

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 1337-1368

Chapter 1337

Aubree chuckled in delight as the public showed disdain for Roxanne.

“Roxanne, you b*tch, I’m going to let you get a taste of your own medicine.”

Early in the morning that day, Sonya read the comments on the internet.

She was furious when she found out that Lucian had sent Roxanne to the hospital and had even spent the night there taking care of her.

She could still recall the incident vividly. Roxanne had just returned to the country not long ago, and Lucian had insisted on taking care of her.

Sonya read through the comments furiously.

Everyone had different opinions regarding the matter. Public opinion was swayed.

Sonya’s face darkened when she saw a comment about how well Lucian and Roxanne complimented each other.

They’re a good match? Since when has she ever been worthy of my son? On what grounds? Certainly not her looks, nor her two illegitimate children. Speaking of which, I’ve yet to find out who fathered those two children.

Just as she was about to blow up, the public’s view of Roxanne took a sharp turn for the worse, and that calmed Sonya down.

However, she suddenly caught sight of a comment that read: Roxanne left the Farwells on her own accord back then. Who knows? Maybe she left because she had gotten herself pregnant and was worried that she wouldn’t be able to explain herself. She’s probably back to get her hands on the Farwells’ wealth now that her children have grown up.

Sonya’s face contorted in anger as she read the comment.

Now that I think about it, Archie and Benny look to be about Estella’s age. But who knows? She could have lied about their age. No wonder she left so hastily back then.

Sonya found the thought to be unbearable as she considered the possibility.

No matter what, Roxanne is very suspicious. I won't let her get her way.

Sonya put her phone away, left the mansion, and drove straight to Roxanne's house.

It was noon by the time she arrived at Roxanne's door. However, no one was home.

Sonya got back into her car and checked her phone, only to find that the public was having a heated discussion about Roxanne. Rumors and speculations spread like wildfire.

Some even suspected that Roxanne had known Jack since a long time ago.

The Farwells were starting to get a bad rap because of this speculation.

One comment read: The fact that the Farwells were unaware of Roxanne's infidelity with Mr. Farwell is quite concerning. I wonder how they judge people. I hope the employees of Farwell Group don't act two-faced like her.

Someone asked: What is the last name of Ms. Jarvis' kids? Can someone please tell me?

Sonya almost fainted in anger as she read the comments.

I knew it. The Farwells will surely turn into a laughingstock when I let her marry into the family. Damn it. I can't believe how quickly this has happened. I need to find a way to settle this once and for all.

Sonya parked her car in front of Roxanne's gates and spent a good while there before finally coming up with an idea.

The most important thing for me to do right now is to restore the Farwells' reputation. The relationship my son has with Roxanne right now is the root cause of it all. So if his fiancée is someone other than Roxanne...

Sonya made up her mind and immediately drove to the Pearson residence.

Even though she was dissatisfied with how Aubree had treated Estella, she was the only one who could take Roxanne out of the picture now.

At most, I'll let her be Lucian's fiancée on paper. After all, no one knows about her deeds yet. Having her around won't harm the Farwells' reputation.

Chapter 1338

At the Pearson residence, Samuel had been receiving calls non-stop since morning due to all the online drama and the Farwells' pressure.

They were either calling to report how terrible his subsidiaries were doing or to discuss the termination of contracts with the headquarters.

Things had been tense at the Pearson residence since morning.

Even though Gina was worried about her daughter, she didn't dare call to check in on her with Samuel around.

That afternoon, Samuel remained holed up in his study while Gina sat alone at the kitchen table, unable to summon the appetite for lunch in the midst of such tension and uncertainty.

Nobody touched the food even when it had turned cold.

That was the scene that greeted Sonya when she arrived, and she couldn't help but notice that Aubree's room was located directly opposite the mansion main entrance.

"Mrs. Farwell, what brings you here?"

Gina was instantly reminded of the previous day's ordeal when she caught sight of Sonya. A shiver ran down her spine, causing her to stand up shakily.

Samuel also emerged from his study when he heard the doorbell ring.

As soon as he saw Sonya at the door, Samuel ended his phone call and hurried downstairs to meet her.

"Mrs. Farwell, what brings you here? Aubree has realized she is in the wrong, and we Pearsons have learned our lesson. Please don't make things any more difficult for us..."

Samuel felt embarrassed as he spoke.

Sonya frowned as she looked around the Pearson residence.

She noticed that there were only two simple dishes on the dining table that had not been touched.

Samuel and Gina appeared exhausted and worn out despite it only having been one night since they had last met. They seemed to have aged a decade overnight, with worry and stress etched into their features.

Sonya's heart ached for them, as they had been good friends for many years.

Reminded of Aubree's actions, she sighed. "How could you allow Aubree to do something like that to Essie? The Farwells have never mistreated you, have we?"

Samuel and Gina exchanged looks, sensing that Sonya was starting to soften.

Samuel said in a resigned voice, "We didn't want this to happen either. Aubree was foolish and has learned her lesson. She said she went down the wrong path because she was desperate to marry Lucian."

Gina chimed in, "Aubree has been locking herself in her room since coming home yesterday. We've had a serious talk with her about it and she's learned her lesson now. She will apologize and make things right with Lucian and Essie."

Sonya's heart ached as she witnessed the sincerity and exhaustion etched on the faces of her two friends.

She stared at them as if she was assessing how sincere their apology was.

Samuel and Gina both had their heads lowered. One was red in the face with anger, and the other had red, blotchy eyes caused by crying.

They do look like they have regretted on their actions.

Sonya slowly retracted her gaze and sat down on the couch in the living room.

"Aubree has indeed gotten carried away. Things wouldn't have turned out like this if she had listened to me back then and tried her best to get along with Lucian and Essie," she said regretfully.

Samuel and Gina immediately caught on.

"Mrs. Farwell, we have realized what a huge mistake we have made and have learned our lesson now. Could you try to persuade Mr. Farwell to let things slide?"

Sonya didn't reply to them as she sat with crossed legs on the couch like an elegant lady.

Chapter 1339

Gina and her husband were at a loss for a moment.

They initially thought Sonya came to defuse the tension.

Seeing Sonya putting up an arrogant look left them unsure of what to do.

Gina tested the waters by pleading, "Mrs. Farwell, we will heed your advice and not do stupid things anymore. Please help us!"

As soon as she finished speaking, she noticed Sonya's gaze fall on Samuel, who stood beside her.

Gina immediately caught her drift and cleared her throat to get Samuel's attention.

Clearly, Sonya still thought the Pearson family was of use to her, and she wanted them to pledge their loyalty to her.

Given that Gina lacked authority in the Pearson family, Sonya hinted at Samuel so he could make the first move.

They might have been friends for years, but after all the things the Pearson family had done, Gina knew they were now at Sonya's mercy. Their friendship had become solely based on interests and more transactional.

Of course, Samuel could read Sonya's mind too, but after much pondering, he still could not bear to give up Pearson Group. But if I were to turn her down, I might risk losing the entire Pearson Group, let alone my position of influence in the company!

Samuel had no choice but to grit his teeth and agreed. "In the future, neither the Pearson family nor Pearson Group will go against your wishes. That's my promise to you!"

Only then did Sonya nod in satisfaction and put her crossed legs down.

"Where is Aubree?" She looked up and glanced at the broken door of the bedroom where Aubree was.

Gina let out a nervous laugh. "She had a fight with Samuel in the morning and ran away. I can call her back immediately if you wish to see her!"

She was worried that her daughter might engage in dangerous behavior but did not care to intervene because of Samuel.

Now that Sonya had mentioned it, she had an excuse to bring her daughter back.

There was a hint of displeasure in Sonya's eyes. How could Aubree throw a tantrum and run away when something like this happened? I'm surprised to learn that she's this kind of person.

Samuel and Gina felt something was amiss when they noticed the change in Sonya's expression.

"Forget it!" Sonya withdrew her gaze. "Tell her to stop causing more trouble when she returns later!"

A question stirred in the hearts of Samuel and Gina. Does the fact that Sonya came to look for us mean there's hope for us to continue with the engagement?

Yet, what Sonya uttered next completely shattered their fantasy.

"Though the engagement between the Farwells and Pearsons is off, I will not allow Roxanne to marry into our family since she has tarnished Farwell Group's reputation!" Fury was written all over Sonya's face. "I'll talk to Lucian on your behalf, but if Aubree were to do anything stupid again, she'd better watch her own back!"

Gina and Samuel looked puzzled. Why is she doing all this if she doesn't want us to proceed with the engagement?

Nonetheless, the two dared not ask further as they knew how furious Sonya was. They responded, "We will keep an eye on Aubree and make sure she doesn't do anything stupid again!"

