once Mommy gets back together with Daddy, Grandma's impression of us will surely change. But don't think we'll like her as much.

Every time the boys called Sonya "Grandma," Roxanne's heart skipped a beat. She said, "Remember that you have to call her Mrs. Farwell, not Grandma." The boys looked at their mother in confusion and asked, "Why?"

Traces of guilt flashed past Roxanne's eyes as she ruffled the boys' hair. "That's because... she's not your real grandma. You can only call your real grandma that."

For a brief second, the boys' expressions changed when they heard her, but they soon schooled their faces back to a neutral look.

"Okay, we'll keep that in mind."

We know our history, but since Mommy wants us to call her that instead, we'll do as she says.

Roxanne finally let out a sigh of relief at their agreement. "I'll be busy with work these days, so might not be able to pick you up. You have to be good kids and listen to Ms. Lane, okay?"

Lysa had just returned from her leave, and Roxanne was taking the opportunity to keep a distance from Estella.

Hearing that, the boys thought about how their mother corrected the way they called Sonya and realized what was going on. Mommy's going to avoid Daddy and Essie again. And yet she says it's not because of Grandma's words...

“But if Essie starts crying...”

Benny could understand why his mother was doing that, but he was still worried about Estella.

Roxanne lowered her gaze. “I’ll have to ask you to help me coax Essie, then.”

While she needed to keep a distance from Estella, the boys did not.

#### Chapter 982 Estella Was Worried

The next few days, Roxanne did not send the children or pick them up because of her work. Like the previous time, the boys would come back and hint to her about how upset Estella was to not see her.

Although Roxanne’s heart ached whenever she heard that, she said nothing about it. One night, as usual, the children waited for their parents to pick them up after school

Estella stared at the two boys. Without even needing her to say anything, the boys knew what she was going to say. Her question would be none other than when their mother was going to come.

Estella’s continuous stares throughout the past few days could burn a hole in their faces at this rate. However, they could not do anything if their mother did not give them her permission.

Not long after, Lysa appeared in the line for parents. Estella looked away in disappointment. Archie and Benny did not leave immediately. They waited until Lucian’s car appeared before leaving with Lysa.

“Daddy,” Estella miserably called out as she watched her father come closer to her. Lucian was slow, and as he walked to her, he swept his gaze around Estella.

Seemingly knowing what her father was looking for, Estella mumbled, "Ms. Lane has picked up Archie and Benny." Lucian stopped looking around and stood before the girl, saying nothing else as he took her hand.

After greeting Pippa, Lucian brought Estella into the car.

Although it was normal for Lucian to hold Estella's hand, there was something strange about it this time. "Daddy, your hand feels hot."

Lucian furrowed his brows and silently let go of her before walking behind her instead.

Estella did not dwell on that, and she climbed into the car.

Lucian started the car engine.

"Daddy, let's go to play with Archie and Benny," came Estella's voice a moment later.

Lucian only frowned and replied, "Ms. Jarvis is busy lately. Let's wait for her to be done with work first." That was what Roxanne had told him after all.

The light in Estella's eyes dimmed at that. "But it's been such a long time since I've seen Ms. Jarvis..." Roxanne had not contacted him ever since that call, and the fury in Lucian had yet to die down. Frustration was the only thing he felt when he heard Estella mentioning Roxanne.

"We'll see her once she's done with her work," Lucian uttered in a strangely hoarse voice.

Estella could sense that something seemed off about her father, but she could not figure out what exactly it was, so she stayed quiet.

Upon reaching the Farwell residence, Lucian got out of the car first. Then he turned around to carry Estella down as well. Carrying Estella had always been an easy task for him, but he stumbled this time.

"Daddy!"

Estella was frightened, and once her father regained his balance, she looked up at his face in concern.

The sight that she saw was Lucian's pale face.

Seeing the worry in Estella's eyes, Lucian patted her head gently in consolation. "I'm fine. I might have caught a cold." He had been feeling weak the entire day, and the girl had pointed out how hot his palm was earlier.

It must be because I caught a cold, then.

Lucian did not think much about it. He had always been as healthy as a horse; this was only a cold. He was sure that he would be fine after a night's rest.

However, Estella was worried.

She had never seen her father this weak before.

"Go on in."