Sonya glanced at them before walking out of the door. I'm glad the Farwell family has this chance to teach the Pearson family a lesson. At least they'll no longer dare to step on our toes!

The flattery on Samuel's face gradually disappeared as he watched Sonya depart. I can't believe I just relinquished the authority of the Pearson family because of my useless daughter!

Chapter 1340

Meanwhile, Roxanne knew nothing about the online controversy.

After breakfast, she took the kids to the beach.

At first, Archie and Benny were a little worried about the changes in public opinion on the internet, but they instantly forgot about it the moment they got into the car.

Roxanne had not taken them on a road trip in a while, so they looked forward to it. They were especially excited that she brought Estella along.

"Mommy, where are we going?" Estella kept calling Roxanne "Mommy" as if she wanted to make up for the years she missed.

While observing the change of scenery outside the car, Archie and Benny could not help but ask curiously, "Mommy, it seems you're driving out of town. You're not planning to sell us now that you have Essie, are you?"

Benny acted shocked and pleaded in a tender, babylike voice, "Mommy, please don't do this to us! We're good kids, and we'll help look after our little sister!"

Estella, too, nodded earnestly. "If you insist, sell me along with them as well!" However, not long after making that remark, she tilted her head, looking troubled. "But I love Mommy very much too. Mommy, don't sell us, please?"

Roxanne's heart melted as she was charmed by their innocent and endearing words.

"When did I say I was going to sell you? I'm taking all of you to the beach because the weather is lovely."

It was the same beach she had visited when she first found out she was pregnant.

A few days ago, Lucian had taken her there again. That visit brought back all of Roxanne's memories of the place.

When she was pregnant, she wanted to bring the little ones to the beach even though they were still in her womb.

As soon as the children heard they were going to the beach, their minds instantly flooded with memories of their last vacation.

Come to think of it, our last vacation was also our first family trip!

The last vacation held a special place in Archie's and Benny's hearts.

It became an unforgettable memory after they discovered Estella was their long-lost sister.

"Mommy, are you taking us to the beach we went to last time?" Benny asked.

Roxanne could not help but feel emotional as she recalled their last experience.

After the kindergarten activity ended, they had gone on a hot spring vacation where many things happened.

If it weren't for Sonya and Aubree, Roxanne and Lucian would have been together when they were enjoying themselves at the beach.

"Mommy?" the little ones urged impatiently, waiting for her answer.

Roxanne snapped back to her senses and smiled at the children. "No. This time, we're going to the beach I used to visit."

The little ones' eyes lit up.

Since Archie and Benny were rarely exposed to Roxanne's past while growing up, they were thrilled to learn that she was taking them to her favorite beach.

Roxanne could not help but grin when she looked in the rearview mirror and saw the happiness on their faces.

When she found out she was pregnant years ago, she once stood by the sea and imagined how she would watch her children play on the beach.

However, she quickly dismissed that thought, as she had decided to leave the country for good.

Roxanne had long given up hope of watching her children having fun by the beach.

Little did she know that one day her dream would come true.

Half an hour later, Roxanne's car slowly stopped in the distance from the beach.

As soon as the car stopped, the children got out of the vehicle and ran toward the beach like untamed horses.

Chapter 1341

"Be careful!"

Roxanne's cheeks tinged pink when she thought about the accident she had had the last time she was here.

The three children waved their hands at her without looking back and dashed toward the waves.

Roxanne quickened her pace and kept up with her children.

"Mommy, you're so pretty!"

Estella grabbed Roxanne's hand and snuggled up to her. Her little face lit up in awe.

There had been a firework event during their last vacation to the hot spring resort. As a result, the beach was overcrowded with people, and the children didn't get the chance to experience playing on the beach.

It was quiet all around at that moment, save for the sounds of waves crashing against the beach.

Despite their young age and high energy levels, the children couldn't help but want to quiet down and relax in the face of the calming waves.

Roxanne patted their heads and said, "There are not many people here, and it's really quiet. That's why I come here quite often." Then she took a glance at the surroundings.

Still worried, she held Estella's hand and said to Archie and Benny, "I'm going to bring you guys to a place."

The two boys snapped back to their senses and kept up with their mother obediently.

Roxanne took them on a long walk, and the children noticed that there was a lighthouse and a long deck when they arrived.

The majestic blue lighthouse towered over the long, white deck, set against the backdrop of crystal-clear, turquoise waters. The windmill nearby turned slowly and gracefully with the rhythm of the tides, creating a picturesque scene that seemed to belong in a fairy tale.

The kids were in awe.

This is totally different from the beach that we've been to!

"Go ahead and enjoy!"

Roxanne was elated to see her children liking the beach.

The three children finally snapped out of their awe at Roxanne's words.

Estella was the first to scamper toward the sea. "Archie, Benny, come on!"

Archie and Benny followed behind her. "Run, Essie! We're going to catch you!"

The three of them chased each other on the deck.

Roxanne leaned against the railing, watching her kids play happily. She couldn't help but take out her phone to photograph them.

She had missed out on a lot of Estella's growth.

She had never seen Estella babble as she learned to talk, nor had she ever seen her stumble as she learned to walk.

However, Roxanne was still grateful that she had shown up when Estella needed her the most.

She was grateful that she had reached out to help Estella and had not resisted the little girl's emotional dependence on her.

If Estella's autism had persisted until now, Roxanne would be overwhelmed with feelings of self-blame.

Naturally, Roxanne was more concerned about Estella. Even though the camera was aimed at the three children, Estella was in every single one of the photos that she had taken.

From now on, she vowed to never miss out on a single moment of Estella's life anymore.

Tired from running around, the three children went back to Roxanne when they noticed that she was still standing in the same spot, taking photos of them.

"Mommy, what are you looking at?"

The three of them huddled to her side and clutched a corner of her shirt. They tiptoed to get a glimpse of Roxanne's phone screen.

Roxanne smiled and crouched down to show them the photos that she had taken.

"There are so many photos of Essie!"

Benny puffed his cheeks in mock displeasure. "Mommy, are you favoring Essie now? It's so obvious!"

Roxanne was stumped.

She had only wanted to record their happy moments and didn't notice who she was photographing.

However, after skimming through the photos, she realized that there were indeed a lot of Estella's photos.

Chapter 1342

Roxanne was hit by a pang of guilt. "Sorry, I didn't realize that. I just—"

She had only subconsciously taken more photos of Estella because she was thinking about her.

Benny was only joking. He immediately explained when he saw that Roxanne had taken the joke seriously, "Mommy, I was just kidding! Don't take it to heart..."

Then, the boy planted a kiss on Roxanne's cheek and said sweetly, "We know you love us! We've just reunited with Essie, and we know you want to make it up to her because we've lost so much time with her. That's why you favor her a little. We understand that. Besides, Archie and I will love Essie more too!"

Estella's eyes crinkled into a smile. "I will love Mommy and you guys more too!"

Roxanne felt as if a heavy weight had been lifted off her chest after hearing Benny. However, she still couldn't help feeling guilty.

Truth be told, after being separated from Estella for so long and finally having her back by her side, Roxanne couldn't deceive herself into believing that she could treat all the children equally. She knew that, at least for now, she would favor Estella more.

"Mommy, we're a bit tired. We want to go sit on the beach for a while," Archie said.

He knew Roxanne was still feeling guilty. He thought it was best to give her some alone time to think things through.

Roxanne thought the same.

She wanted to cool off a little and take some time to think about how she should treat her three children. Just when she was considering how to start, Archie's voice rang out.

Roxanne flashed a grateful smile at the considerate boy. "Go on, but you guys can't go too far. Be sure to keep a distance from the sea and wear your watch properly."

Archie nodded and brought his siblings back to the beach.

"It's all my fault. I've made Mommy upset," Benny muttered apologetically. Then, he turned to look at Estella. "What I said earlier was just a joke. I really, really like you!"

Benny was afraid that Estella might take it seriously as well.

Estella hurriedly nodded. She knew Benny was just joking.

After all, Archie and Benny had always taken good care of her ever since they knew her.

Estella was apt at discerning whether someone was being sincere.

Benny heaved a sigh of relief when he saw Estella nodding. Then, he turned to Archie and said in a small voice, "I wish Daddy was here."

He can definitely make Mommy feel better.

With that thought in mind, Benny secretly sent their location to Lucian.

Daddy will come to find us if I send him the location, right? Mommy will feel so much better with Daddy around.

Benny felt better afterward.

“Um, why did Mommy refuse Daddy’s proposal?” Estella mumbled.