Fearing that he would pass the virus to her, Lucian did not hold the girl's hand again.

Estella stared at her father's back as worry washed over her.

Chapter 983 My Turn "Mr. Farwell," Catalina greeted him when she saw him enter. She had prepared dinner. "Dinner is—"

Before she could finish her sentence, Lucian interrupted tiredly, "I won't be eating; I'll be resting upstairs. I'll leave Essie to you." Right as he said that, Estella entered the house.

Noticing that Lucian seemed unwell, Catalina said nothing else. After watching Lucian head up the stairs, she led the girl to the dining table.

Estella was staring up the stairs with a worried look on her face. "Daddy's not feeling well." Catalina patted her head and reassured her, "I'll go and take a look at him later. Eat while dinner is hot, Ms. Estella."

Estella was still worried and was distracted throughout dinner. After finally finishing her meal, she made to run up the stairs. Catalina hurried after her.

The door to Lucian's bedroom was tightly shut. Estella knocked on the door cautiously but received no response. "Daddy?" she called out. Silence answered her. She glanced at Catalina anxiously.

Even Catalina was starting to worry. She had seen how pale Lucian looked. Still, as she thought that he would be able to take care of himself, and since Estella needed taking care of, she did not head upstairs right away.

She did not expect the situation to be this serious. Catalina and Estella exchanged a glance before the former hesitantly opened the door.

Fortunately, Lucian did not have the habit of locking his door, so they could get into the room with ease. As it turned out, Lucian was lying on his bed, securely under his covers. He was asleep.

He seemed fine at the first glance, but the two of them soon notice the unnatural blush on his face and his furrowed brows. "Daddy!" Estella ran to the side of his bed to take a better look at her father's condition.

Unlike her, Catalina hastily made a call to the family doctor. Just as she ended the call, Lucian woke up from their voices.

When he squinted at the side of the bed and noticed the small figure there, he quickly said, "Go out, Essie. I'm sick, and I'll spread it to you." Estella shook her head fervently.

Lucian's voice was raspy, and Estella knew that he had a bad cold. "I want to take care of you, Daddy!" the girl protested. Lucian was unfazed by it. "Catalina, bring Essie out."

Catalina gave him a curt nod and walked over to the side of the bed. "Mr. Farwell, I've asked Dr. Elswick to make a trip here." Lucian inclined his head. "Please bring Essie out." "No!" Estella stubbornly ran away from Catalina. "I want to take care of Daddy!" Not daring to use any force on the girl, Catalina

had no choice but to call out, "Ms. Estella..."

With a somber look, Estella uttered, "Daddy always takes care of me when I'm sick, so now it's my turn to take care of Daddy!" Catalina turned to look at Lucian with a frown.

"You want to take care of me?" Lucian asked, staring at his daughter. Estella bobbed her head vigorously. "Then please get me a glass of water from downstairs." Hearing that, Estella spun around without hesitation and went out of the room.

It was only then Lucian said to Catalina, "Go after Essie and take care of her. When Dr. Elswick is here, get him to come upstairs."

Catalina nodded and turned to leave.

#### Chapter 984 None Other Than Roxanne

Right as Estella brought water over, she saw Catalina exiting the room and closing the door behind her. At that, she quickened her pace and jogged over to the doorway before looking at Catalina angrily.

"I want to give this to Daddy!" The second Catalina turned around, she was greeted by the sight of the sulking girl. A resigned look crept into her eyes. Mr. Farwell enjoys giving me challenges like these, doesn't he?

"Ms. Estella, Mr. Farwell isn't feeling well, and he has gone to sleep again." Catalina dared not look into Estella's eyes as she spoke, for she could not bear to lie to the girl.

Upon hearing that her father had gone to sleep, Estella looked at the glass of water in her hands in disappointment and in silence.

Catalina glanced at the time. It would still take some time before Sonny got here, so she brought Estella back to her room to rest. Half an hour later, Sonny walked into the mansion with his medical kit.

By then, Catalina had already coaxed Estella to sleep, so she came out to lead Sonny into Lucian's bedroom.

Lucian had fallen asleep again.

"Mr. Farwell did not seem well when he came home today," Catalina said to Sonny as she looked at Lucian worriedly.

Sonny nodded. Then he stepped forward to give Lucian a checkup.

During the checkup, Lucian woke up from the doctor's movement. When he realized it was Sonny, he asked in a hoarse voice, "So what is it?"

"You're ill because you're overworked," Sonny said. "And something's bothering you, so your flu-like symptoms are extra worse. You'll need to rest well during this time."

Something's bothering me...

Both Lucian and Catalina frowned.

Lucian, of course, knew what he was bothered about.

It was because of none other than Roxanne, who wanted to cut ties with him again.

Catalina was taken aback.



She knew all along that Lucian was not one to wear his heart on his sleeve.

Therefore, this was her first time seeing him ill because of the troubles in his mind.

She wondered what it was about.

Sonny asked if Lucian wanted to get an IV drip, which Lucian rejected. After prescribing Lucian some medicine, he left. "How is Essie?" Lucian asked.

"She made a fuss for a while, but she's asleep now."

Indeed, Estella had been kicking up a fuss to see her father, but Catalina had managed to stop her from entering his room. After a while, Estella grew tired and fell asleep.

Hearing that, Lucian relaxed and tiredly closed his eyes.

Perhaps it was because he was sick. He was exceptionally sleepy. Seconds after closing his eyes, he fell asleep.

Catalina tiptoed out of the room.

That night, Catalina barely slept a wink. She would check on Lucian every once in a while.

She had thought he had only caught a normal cold and would be fine after a night's rest.

Yet, even when the next morning came, Lucian was still having a high fever.

The moment Estella woke up, she began insisting on seeing her father. Left without a choice, Catalina did as she asked. Lucian was still asleep.

The girl looked at him from afar, and tears welled up in her eyes.

It was her first time seeing her father as sick as that.

“Mr. Farwell has instructed me to send you to school if he’s still unwell the next day,” Catalina informed Estella as she ruffled her hair. “Once come back, I’ll take good care of Mr. Farwell.”

Estella was reluctant to leave, but she knew she could not go against her father.

Furthermore, her father was still sick. She did not want him to worry about her, so she nodded obediently.

#### Chapter 985 Made Up Their Minds

Estella was still down in the dumps when she arrived at the kindergarten. In the past, she would always take the initiative to look for Archie and Benny during recess so they could play together.

That day, however, the two boys waited for a long time but did not see her approach them. Hence, they went up to her and said, “Let’s play a game, Essie!”

Her eyes reddened as she shook her head weakly. Seeing that, Archie and Benny exchanged concerned looks. “What’s the matter? Did someone bully you?”

Estella shook her head again. The image of Lucian looking ill floated in her mind. He’s sick...

Suddenly, an idea popped into her head, and her eyes lit up. She glanced at the two boys next to her. Archie and Benny were still looking at her worriedly. When they saw her gazing at them thoughtfully, they were confused.

The next moment, they heard Estella say in her adorable voice, “Daddy...” She sounded as though she was on the verge of tears. The boys’ expressions turned grave, and they gazed at her earnestly.

Looking at them miserably, she continued, "Daddy is sick, but he won't let me stay home to look after him." Archie's and Benny's chests tightened when they heard that Lucian was not feeling well. They hurriedly asked, "How is he? Why did he suddenly fall sick?"

"I think he has the flu. However, his body feels hot to the touch. I wanted to take care of him, but he said I'd catch it and wouldn't let me in," Estella replied.

Archie and Benny glanced at each other, realizing that Lucian was running a fever. And judging by how worried Essie looks, he must have a high fever.

Although they were also fraught with worry, they chose to comfort Estella. "Mr. Farwell is an adult, so he knows his condition. Children like us have weaker immune systems. That's why he didn't allow you to go in," Archie said, stroking Estella's hair reassuringly.

"If worse comes to worst, we can ask Mommy to go over and take a look at him," Benny chimed in. No sooner had the words left his mouth than he felt a twinge of regret.

Archie still don't know what Mommy's thinking of doing. If she's insistent about avoiding Daddy and Essie, then what Benny just said will only end in another disappointment for Essie.

As that thought crossed his mind, he bowed his head guiltily.

However, Estella's eyes glimmered with hope as soon as she heard him say they could ask Roxanne to check on Lucian. "Really?"