Despite knowing that she had probably taken Benny’s words the wrong way, Estella couldn’t help but feel dejected.

I enjoy both Mommy’s and Daddy’s love, but Archie and Benny receive only Mommy’s love. Aren’t they receiving less than me, then? If Mommy and Daddy get together, Daddy will surely treat Archie and Benny like his own children.

Benny stole a glance at Archie after hearing Estella.

We can’t tell her that Mommy refused Daddy because of Grandma, can we?

It didn’t matter if they knew about it or not since they couldn’t actually do anything substantial about it.

However, Archie and Benny knew that Estella would definitely confront Sonya if she knew about it.

The boys were afraid that they might accidentally trouble Roxanne again.

Chapter 1343

“Because...” Archie and Benny couldn’t just ignore their sister’s pleading look.

In the end, Benny made up a reason. “Maybe it’s because Mommy wants to test Mr. Farwell further! After all, they didn’t seem happy when they separated back then.”

Estella furrowed her eyebrows, perplexed. I know I don’t know about Daddy and Mommy’s matters as much as they do, but I think that’s the case based on what Daddy said when he proposed to Mommy. What happened when they initially separated? Why did Mommy abandon me?

When Benny saw that his answer removed the smile on his sister’s face after he ruined his mother’s mood, he was in full panic mode. “I-It’s going to be fine! As long as Mr. Farwell performs well, Mommy will forgive him eventually and accept his proposal!”

Still, Estella remained worried. “But what if Daddy feels he has lost all hope after Mommy rejects him this time? What do we do, then?”

I helped Daddy chase after Mommy, so I know he’ll overthink things. He would get angry and stop pursuing Mommy if she had a tiny issue. The more Estella thought about the times when her father got jealous, the more concerned she was. In the past, I would advise Daddy. But now, he doesn’t have anyone like that! If I had known this would happen, I would’ve stayed by his side obediently...

Her words threw Benny's mind into further chaos. "I don't think so?"

Daddy's probably not that fragile! He glanced at his phone watch. I still haven't received any news. Did Daddy really give up? But he taught the bad lady a lesson this morning!

"Why not?" Archie was similarly dumbstruck by Benny's words. "Mr. Farwell's personality is exactly the same as yours, which is to say he always gets very emotional. Who knows what he's thinking right now?"

That instantly shifted Benny's attention. "There's no way I'm similar to Mr. Farwell when I'm so cute and lively! You're the one who resembles Mr. Farwell! You always have that lack of expression on your face, just like him! I resemble Mommy the most!"

Estella was also attracted by her brother's conversation. She uttered innocently, "I should be the one who resembles Mommy the most!" Mommy's a girl, and I'm a girl too! Besides, Mommy is really pretty, so when I grow up, I'll be as pretty as her, too!

Her participation in the conversation stunned the boys for a moment.

"I don't care! I don't want to resemble Mr. Farwell!" Benny turned away and left with a pout.

Am I really that similar to Daddy? Okay, maybe we look a little alike. We're both handsome, after all. However, our personalities are completely different! Daddy's not talkative and he's always expressionless, unlike me, who's lively, cute, smart, and has a sharp tongue! Everyone loves me.

"Don't you like Mr. Farwell the most—" Archie was going to joke about his brother when he saw the latter walking toward the sea.

"Come back, Benny!" he yelled and promptly chased after him.

Benny was still so deep in his thoughts that he couldn't hear Archie and kept marching forward. The loud waves didn't help either.

Chapter 1344

Upon seeing the scene before her, Estella knew she couldn't help and went to call for her mother instead.

When Roxanne returned to her senses and turned to the sea, she saw the boys approaching the ocean.

She saw Benny frowning while looking as though he had lost his soul.

"Archie! Benny!" Furrowing her eyebrows, she chased after them.

She wouldn't have panicked if they were in a different place because the boys knew how to swim.

However, she had tripped there two days ago, so she knew there were rocks hiding in the water. She couldn't help but worry.

Estella followed behind her.

Right then, a huge wave rushed straight toward the boys. Roxanne felt her heart tighten. She increased her pace and grabbed the boys in time.

The three of them were drenched in seawater, but not Estella because she was too far behind.

When Benny snapped back to reality, he lowered his head guiltily to avoid looking at Roxanne.

Roxanne tossed the boys to the beach.

In one smooth motion, Benny sat on the ground and flashed a pleasing smile at his mother.

Those not in the know would think they were just playing around.

Lowering his head, Archie apologized, "I'm sorry for not keeping a close eye on Benny, Mommy."

Roxanne glanced at the sensible Archie before turning to Benny, who was still putting on a pitiful act. Fury burned in her heart, but she couldn't bring herself to get angry. "Didn't I tell you two to stay away from the sea?" Then she sighed resignedly. "This is just great. I didn't bring any clothes with me." I thought we were just going to stand on the beach deck. Getting drenched certainly wasn't something I expected to happen. If my clothes aren't wet right now, I could've bought them new clothes from nearby shops. Now, I can't even do that.

Just as Roxanne was wondering what to do, Estella called out, "Daddy!"

Roxanne assumed the girl wanted her to ask Lucian for help, so she said, "Daddy still needs to work. He's busy."

Besides, she didn't want him to know she had secretly brought the children to the beach so soon after he brought her there.

"Daddy!" Abruptly, Estella sprinted past her.

Only then did Roxanne realize Lucian had arrived.

The boys raised their heads and stared at the man.

After patting Estella's head, he carried her in his arm, approached Roxanne, and asked resentfully, "Why did you only bring the children here?"

Roxanne couldn't help but feel guilty as she met his eyes. "I thought you were busy working today..." It's also because I need time to calm down after I rejected his proposal last night.

However, he didn't give her a chance to breathe. "As busy as I may be, I still have time to spend with you all." Then he examined her and the boys because they were wet before speaking meaningfully. "Besides, I can't help but worry when you bring the children to the beach."

Roxanne blushed as she recalled the kiss they had after she fell that day.

"Mommy's very good at swimming!" Benny defended. She even went diving when we went on vacation last time!

Just as he ended his sentence, he heard his father chuckle for no apparent reason.

Meanwhile, Roxanne's face was getting even redder.

When the children saw how their parents were acting, they knew for sure something had happened and that it very likely involved their father bullying their mother.

Chapter 1345

"Daddy, why are you here?" Estella glanced at her father curiously.

We were talking about Daddy a few moments earlier, and I'm surprised to see him arrive so quickly. I thought he was angry.

Her words served as a reminder to Roxanne.

Suppressing her embarrassment, she gave Archie and Benny a stern, questioning look, as if to inquire which one of them had sent Lucian a text message.

It couldn't be Essie, so it must be either of the boys!

"It wasn't us!" Benny felt a chill go down his spine and immediately drew on his inborn acting skills to put on an innocent look. "If you don't believe us, ask Mr. Farwell!"

With that, he turned to look at Lucian.

Lucian met his eyes and nodded readily. "I came here by myself."

Roxanne frowned, her eyes filled with suspicion.

It's worrying to consider what might happen once they discover their familial connection, given that they're already helping each other without any knowledge of their relationship.

Knowing Roxanne was suspecting him, Benny shot her an innocent smile and changed the topic. "Mommy, I'm freezing!"

Roxanne couldn't bring herself to yell at them, so she turned to look at Lucian.

He was the only one who could head out to buy some clothes for the kids.

Before she could state her request, Lucian broke the silence. "I have some clothes in the car that you can change into. You can change your clothes in the car."

Roxanne grew suspicious again.

How could it be so coincidental?

As though he had seen through her, Lucian arched a brow and added, "Don't forget that I brought you here first after you returned to the country. For the past six years, this was my territory. Is there something wrong with me coming to my territory?"

Roxanne was rendered speechless.

Since he had spelled things out so clearly, Roxanne knew she couldn't probe further as she did not want to come across as overly calculative.

"Perhaps this is fate," Lucian remarked with a smile. He then pushed Archie's and Benny's shoulders gently. "Come, let's go change your clothes."

The boys nodded obediently and padded to his car with him.

"Mr. Farwell, why are you here?" Benny asked in surprise as he changed his clothes.

They were thoroughly soaked, and it was quite troublesome for them to switch out of their wet garments into something dry and comfortable.

Lucian only remembered to bring them a change of clothes but forgot to buy some towels to dry them off.

He glanced around in his car and retrieved his suit jacket placed in the backseat to wipe the boys dry.

The material was expensive and bad at absorbing water, but it was better than nothing.

Lucian was amused to hear Benny's question. "You were the one who sent me your location, no?"

Benny flashed a guilty smile. "You didn't answer me, so I thought..."

I thought he's mad at Mommy!