Looking up and meeting her expectant gaze, Benny could not bear to break it to her. He could only turn to Archie for help. Sensing Benny's pleading gaze and taking in the eager look on Estella's face, Archie nodded immediately. "Our mommy is an excellent doctor. It's only flu, so it won't take long for him to get better."

A faint smile finally spread across Estella's lips.

It went without saying that she knew Roxanne was a good doctor who could cure her father in no time. If Ms. Jarvis does go to treat Daddy, I'll get to see her!

Her spirits lifted, and her heart was filled with anticipation.

As for Archie and Benny, they were caught in a dilemma.

Although they were concerned about Lucian, they did not know whether Roxanne would be willing to treat him after learning he was ill.

If she were unwilling, not only would they incur their mother's suspicion again, but they would also have to face Estella's look of disappointment.

We really don't want to let Essie down...

Exchanging furtive glances, the two boys silently made up their minds that they would make sure Roxanne went to treat Lucian.

## Chapter 986 Let Her Be

While that was happening, Sonny had also informed Sonya that Lucian was unwell. Although she had previously gotten into an argument with Lucian, she still decided to personally check in on her son upon learning of his condition.

"Mrs. Farwell." When Catalina saw Sonya walking through the door, she could not help thinking about how the mother-son pair had quarreled the last time. She hesitated, wondering whether to let the latter go upstairs or not.

Naturally, Sonya paid no mind to her hesitation. "Is Lucian in his room?" Catalina nodded. "He's not feeling well and is resting. How about—"

Before she could finish her sentence, Sonya interrupted impatiently, "My son has fallen ill. As his mother, of course want to see

him."

With that, she strode upstairs.

Not daring to stop her, Catalina could only trail behind awkwardly.

Over in the bedroom, Lucian thought it was Catalina coming to check on him again when he heard a knock on the door.

"Come in," he responded in a low voice.

Soon, the door opened, and he heard his mother's voice ring out. "I heard from Dr. Elswick that you're sick. How are you feeling?"

Lucian's brows drew together sharply as he turned toward the direction of the voice. By then, Sonya had already walked over to his bed, pulled up a chair, and sat down with a frown.

"Dr. Elswick says it's because you're overworked. He also said something is bothering you. Is it because of Roxanne? What makes her worth your worry? Back then, that woman left without a word. She was gone for six years. Did she ever consider your feelings?" Sonya said, looking utterly mystified.

Lucian could not be bothered to argue with her and merely replied, "You're overthinking. I'm a little tired. want to take a nap." After saying that, he ignored her and closed his eyes.

It was evident to Sonya that he was trying to avoid the topic, and anger rose within her.

"It's not that don't care about your health. It's just that the cause of your illness is completely unacceptable to me!"

He opened his eyes again and glanced at her. "If you care that much about me, let me rest."

Sonya still felt like venting, but she suppressed the urge to do so when she saw how ill he looked.

She glared at him for a few seconds, then stood up expressionlessly. "I'll get Aubree to come and look after you. You'd better not send her away."

With that, she spun on her heel and left.

Catalina felt a sense of helplessness at the tension hanging in the air between the duo.

Nonetheless, when she saw Sonya go downstairs, she still had to hurry after her respectfully and send her off.

After watching Sonya leave, she turned around and went back upstairs.

She thought of saying that since Lucian was not feeling well and Sonya had purposely come to visit him, the pair could take the opportunity to reconcile.

However, she swallowed her unspoken words when she remembered that Sonya wanted to tear Lucian and Roxanne apart. By the time she returned to the bedroom, Lucian was already sitting up, leaning against the headboard and working. Catalina's heart sank. "Mr. Farwell, you should rest for a while."

He lifted his gaze and glanced at her. "That's not necessary. I've already slept for a long time and have had enough sleep." Knowing that she would not be able to change his mind, Catalina fell silent.

After a while, she thought of something and said hesitantly, "Mrs. Farwell mentioned that she'd get Ms. Pearson to come by. When she comes..."

Should let her in or ask her to leave? Lucian knew what the woman was thinking. He frowned and was silent for several seconds. Then he answered, "Let her be."

Clearly, my mother is annoyed by my attitude. If I don't put up with what she wants for a bit, I'm afraid she'll go and stir up trouble for Roxanne.

After getting a clear answer, Catalina breathed a sigh of relief and left the room.

## Chapter 987 Look After You

Sonya was a woman of her word. That afternoon, Aubree appeared at the Farwell residence door. Catalina gazed at Aubree on the video intercom screen. Recalling Lucian's instructions, she let her in.

Aubree had a thermal container in her hand, and she headed for the stairs as soon as she walked in. "Ms. Pearson," Catalina called out, wanting to tell her that Lucian was working and not to go up and disturb him.

To her surprise, Aubree acted as though she was invisible and went straight upstairs. As the older woman watched Aubree waltz off, her thoughts inadvertently turned to Roxanne.

It's just as I thought. In comparison, Ms. Jarvis is still a much nicer person. She sighed, then quickly hurried after Aubree.

Aubree walked up to the door to Lucian's bedroom. She raised her hand to knock on the door, then entered the room without waiting for a response.

"Lucian—" She broke off abruptly when she saw him sitting on the bed and working. "Why are you up? Mrs. Farwell told me you were resting."

Lucian was in the middle of going through his emails. When he heard what she said, he looked up impatiently and glanced at her.

"Even if I was resting, does it mean you can barge in like this?"

His retort left her speechless. After a while, she finally explained guiltily, “ I was just worried about you after hearing Mrs. Farwell say that you’re feeling under the weather.”

After saying that, she composed herself and approached him with a concerned expression. Then she opened the thermal container.

“ I made this broth earlier this afternoon after learning that you were ill. Hurry up and try it.

As she spoke, she made to serve him some broth.

However, he did not even spare her a glance as he replied, “No, thanks. I’ve already had lunch.”

She paused. “It’s just a little broth. It won’t be very filling. My mother makes it for me whenever I fall sick.” A hint of displeasure flashed across his eyes as he stared at the broth she placed in front of him.

Catalina had been a few steps behind Aubree. As soon as she walked into the room and took in the scene, she cleared her throat helplessly. “Ms. Pearson, Mr. Farwell is running a fever. It’s best if he doesn’t have anything too oily.”

I’m just telling the truth. Apart from that, it’s also because I can see Mr. Farwell doesn’t want to pay her any attention. If things go on as it is, I’m afraid the atmosphere will become very strained.

Upon hearing that, Aubree froze.

Lucian gazed up at her impassively, then reached out and brushed her hands away. “I appreciate the thought, but there’s no need to do anything unnecessary.”

Aubree looked upset. “It’s my fault for not taking that into consideration. How about I help to make dinner? I’ll make you some risotto.”

“Catalina will take care of it. You don’t need to trouble yourself,” he replied flatly.



At those words, Aubree pretended to frown helplessly. "But... Mrs. Farwell asked me to come here to look after you."

Lucian's expression darkened when he heard her bring up his mother.

Sensing a shift in the atmosphere around him, she quickly stopped talking.

"I'm tired. I'm going to take a nap."

Lucian set aside his phone and swept his gaze over the two ladies in the room.

"Ms. Pearson, why don't take you downstairs to get some rest?" Catalina hurriedly piped up. Needless to say, Aubree was unwilling to leave just like that.

However, Lucian was already lying on the bed with his back toward them, evidently having no intention of conversing with them any further.

Seeing that, Aubree had no choice but to follow Catalina out of the room. Once outside the room, Catalina stepped aside respectfully to allow Aubree to walk ahead.

As Aubree brushed past her, Catalina clearly sensed her shoot her a displeased look.

## Chapter 988 Just Wait Patiently

The two ladies went downstairs, one after another. Catalina placed Aubree's thermal container on the table. She was about to say something when she heard the latter's cold voice ring out behind her. "Since Lucian can't eat that, you can finish it for him."

Catalina was momentarily stunned. Then she figured out what was going on. She's venting her anger on me because of what said earlier.

Realizing that, she suppressed the helplessness in her heart and answered politely, "Thank you. You're too kind, Ms. Pearson." Aubree shot her an icy glare. The more she looked at Catalina, the more furious she was.

As soon as received Mrs. Farwell's call this morning, had my housekeeper prepare the broth. waited until the broth was done and brought it here, thinking of buttering Lucian up and getting in his good graces. However, never expected my efforts to be ruined by this woman! And if remember correctly, when Roxanne was still in this house, the two seemed to get along well.