Lucian could guess his mind. "You thought I'm mad at your mommy because she rejected me?"

Benny chuckled sheepishly.

Archie, however, remained unfazed. "Are you upset?"

Lucian had no idea he'd be this straightforward. It took him a few seconds before he regained his composure to reply, "No. Our past was marred by a misunderstanding that was entirely my fault. All I want now is to try to win her heart back, nothing more." A gentle smile nudged his lips as he gazed at the boys. "You'll help me, right?"

Benny bobbed his head eagerly. He then proceeded to explain why Roxanne was in a foul mood earlier.

"It was my fault for making her angry," he admitted.

Lucian finally understood why Benny had summoned him. He was pleased to be of help.

"All right, I'll handle this, so don't worry. I'll make sure to cheer her up."

Chapter 1346

Roxenne and Estelle waited at the beech for some time before Lucien and the boys climbed out of the car.

The sight of the boys wearing rainbow-colored T-shirts surprised Roxenne to no end.

Lucien preferred wearing plain-colored clothes, so she had assumed he'd buy monochrome clothes without any pattern for the boys.

She had no idea he'd buy them such vibrant-looking clothes.

I wonder when he bought these clothes. They seem to fit the boys well.

"When did you buy the clothes?" Roxenne asked when they came over to join her.

Recalling Benny's earlier comment that she was in a foul mood, Lucien regarded her silently for a moment before responding, "I actually bought them on my way here. I've been planning to bring you here one day, and I thought it best to be prepared, and it seems I made the right choice as they came in handy."

His words merely served to fuel Roxenne's suspicion.

Never mind if Lucien showed up suddenly. I can't believe he even prepared clothes for them.

She looked down and observed Archie's and Benny's reactions.

The boys were grinning adoringly. "Mommy, Mr. Ferwell bought clothes for you as well. You should go get changed!"

When they were changing their clothes, they suddenly noticed a stunning dress tucked away in the rear of the car. They were certain that Lucien had purchased it as a surprise for Roxenne.

Roxenne was stunned to hear that.

Did he buy clothes for me as well?

She gave Lucien a questioning look.

Lucien appeared to be a bit dismayed, as the boys had ruined his surprise, but he still gave a brief nod. "Go get changed. You don't want to catch a cold."

Roxenne remained hesitant.

Lucien arched his brow teasingly. "Don't worry. I won't peek at you. You can take your time while I bring the kids to play over there."

Without waiting for her reply, he gathered the kids and led them away.

The kids wanted Roxenne to get changed as soon as possible, so they followed him obediently.

Roxenne hesitated as she stared at their backs. A few seconds later, she made up her mind and walked to the car.

As Benny said, there was an ocean blue spaghetti strap dress at the rear of the car. The bodice of the dress was slightly ruffled, and the waist was snugly cinched.

After giving birth to Archie and Benny, she rarely had the chance to wear such a casual outfit.

However, she had to admit that the dress was her style.

Six years ago, when she was still married to Lucien, she would often come to the beach dressed in similar dresses.

I can't believe Lucien knows the style I like. It looks like he has put in some effort to get to know me.

Under his careful and considerate attention, Roxanne felt her heart beginning to mend from the anguish of their divorce.

She retrieved the dress and was about to remove her own clothes when she suddenly remembered that her underwear was drenched, too.

She glanced at the expensive dress in her hands.

If the dress comes into contact with water, it will be irreparably ruined.

Right then, her phone, which she placed on the seat, lit up.

Roxanne glanced at it and realized it was a text from Lucien.

It read: There's underwear in the box in the trunk. I bought the same brand you used to buy, but I'm not sure if you'll like it.

Roxanne's cheeks turned pink after she read the text.

Did Lucien seriously buy me underwear? Am I dreaming?

Roxanne had never imagined that Lucien would do such a thing for her six years ago, let alone after he proposed to her.

Roxanne and Estella waited at the beach for some time before Lucian and the boys climbed out of the car.

The sight of the boys wearing rainbow-colored T-shirts surprised Roxanne to no end.

Lucian preferred wearing plain-colored clothes, so she had assumed he'd buy monochrome clothes without any pattern for the boys.

She had no idea he'd buy them such vibrant-looking clothes.

I wonder when he bought these clothes. They seem to fit the boys well.

"When did you buy the clothes?" Roxanne asked when they came over to join her.

Recalling Benny's earlier comment that she was in a foul mood, Lucian regarded her silently for a moment before responding, "I actually bought them on my way here. I've been planning to bring you here one day, and I thought it best to be prepared, and it seems I made the right choice as they came in handy."

His words merely served to fuel Roxanne's suspicion.

Never mind if Lucian showed up suddenly. I can't believe he even prepared clothes for them.

She looked down and observed Archie's and Benny's reactions.

The boys were grinning adorably. "Mommy, Mr. Farwell bought clothes for you as well. You should go get changed!"

When they were changing their clothes, they suddenly noticed a stunning dress tucked away in the rear of the car. They were certain that Lucian had purchased it as a surprise for Roxanne.

Roxanne was stunned to hear that.

Did he buy clothes for me as well?

She gave Lucian a questioning look.

Lucian appeared to be a bit dismayed, as the boys had ruined his surprise, but he still gave a brief nod. "Go get changed. You don't want to catch a cold."

Roxanne remained hesitant.

Lucian arched his brow teasingly. "Don't worry. I won't peek at you. You can take your time while I bring the kids to play over there."

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I can't believe Lucian knows the style I like. It looks like he has put in some effort to get to know me.

Under his careful and considerate attention, Roxanne felt her heart beginning to mend from the anguish of their divorce.

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If the dress comes into contact with water, it will be irreparably ruined.

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Roxanne's cheeks turned pink after she read the text.

Did Lucian seriously buy me underwear? Am I dreaming?

Roxanne had never imagined that Lucian would do such a thing for her six years ago, let alone after he proposed to her.

Chapter 1347

Roxanne sprawled on the backseat and poked her head into the trunk.

There was an exquisite black box right in the middle of the trunk which belonged to the underwear brand she used to wear.

This brand was only available locally and sold in offline stores, so Roxanne couldn't buy it when she was overseas.

After her return, she didn't have time to head to the store in person to buy new underwear.

She couldn't help but grow curious when she imagined Lucian shopping in the store with his expressionless face.

I can barely imagine it!

Roxanne heaved a sigh of relief when she saw the box in the trunk.

Fortunately, he didn't put the box in the backseat. If the boys were to see the box, I couldn't imagine how he'd explain it to them.

Roxanne couldn't face the boys if Lucian were to tell them the contents of the box directly.

She hesitated briefly before retrieving the box.

Despite feeling shy, she had to wear it, as Lucian had paid for it, and she didn't want to stain the new dress.

Roxanne's cheeks turned crimson when she tried on the new bra.

She attempted to hook the bra from the first row to the last row, but it was a struggle. Even when she finally succeeded, the bra still felt too tight.

Never in Roxanne's wildest dreams did she expect Lucian to buy the same brand of underwear she had liked six years ago and the same size she had worn back then at that.

After she gave birth, her bosom had increased in size, making her barely able to fit into her old size.

Alas, she had no choice but to make do with it.

Roxanne hastily put on the dress and folded the clothes she and the kids had changed out of. After the embarrassment in her heart faded away, she opened the car door and hopped out.

"Mommy, you're so pretty!"

The kids were splashing around in the sea under Lucian's supervision.

Their eyes lit up when they saw Roxanne clad in the dress.

Roxanne's skin was as pale as milk, but the ocean-blue dress accentuated her complexion and made her radiate.

Her long hair flowed down her back like a cascade of silk. The ocean breeze blew, causing her dress and hair to sway in the air.

Roxanne's gentle smile was complemented by the way the dress hugged her curves.

Lucian's gaze turned dark as he regarded her silently.

I can't believe she looks seductive in this dress! Six years ago, she often came to the beach dressed like this. Many people must've seen her, but I only noticed how gorgeous she looks today!

"Mr. Farwell!" Wanting to make up for his mistake, Benny decided to create an opportunity for them. "You picked a suitable dress for Mommy!"

Lucian snapped back to his senses and shot Benny a half-smile. His gaze was still fixed on Roxanne.

Benny's words reignited the embarrassment that Roxanne had tried hard to suppress earlier.

Sensing Lucian's gaze on her, Roxanne blinked twice and averted her gaze shyly. "Thanks. This dress must be expensive. How much is it? I'll transfer the money to you later," she said softly.

Instead of answering her question, Lucian asked, "Do you like it?"

Roxanne sighed. "It's been a while since I last wore a dress."