At the thought of that, Aubree looked even more upset. "Do you also wish for Roxanne to come back?"

The question came out of the blue and stunned Catalina for a few seconds. Finally, she replied, "That's Mr. Farwell's personal matter. As a subordinate, it's not my place to comment on it."

Aubree snorted coldly. "It's good that you know that. In the future, you'd better stay far away when I'm talking to Lucian." Catalina gave a bitter smile as she nodded, missing the time when Roxanne had been around even more.

Since Lucian was ignoring Aubree, Catalina thought the latter would leave.

The last thing she expected was for Aubree to stay the entire afternoon.

Neither of the two women uttered a word to the other.

It was not until school was over for Estella that Catalina felt a sense of relief.

"Ms. Pearson, I'm going to pick up Ms. Estella from school. Would you—"

She was about to ask Aubree if the latter would like to join her.

However, Aubree cut her off mid-sentence and said, "You don't have to go. Since I'm here, should be the one to pick her up." With that, she picked up her bag and rose to her feet.

Catalina balked at the suggestion when she thought about how deeply Estella disliked Aubree, but because of the difference in their statuses, she was not in a place to say anything.

All she could do was stand by and watch Aubree leave the house.

Upstairs, Lucian was bored from being cooped up inside his room and came out to get some air.

As soon as he got downstairs, he spotted Catalina looking anxious.

“Why are you still here? Shouldn't classes have ended for Essie by now?” he asked with a frown.

She turned to him with an embarrassed expression. “Ms. Pearson... She... couldn't stop her.”

His frown deepened at her reply. Nonetheless, he knew that if Aubree was the one to make the suggestion, it would be difficult for Catalina to dismiss it.

Ultimately, it was an oversight on my part.

“I'll go over myself.”

If let Aubree pick Essie up, Essie will probably come home in tears.

Catalina could not help worrying when she heard that. “But you're not—

Lucian waved his hand dismissively. “It's not that serious. I'll have the driver send me there.”

His response made her feel much more at ease, and she quickly went to get the driver.

The children were queuing up at the kindergarten entrance, waiting for their parents to pick them up.

Archie, Benny, and Estella gathered together. Estella's face was etched with worry, and her eyes were still red-rimmed.

As the boys stood next to her, they reassured her in their piping voices, "Don't worry, Essie. We'll soon bring Mommy over so that she can treat Mr. Farwell. Just wait patiently."

#### Chapter 989 What Brings You Here

Estella nodded at Archie and Benny obediently. "Essie!" Just as the three children were chatting up a storm, someone suddenly called out to Estella from a distance.

The three children turned to look toward the direction of the voice in unison. Since Lucian was out sick, there was no way he would come pick up Estella.

By that logic, Catalina was likely the one who had come to fetch her. However, when they saw the person who was approaching, surprise tinged their expressions. One by one, they frowned.

The person who called out to Estella was Aubree. Paying no heed to Archie and Benny, Aubree strode toward Estella directly. "Essie, your father is still sick, so I came to pick you up in his stead."

Aubree reached out, intending to take Estella's hand.

Estella pursed her lips. A reluctant look spread across her face when she saw the woman's outstretched hand and she silently hid her hands behind her back.

Frowning slightly, Aubree admonished the little girl, "Essie." Sensing the veiled threat in Aubree's tone, Estella ran toward the boys and carefully hid behind them.

She would rather follow Lysa to Roxanne's place than return with Aubree.

Estella had not forgotten the last time Aubree had sent her to school. The latter had spanked her bottom inside the car. I'm never going with that evil woman ever again! Sensing her fear, Archie and Benny stood in front of Estella protectively. "Ms. Pearson, we will see that Essie gets home in a bit."

Aubree glanced at Archie and Benny and was suddenly reminded of Roxanne.

She maintained a smile on her face as she thought of the latter, but her eyes darkened perceptibly. "Since I'm already here, there's no need to trouble anyone else."

Estella tensed up behind the two boys, still refusing to come out. Pippa, who had watched the scene unfold, hurriedly came over to diffuse the situation. "Ms. Pearson, since Essie is unwilling, will handle sending her home later."

Aubree lifted her head and smiled at Pippa. "There's no need. There seems to be some misunderstanding, but I'm sure Essie and can resolve it." She then glanced at the three children. "You two leave us. have something to say to Essie."

Archie and Benny looked at Estella hesitantly.

In response, Estella shook her head.

"Essie doesn't want to talk to you," the boys announced.

Aubree's expression grew ugly when she heard the retort.

The little shits! was planning to return with Estella in order to earn some brownie points from Lucian. Why is she making it so difficult?

"Your father will be worried if you return home late." Aubree suppressed her rage. "He's still not feeling well. Essie, be a good girl, and don't cause trouble for your father."

At the mention of her father, Estella hesitated for a moment before stepping out from behind the two boys.

However, when she saw Aubree's face, she was immediately reminded of her horrible behavior. A surge of worry and fear enveloped Estella. Instantly, her eyes reddened, and tears began to well up.

"Be a good girl now." Paying no heed to the little girl's anxiety, Aubree reached out to grab her hand.

Just then, Pippa's voice sounded from behind them.

"Mr. Farwell, what brings you here?"

Wasn't Ms. Pearson supposed to pick Essie up?

Upon hearing Pippa's words, the children turned their attention toward Aubree and peered at her suspiciously before turning to look at Lucian, who was standing in front of them in casual clothing.

Perhaps it was because of his illness. Although his posture appeared to be laid back, his expression was anything but.

Chapter 990 Leave Essie To Me

"Lucian..." Aubree's expression stiffened when she saw him. "Why are you here? thought you were indisposed, so came to fetch Essie."

Lucian glanced at her calmly. "I don't recall asking you to do such a thing." The expressions of the people around them changed the moment they heard the words.

Pippa began to feel fearful. Although she knew about Aubree and Lucian's relationship and that Aubree would not dare to do anything drastic to the little girl, Estella was not an ordinary little girl.

If Pippa were to allow Estella to be taken away unknowingly, she would likely face repercussions. Thank goodness Essie didn't go with her...

Relief washed across Archie's and Benny's faces. They had thought that it was weird for Aubree to come to pick up Estella when their father knew the little girl did not like the woman.

It was the evil woman's ploy all along! Hmph! Good thing we stopped her. "Come here, Essie." Lucian held out a hand toward the girl.

Still shaken, Estella sniffed aggrievedly and took her father's hand. Lucian turned to look at Archie and Benny. Before he could speak, a strong gust of wind suddenly blew.

Lucian covered his mouth, trying to stifle his cough. "I won't be waiting with you today. Will you boys be all right?" Under normal circumstances, Lucian would have waited with Archie and Benny until Lysa arrived.

However, he did not have the energy to do so today.

Archie and Benny nodded obediently. "We'll be fine!" They knew that their father was currently sick.

Pippa, who was standing nearby, hurried to reassure Lucian, "Don't worry, Mr. Farwell. I will watch over the boys." Lucian nodded and walked away with Estella in tow.

Since Estella knew that Lucian was feeling unwell, she went with him obediently.

Aubree, on the other hand, was filled with guilt and annoyance after Lucian's sudden appearance.

Lucian had made her look bad in front of so many people. Despite that, she stubbornly went after them.

After Lucian helped Estella into the car, the car started. From the corner of his eye, he could see Aubree following them in her own vehicle.

Displeasure flashed across Lucian's eyes.

"Are you okay, Daddy?" Estella stared at Lucian, concern in her red-rimmed eyes.

Lucian patted her on the head. "I'm feeling much better." He wrinkled his brow and said apologetically, "I didn't tell Ms. Pearson to pick you up."

Estella grinned. "Yup, know!"

Lucian patted the little girl's head and did not speak for the rest of the journey.

Without waiting for Lucian to carry her, Estella scrambled out of the car the moment they arrived at the Farwell residence and grabbed his hand.

Just as they were about to enter the mansion, the sound of a car door slamming shut sounded from behind them. Puzzled, Estella turned to see Aubree getting out of her car and marching toward them.

"Daddy..." Estella instinctively shrank toward her father.

Lucian gripped her hand comfortingly. "You can just ignore her."

Uneasy, Estella stood by his side silently.

Aubree approached them, smiling warmly as she glanced at Estella. It made the girl edge closer to her father. "Lucian, you must be exhausted. Leave Essie to me."