She stretched out her hand, trying to comb her hair, which had been ruffled by the cold breeze, and slowly turned her head to look at the sea. She felt as if she had traveled back in time to six years ago.

However, she wasn't alone now, as Lucian and the kids were with her.

Chapter 1348

Lucian watched as she gazed at the sea silently. His eyes grew dark as guilt rose in his heart.

She must've stood here alone six years ago. What could she be thinking of? Was she blaming me?

He slowly approached her, his eyes revealing the guilt and affection that had been building up inside of him for the past six years.

Roxanne turned over her shoulder to realize that there was someone standing beside her. She was suddenly transported back in time, and the man's presence filled the void that had been left in her life.

"A penny for your thoughts." Lucian suddenly spoke when he noticed the change in her expression.

Roxanne snapped out of her reverie and flashed a nonchalant smile. "It's nothing. The ocean looks somewhat different today, that's all."

That would explain why she felt different when she had been here before.

Lucian looked at her silently before suddenly reaching out to pull her into his arms.

Behind him, the children were taken aback.

They quickly recalled how they had interrupted the adults' hug previously and promptly covered their eyes with their hands, but their lips curled into smiles nonetheless.

Benny couldn't stop himself from peeking through the gaps of his fingers.

He saw Roxanne regaining her composure several seconds later and tried to push Lucian away. "The kids are here. Stop it."

Lucian buried his head in the nape of her neck and mumbled, "They won't peek."

Roxanne furrowed her brows at his answer. She was about to protest when the kids' adorable voices rang out.

"Mommy, we didn't see anything!"

She slowly scanned the row of children and saw that they had all covered their eyes with their hands. They were standing still with huge smiles on their faces.

They couldn't see anything now but had seen everything a while ago.

"They didn't see a thing," Lucian assured her, feigning nonchalance and tightening his grip around her waist.

With no other choice, Roxanne relaxed and allowed him to hug her. "What is it? Hurry, spill. The children are still waiting for us."

Lucian was overwhelmed with a mix of emotions.

He had no idea why he had reached out to hug her earlier.

Perhaps it was because he felt guilty, or perhaps he just couldn't help himself.

After a long moment of silence, Lucian said in a hoarse voice, "Can you promise me you'll only wear this kind of dress for me?"

Lucian couldn't help but feel captivated by Roxanne's alluring appearance in the ocean-blue dress. He couldn't shake off the guilt he felt for what happened six years ago and wanted to make it up to her in any way he could.

Roxanne was moved as she naturally understood the underlying meaning of his words.

However, she could barely believe her ears.

"I'll keep you company when you want to come to the beach. You won't be alone anymore."

Lucian's huge palm brushed across her waist.

Roxanne felt a tickling sensation and immediately jolted back to her senses. Finally, she dared to believe that it was true.

Her hands balled into fists as she gave a conflicted nod.

Having received her answer, Lucian loosened his grip on her waist.

Roxanne thought he was finally going to let her go, but she had no idea he'd lean down to give her a kiss.

Seeing that, Roxanne quickly glanced at the kids and avoided Lucian's kiss without hesitation.

Lucian seemed displeased that he didn't manage to kiss her.

Roxanne cleared her throat awkwardly. "All right, since you're here, let's have fun together with the kids at the beach."

Chapter 1349

Lucian could tell Roxanne only had the children's best interests at heart, so he did not force her. "Let's go."

The children lowered their arms slowly upon hearing his voice and studied Roxanne with surreptitious smiles.

Although they had covered their eyes earlier, their ears had remained open, and they had heard it all.

Mommy promised to wear a dress like this only for Daddy. Does that mean Mommy has him in her heart? No, Mommy has always been thinking of Daddy. She was only forced to reject his proposal because of Grandma.

Archie's and Benny's smiles faded a little when they thought of that.

A second later, they were swept off their feet into their father's embrace.

The boys froze in surprise before catching sight of the ocean in the distance, and their faces lit up once more.

With Roxanne leading Estella by the hand, the five of them sauntered along the beach.

Tired of being carried too long, the boys became so restless and bored that they struggled to free themselves from Lucian's arms.

Accommodating their wishes, Lucian placed them on the beach, and the children chased each other into the distance.

Feeling a little worried, Roxanne strode after them.

Lucian jogged along, but at the thought of something, he slowed to a stroll in their wake.

A twinkle appeared in Lucian's eyes as he watched Roxanne play with the children. He fished out his phone and took some photos of them.

Remembering how much she enjoyed taking pictures of the children the last time they went on vacation, he felt a responsibility to document the children's growth.

Although she had never mentioned it, Lucian knew she would love to be in the children's lives.

However, there was never anybody else to take her place behind the camera, which resulted in her absence in the photographs.

Roxanne had barely spent any time with the children before she excused herself.

As much as she wanted to continue playing with them, the activity caused her to bend over, drawing her already uncomfortable undergarments tighter around her skin.

She was worried that the delicates would wear themselves out if she kept going.

Blushing profusely, she removed herself from the children's company with a shifty smile and said, "I'm a little tired. You guys play among yourselves."

To her relief, the children did not ask any questions.

They wanted their parents to spend some alone time together.

“What’s wrong? Are you unwell?”

Lucian put aside his phone at her approach, alarmed by her peculiar expression.

His gaze did not so much as leave her figure when he was taking photographs earlier, and he noticed she would make an odd gesture now and then. After bending over, she would straighten up almost instinctively. It happened enough times to rouse his suspicion.

I wonder if she’s feeling unwell.

Roxanne’s cheeks turned even redder. “I’m fine…”

I can’t tell Lucian he bought me undersized underwear!

Just the thought of it made Roxanne grimace with embarrassment.

Frowning with worry, Lucian touched her forehead under the assumption of her being feverish but did not detect anything unusual.

“You’re not having a fever. What could it be?”

Roxanne bit her lip, too embarrassed to speak.

Lucian was really worried. “Let’s call it a day. We’ll stop by the hospital for a check-up.”

Chapter 1350

At those words, Roxanne looked at the children in the distance who were having the time of their lives.

I wonder if it’s the feeling of security Lucian brings that makes the children appear much happier than they used to be.

She could not bear to spoil their mood, seeing as the children did not have many outings.

Roxanne steeled herself to reject Lucian’s suggestion. “I’m not unwell. My clothes just aren’t the best fit to get physical in.”

Lucian merely fixed her with a penetrating gaze. “Where? Are they too loose?”

Seizing the opportunity, Roxanne nodded.

His voice, carrying hints of displeasure, sounded a moment later. "It shouldn't preclude you from playing with the children if it is loose fitting. I felt it when I hugged you earlier, and it fits you just fine."

Roxanne's cheeks grew redder than ever. She glared helplessly up at him.

My words could not be clearer, yet he still doubts me. Does he want me to spell it out?

Noticing the fury in the woman's gaze, Lucian gave her an inscrutable smile and leaned in close to her.

Before she could retreat, he was already in front of her. "Did I buy the undergarments in the wrong size?" he asked softly, sweeping his gaze over her bust.

Instinctively, Roxanne covered them with her hands.

His low chuckle sounded again.

"I bought this according to an order you placed six years ago, but I'd forgotten you bore children. My mistake."

Roxanne felt her ears scorch. She turned her head silently away from his hot breath at her ear.

Lucian's voice still found its mark. "I can't take all the blame. After all, you never gave me a chance to take the measurements. I would remember it after measuring it once, and I won't buy the wrong size again."

Roxanne was outraged by his shameless words.

After six years apart, he has become more shameless. This isn't the Lucian I know.

Her heartbeat quickened in her consternation. She was so nervous that she dared not examine Lucian's expression.

To her relief, he did not press her.

Seeing her panic, he averted his gaze with a laugh and reached for his phone from his pocket. "Since you're restricted from running around, do you want to take a look at the pictures I took?"

Like a startled rabbit, Roxanne was looking around for a place to hide in embarrassment. As a result, she did not hear what he said.

Lucian frowned slightly but remained patient with her. "The kids enjoy having you around."

The resolve in Roxanne's gaze wavered at the mention of the children.

"Essie looks like you when she smiles. Here."

Lucian scrolled through the photographs, making brief remarks about each while observing Roxanne's expression.

At every mention of the children, her gaze would shift over slightly.

"Let me see."

At last, Roxanne gave in to the temptation of seeing the photograph where Estella's smile resembled hers and leaned closer to Lucian.

Basking in the satisfaction of gaining her trust, Lucian did not complicate matters for her any further and placed the phone in her hand.

Roxanne took it eagerly, fixing her eyes on the group photo with the children, and she felt a surge of gratitude.

Chapter 1351

It was her first photograph with the three children.

More importantly, it was after learning that Estella was the baby whom she had thought died prematurely.

"Thank you," she said gratefully.

Looking at her trembling hands, Lucian pulled her into his arms. "If you want to thank me, then reconsider my proposal. I was lying to you. I can't wait much longer. Six years is long enough. I don't want to keep waiting."

Roxanne lowered her head without answering. Her eyes brimmed with guilt.

Having detected something in her silence, Lucian released her with a sigh and gave her a kind smile. "It's all right. I can wait a little longer. Besides, I'm sure you wouldn't bear to keep me waiting too long."

Roxanne looked away, not knowing what to say.

Meanwhile, having tired themselves out, the children came running over to the adults.

"Mommy, what were you looking at earlier?"

Benny could tell that something was wrong between their parents, so he hurriedly tried to change the subject. Clutching Roxanne's arm, he asked to see the phone in her hand.

Heaving a sigh of relief, she crouched beside him to show him the photographs.

Initially only intending to help his father out of the predicament, Benny was pleasantly surprised to learn how nice the photographs his father had taken looked and was momentarily mesmerized.

"Wow, Mommy! You and Essie look so much alike when you smile!" He found the photograph of his mother and sister smiling. "We've never noticed this!"

Having also just seen that photograph, Roxanne felt emotional.

Estella leaned closer curiously to Benny and gazed at the photograph.

A moment later, she arrived at a verdict. "Mommy is pretty!"

Benny's cheeks puffed with pride. "Of course. Mr. Farwell took it! He has never taken a bad picture of Mommy!" He then turned around and pretended to comfort his sister. "You are still young. When you grow up, you will be as pretty as Mommy!"

Estella turned to Roxanne beside her at those words. At the thought of how beautiful she would be in a few years, she smiled so broadly that her eyes turned to slits.

Roxanne caressed the children's heads as she said to Lucian, "The children must be hungry. Let's call it a day and find someplace to eat."

Then, she turned and sought the children's opinion.

Starving, the children nodded eagerly at the question.

Lucian announced promptly, "I've booked a restaurant. Let's go."

The family got into the car.

The three children squeezed behind while Roxanne sat in the passenger seat.

"What is this?"

The children noticed the box which contained the undergarments and gazed curiously at the adults.

With a jolt, Roxanne remembered that she had forgotten to put the box back after changing her underwear.

Confronted by the children's questions, she was at a nervous loss for words.

"It's a box for clothes. Toss it into the trunk for me, will you?" Lucian's nonchalant voice sounded beside her.

The children obliged and tossed the box to the trunk.

Roxanne heaved a massive sigh of relief. She gazed up at the man beside her with the intention of thanking him.

Instead, she met his mischievous gaze.

Roxanne froze when their eyes met and flushed crimson.

"Thank you," she mumbled her gratitude and turned away, trying hard to calm her pounding heart.

Chapter 1352

As the restaurant in which Lucian had made reservations was not far from the beach, it took less than twenty minutes for the family to arrive.

Roxanne helped the children out of the car, and Lucian went off in search of a parking spot.

"Is that Roxanne? I can't believe she dares to show herself."

An unfamiliar voice rang out.

Roxanne turned in the direction of the remark in confusion.

Two figures who had emerged from the restaurant were openly pointing and casting strange looks at the three children beside her.

"Those two are her kids, aren't they? And the little girl beside them is the heiress of the Farwell family?"

The pair gossiped as they walked, pretending she did not exist. "How trusting of Mr. Farwell to leave his kid in her care."

Roxanne heard their words clearly, and a strange sense of unease surfaced within her.

For some reason, she noticed how everybody they passed by was giving them the same strange look.

Hearing those words as well, Archie and Benny noticed the manner in which the strangers looked at them.

Turning to his brother in a panic, Benny feared that the rumor mill on the internet was causing them trouble again.

Otherwise, why would these people look at us like that?

Archie's expression grew taut, like a wary little fox. With several noiseless steps forward, he stood before Roxanne.

Upon his arrival, Lucian noticed the hostile and wary looks on the four of them.

"What's going on?" he asked with a frown.

Roxanne became inexplicably calm at his arrival and shook her head. "Nothing. Let's head inside."

I am likely overthinking. After all, these people don't know me. There's no reason for them to hate me.

The pair led the children into the restaurant.

Perhaps because of Lucian's presence, the ones who had given them strange looks earlier averted their gazes.

Roxanne heaved a secret sigh of relief.

To divert his attention, she brought up the problem with Estella's accommodations.

"Can Essie stay with me for another two days?"

Estella turned her large, unblinking eyes to her father. "I would like to stay with Mommy, Daddy!"

Lucian caressed the child's head. "Sure, but you must listen to Mommy and not give her any trouble."

Estella nodded obediently in response, beaming.

Roxanne put on a disapproving face. "It's not the same as it used to be. Essie is my daughter. She can never trouble me."

Besides, I have never seen the child as being troublesome.

Aware of the error in his words, he gave an apologetic smile. "My mistake."

Initially only intending to make one grumbling remark, Roxanne became surprised at the speed with which he admitted his mistake and instinctively laughed alongside him.

His eyes, however, darkened.

From the moment they sat down, Lucian had sensed the other patrons occasionally looking at them with what seemed to him to be disgust in their eyes.

Whipping around suddenly, he caught the neighboring patrons before they could retract their gazes.

The other customer shuddered when their eyes met, but it was too late to look away.

“What are you looking at?”

Scowling, Lucian rose to stand before the man at the neighboring table, who waved his hand guiltily. “Nothing! I wasn’t looking at anything. I know nothing!”

Chapter 1353

Lucian narrowed his eyes dangerously as he scanned the inside of the restaurant.

When the others saw Lucian had gone looking for the man to settle the scores, they retracted their gazes guiltily.

Meanwhile, the man was so scared he did not dare breathe loudly in front of Lucian.

Truth was, the man had no ill intentions.

He had only read the discussion on the internet and gotten curious about their relationship.

In fact, when the man saw Roxanne bringing along two sons of unknown origins, he figured Lucian would have some grudge against her.

To the man’s astonishment, Lucian seemed to be truly in love with Roxanne.

Moreover, Roxanne did not look like a crafty person as described in the rumors.

Lucian suddenly thought of something and warned the man, “I don’t care what you think, but you’d better keep your eyes to yourself and not interrupt our meal.” After that, he instructed the waiter to move them to a different private room.

“What happened?”

Uneasiness swirled within Roxanne’s heart.

Flashing an assuring smile, Lucian said, "Nothing. Carry on with your meal. I need to make a call."

With that, he exited the private room and called Cayden.

The call was connected instantly. "Mr. Farwell."

Lucian's expression was stern, and he exuded a gloomy aura. "How's the public opinion on the internet now?"

Cayden sounded rather guilty. "The public opinion is one-sided, and they're not in Mrs. Farwell's favor. I've already assigned someone to handle it and trace the source."

The situation had stabilized earlier, but for some unknown reason, negative comments began to appear.

Cayden had dealt with it in a panic. He did not dare to call Lucian, for he knew the latter was with Roxanne.

However, he never expected Lucian to make the call instead.

Lucian's expression grew darker. "How long has it been? Why didn't you tell me about it sooner?"

Cayden lowered his head, not daring to answer.

In the meantime, Roxanne, too, received a call from Linda in the private room.

Linda had originally been abroad, but ever since something happened to Colby, Roxanne had told her to return because she feared she could not handle all the work on her own.

They had been keeping in touch recently because of the research institute.

Seeing Linda calling her out of the blue, Roxanne naturally thought it was related to the research institute, so she answered it without hesitation.

"Dr. Jarvis, have you offended anyone?"

Linda's words puzzled Roxanne. "Did something happen?"

Linda briefly recounted the discussion on the internet and summarized by saying, "I think they're targeting you on purpose. Someone's slandering you behind your back."

Roxanne's eyes dimmed when she learned about what the internet was saying about her.

She could roughly guess who the person behind all of it was.

Apart from Aubree, no one would call Roxanne a homewrecker.

Linda continued, "At first, I thought I shouldn't get involved since this is your private matter, but this is affecting the research institute's reputation. We know it's someone slandering you, but the others don't. Many collaborators have requested to cancel the contract because of this. They're afraid your reputation might collapse and affect them."

Roxanne felt her heart sink when she heard that. "I got it. Indeed, this one's caused by my private matters. Negotiate with them about the cancellation of the contract. I'll do my best to deal with the matters on my end."

Linda hummed in agreement.

Chapter 1354

By the time Lucian hung up and returned to the private room, he saw Roxanne lowering her head and reading something on her phone.

The scowl on her face made him frown. He figured she was reading the contents of the discussion.

"You know about it already?" Lucian asked as he walked over to sit beside her.

Roxanne did not look up. She kept her eyes fixed on the post that was constantly updating with insulting comments targeted at her.

There were also comments that speculated the background of Archie and Benny.

Roxanne could bear the insults hurled at her. However, she could not help but feel bad when her children were dragged into the mess as well.

"Mommy, what's wrong?"

Estella was oblivious to the discussions online. She inched over to show her concern.

It was then that Roxanne snapped back to her senses. Putting away her phone hastily, she flashed Estella a smile as if nothing happened. "It's nothing. Eat up."

With that, she cast Archie and Benny an apologetic glance.

The boys had guessed there were changes to the discussions on the internet.

They surmised the reason Roxanne was giving them that look was that they had been dragged into the discussion as well.

Not wanting to make Roxanne worry, they feigned ignorance and smiled meekly.

At the same time, Benny secretly clenched his fists.

That evil woman must've done something again. I'll teach her a lesson once I get back to my laptop.

"I'm sorry. It's my fault for not dealing with it properly." Lucian gazed into the woman's eyes with worry.

Before entering the private room, he had read the discussions online, which were filled with insulting and degrading comments toward Roxanne.

Immediately, he knew she would be upset if she read them.

Glancing at the children, Roxanne whispered to Lucian, "Let's talk after the meal."

She did not want the children to learn of the matter.

Understanding her intention, Lucian nodded with a heavy heart and said nothing else.

Thankfully, they had a peaceful meal after changing private rooms.

Archie and Benny were worried about the discussion that they lost the mood to fool around. They simply ate their food in silence.

The meal was a gloomy one.

Once they finished the food, Lucian drove them straight to Roxanne's house.

Roxanne stayed downstairs with Lucian after telling the children to go upstairs first.

"I'm sorry I didn't deal with this properly. I didn't expect Aubree to pull such a move after that lesson."

Lucian's heart was filled with fury.

He hated himself for not dealing with Aubree using his methods.

Lowering her head, Roxanne uttered, "I'm not bothered about what they're saying about me. This isn't the first time, anyway. I just hope that Archie and Benny won't get dragged into this mess. They have nothing to do with this."

Lucian felt a twinge in his heart. "I know. I'll settle this as quickly as possible."

When he finished his sentence, he gave her a conflicted look and asked cautiously, "It's been so long. Can you tell me who Archie and Benny's father is already?"

Every time he pictured Roxanne with another man, he could not help but feel mad, not to mention she had children with another man.

Regardless, all he wanted at that moment was to keep her by his side.

No matter how much he cared about the past, he had no choice but to feign indifference.

After all, the boys shared Roxanne's blood, too.

Lucian would still treat Archie and Benny as if they were his own.

Still, he could not help but feel curious about their father's identity.

Chapter 1355

Panic spread over Roxanne's face when she heard the question.

Archie and Benny's father was right in front of her, yet she did not know how to answer him.

Lucian understood her intention when there was no answer from her after a long time. "It's okay if you don't want to tell me. I'll look into it myself. I'll find out, eventually."

"Don't." Roxanne frowned.

Lucian's expression darkened.

I can't even look into him? Just who is this man?

Roxanne kept her head low as a myriad of emotions swam in her eyes. "I'll tell you when the time comes. Just don't look into it."

I should be the one to tell him about the boys' identities.

She did not dare to imagine what Lucian's reaction would be if she let him dig into it.

Lucian fell silent for a long time. Seeing how anxious she looked, he agreed, "Okay. I'll wait for you to tell me."

He had prepared himself for the worst, thinking maybe Roxanne had been taken advantage of in the past.

He believed in her feelings for him six years ago and that she would not lose them so soon.

She might've been forced to bear those boys...

The thought of it flooded his heart with more remorse.

Oblivious to his thoughts, Roxanne could only flash him a grateful smile.

Lucian could not bear to see her feeling so worried. He got up and said, "Take good care of the children. I'll settle the discussion on the internet. Don't worry."

I couldn't protect her for the past six years. Now that we're finally together, I won't let anyone harm her again.

With that, he spun on his heel and left.

After watching him leave, Roxanne made her way upstairs.

The children were hanging out in Archie and Benny's bedroom.

Ignored by the boys, Estella played with the toys on the side.

Archie and Benny huddled together in front of the computer, reading the discussion that had changed its direction.

"Mommy's not like that! It must be that evil woman's doing. I'm going to teach her a lesson." Benny balled his fists furiously.

He placed the laptop on his thighs. He was about to begin his counterattack when suddenly a knock sounded on the door.

The boys exchanged glances. Immediately, they shut the laptop and opened the door with a smile.

Standing at the door, Roxanne asked, "There's something wrong with the laptop in the study. Can I borrow yours for a while?"

The children were getting smarter. They would notice the uproar on the internet as long as they used the laptop.

Roxanne did not wish for them to be involved, so the only solution she could think of was to confiscate their laptop for the time being.

Naturally, the boys guessed her true intention and were reluctant to give her the device.

We haven't even taught that evil woman a lesson for bullying Mommy!

However, as soon as they recalled Lucian's promise at the restaurant, they felt a wave of relief.

Daddy won't let that evil woman off.

At that thought, the children finally gave in.

"Okay. I was browsing the stock market just now, though. Give me a moment, Mommy," said Archie nonchalantly. He then returned to open the laptop and cleared the browsing history before handing it to Roxanne.

Roxanne secretly sighed with relief upon receiving the laptop. "I'll get busy, then. Take care of Essie, okay?"

The boys nodded obediently.

When they saw Roxanne entering the study with the laptop, their faces promptly fell.

Hopefully Daddy can help us teach that evil woman a lesson.

Chapter 1356

Aubree's joy did not last long, for the tables had turned that evening.

Farwell Group made an announcement again, clearly stating the reason for the annulment of the engagement between the Farwell and the Pearson family. At the same time, it also contained a warning for the people who contributed to the discussions on the internet.

One specific line in the announcement caused an uproar on the internet. It read: The Farwell and the Pearson family have annulled their engagement due to Aubree's personality that is unfit for the role of Mr. Lucian Farwell's wife.

Someone wrote: The Farwell family must've toned down their words. They're a big family, after all. I bet Aubree has done something disgusting behind their backs. Farwell Group is already sparing her dignity by saying it's a personality problem.

Another wrote: So, who's the problem now? Aubree or Roxanne?

Someone replied: Do you still need to ask that? Didn't Farwell Group explain everything clearly in the announcement? It's Aubree, of course! Who knows? She might even be the one who orchestrated the entire discussion on the internet.

Suddenly, the netizens began discussing among themselves.

Although the public was still curious about Archie's and Benny's identity, no one dared to bring it up after reading Farwell Group's warning.

Roxanne secretly breathed a sigh of relief when she saw things had finally calmed on the internet. Even though Lucian had promised her he would settle that matter, she did not think it would be done so quickly.

Moreover, Lucian had filed lawsuits in the name of Farwell Group against those who slandered her.

That was basically announcing their relationship to the public.

A peculiar feeling arose within Roxanne when she thought about that.

Since the matter had already been resolved, there was no reason for her to keep the boys' laptop, so she returned it to them.

After they got their laptop back, the first thing the children did was check the discussion on the internet.

Thanks to Lucian's warning, the disrespectful posts toward Roxanne had been completely removed from the internet.

Farwell Group's latest announcement was at the top of the trending list. Everyone who clicked on it could see the announcement.

Naturally, the boys discovered it as well.

First, the children noticed Lucian had indirectly called Aubree out for having a poor personality, which made them applaud him.

As expected, this has to be handled by Daddy. The effects wouldn't be the same if we took care of it.

Next, they learned that Lucian was gathering evidence and filing lawsuits against those involved in the discussions.

Upon reading that, they naturally took up the responsibility to help collect evidence.

In less than half an hour, the children compiled all the evidence in a compressed folder and sent it to Farwell Group anonymously.

They would not let those netizens who insulted Roxanne off the hook.

One of the most crucial pieces of evidence in the compressed folder was the proof of Aubree transferring money to a media company.

It was only fifty million. The remaining balance of ten million had yet to be transferred.

Meanwhile, Cayden reported to Lucian the moment he received the compressed folder.

The evidence of Aubree bribing the media company made Lucian's blood boil.

In fact, he had guessed the same thing and had assigned someone to look into it.

Never did he expect someone to find the evidence faster than them.

Taking in Lucian's infuriated look, Cayden prompted carefully, "Mr. Farwell..."

"Since this company loves money so much that they'd go against Farwell Group for it, we'll make them pay with all the money they earned," Lucian said coldly.

Cayden nodded grimly.

Of course, he knew Lucian was not just referring to the five million Aubree transferred. It also included every cent the company had earned ever since its establishment.

How dare they bully Mrs. Farwell! That company won't be able to survive in the industry anymore!

Chapter 1357

Just as Cayden was about to leave to execute his orders, Lucian's voice rang out behind him again.

"Where did the compressed folder come from?"

Lucian eyed the computer screen.

Everything in the folder was more detailed than the evidence gathered by Farwell Group's technicians.

It even contained the personal information of the users who made the worst insults.

If Farwell Group were to file lawsuits, every single one of them would surely have to face punishment by the law.

Lucian's curiosity was amplified when he recalled the same person had taken action twice.

Whether the anonymous person was simply targeting Aubree or doing it to protect Roxanne, Lucian had no clue.

If it were the latter, then he had to find the person.

Cayden looked conflicted when he heard Lucian's question. "The technician's still looking into it."

This person must be the same one who posted the discussion this morning.

Alas, he did not know who that person was.

Farwell Group's technicians were among the best in the country. The supervisor of the department, especially, ranked third on the list of hackers.

Still, he could not find the identity of the anonymous person.

While Cayden was feeling curious about the anonymous person's identity, he felt nervous for Lucian too.

After all, Roxanne had disappeared for six years. Now that she had returned, many outstanding men had begun appearing in her life.

I wonder what this hacker's relationship with Mrs. Farwell is. Don't tell me he's going to fight with Mr. Farwell for Mrs. Farwell's heart...

Lucian's expression grew darker as he ordered frostily, "File lawsuits against everyone listed in the name list. One more thing, find the anonymous person no matter what it takes."

Even if Lucian did not care about Roxanne's relationship with the anonymous person, he still wanted to find out the reason for the latter to make such a move. After all, the person had great hacking skills.

Who knows? He might attack Farwell Group one day if I let such an elusive hacker roam freely.

Cayden acknowledged it at once. "Understood. I'll execute your orders right away."

With that, he left hastily.

That night, Ocean Media officially announced its bankruptcy.

At the same time, Samuel received a call from Lucian.

Thinking Sonya had actually begged Lucian for mercy on their behalf, Samuel answered it with anticipation. "What's the matter, Lucian?"

Lucian's voice was laced with anger as he warned, "Mr. Pearson, you'd better watch your daughter and stop letting her do stupid things that test my limits. If not, Pearson Group will face worse consequences than this."

The anticipation within Samuel was instantly doused by Lucian's words. Horrified, he asked, "What did Aubree do? Please tell me the details. I promise I'll teach her a lesson."

"You don't even know what she's done? Looks like your apology that day was just a perfunctory one. If that's the case, don't blame me for not sparing your dignity one last time."

Samuel's heart was flooded with panic. To his dismay, Lucian had already hung up before he could even ask more questions.

Recalling Lucian's words, Samuel flew into a rage.

Aubree again! She has only gone out this morning. What stupid thing has she done this time to make Lucian so mad?

Upon hanging up, Samuel stormed up the stairs.

Aubree was sitting in her bedroom, looking grim.

As soon as she had contacted the media company, she had gone home and happily watched the drama unfold.

Little did she expect the tables to turn again that night.

Chapter 1358

Her face contorted with anger when she saw Farwell Group's new announcement trending.

On top of that, the announcement clearly stated it was Aubree's personality that caused the annulment of the engagement.

How could Lucian do this to me?

A netizen commented: I've met Aubree before. Sure enough, she's not all that great. She always looks down on others as if we're inferior to her.

Another comment read: I heard Aubree even scolded the daughter of the Farwell family and called her Little Mute. Back then, I thought I'd gotten the wrong person because they hadn't called off their engagement yet. Now that I see it, it's definitely Aubree. No wonder Mr. Farwell wants to renounce the engagement.

The more Aubree read, the darker her expression grew.

Everyone, no matter their identity, was stepping out to criticize her.

Hmph! What do they know? It's all Roxanne's doing! Who knows what she said to Lucian? It's clearly that b*tch's fault. What right do they have to criticize me?

Aubree was seeing red.

Just as she was about to contact the media company to attack Roxanne again, the person in charge beat her to it.

"You called me at the perfect time. I want you to post the news from this—"

Before she could even finish, the person on the other end of the line questioned, "Ms. Pearson, didn't you say our company won't be affected? What's happening now?"

Aubree froze for several seconds before frowning. "What's wrong? What happened?"

The person in charge sounded as if he was hiding somewhere. Although his voice was soft, his anger was notable.

"The assistant of Farwell Group's CEO brought his men to our company and even showed us evidence of our illegal acts from the past. They want to send us to jail. They even seized our company!"

Suddenly, Aubree felt a chill run down her spine.

The person in charge continued, "And now, our company's bankrupt. I've lost all my money! Where's the balance of the ten million you promised? Transfer it to me now! I'm going to go into hiding with that—"

Before he could finish, Aubree hung up.

It took her a while to register the fact that Cayden had brought his men to the media company. Does that mean Lucian knows it's my doing already?

The thought of that possibility made her break out in a cold sweat.

Lucian said he wanted to send me to jail for attacking Roxanne earlier. He'll never let me off the hook if he finds out I'm the one behind this again.

As she was feeling fearful and uneasy, her broken room door was suddenly pushed open.

At that, Aubree hastily put away her phone and gazed at the door.

All she saw was her father marching over with a gloomy expression.

“Dad...”

Aubree was already feeling extremely guilty. Her voice trembled more when she noticed Samuel's expression.

Glowering at her, Samuel fumed, “What did you do again?”

Aubree shuddered, and her subconscious self decided to hide the truth. “What are you—”

To her horror, Samuel grabbed her by the neck and lifted her up from the bed before she could finish.

“If you did nothing, why would Lucian suddenly tell me to watch you carefully? If you did nothing, why would he suddenly tell me Pearson Group would face worse consequences? Do you take everyone for a fool?”

Samuel's eyes were bloodshot as rage surged in his heart.

Aubree could barely breathe. “Dad, let me go... I was wrong...”

Chapter 1359

Samuel was so infuriated that he lost his composure.

“You imbecile! Didn't I tell you not to mess with Roxanne? Why didn't you listen? Do you want our entire family to pay the price with our lives?” Samuel tightened his grip with each second.

Aubree was losing her breath as she struggled, causing her to knock something off the floor, which produced a loud sound.

Upon hearing the sound, Gina hurriedly went over to comfort Aubree as she thought the latter was throwing things out of anger.

However, the sight of Samuel strangling Aubree was what greeted her right after she went through the door.

“Samuel, what are you doing?”

Gina's knees went weak for a while before she rushed to them and pried Samuel off of Aubree.

Falling to the floor, Aubree held her neck while panting heavily.

“What happened? Wasn’t everything fine earlier? Sonya has even agreed to ask Lucian for forgiveness on our behalf. Why did you lose your temper again?” Gina questioned in dissatisfaction as her heart broke for her daughter.

“What did I lose my temper again, you ask? Why don’t you ask this imbecile of yours about what she did? Because of her, Lucian’s outraged once again! Not to mention Sonya, even Mr. Elias can’t save us this time!”

As Gina heard that, her hand on Aubree’s back froze as she stared at the latter in disbelief. “What did you do this time?”

In a state of frenzy, Aubree shouted, “I didn’t do anything wrong! That b*tch asked for it! She was the one who messed with me first!”

When her words fell, Samuel slapped her so hard she fell to the floor again. “You still show no remorse, huh? You’re grounded from now on! Don’t even think of stepping foot outside of this house!”

Wearing a gloomy look, Aubree held her cheek.

Roxanne, that b*tch! I will never forgive her!

Lucian kept his word. He showed Pearson Group no mercy.

In just a short period of time, nearly all business partners of Pearson Group put their termination contracts forward on the grounds that the Pearsons might ruin their reputation.

Not only could Pearson Group not afford to pay a single penny of the liquidated damages, but they could possibly face a huge sum of compensation as well.

That night, the Pearson family members gathered in Samuel’s living room.

“What exactly did Aubree do to get Farwell Group to target us like this, Samuel?” asked someone who could remain calm, trying to clarify with Samuel to see if there was a way to make things right.

However, Samuel was too embarrassed to speak.

The members of the Pearson family had not been that supportive of the marriage contract between Aubree and Lucian.

Initially, they welcomed the idea, as they could gain Farwell Group’s support, but after observing Lucian’s attitude in the past few years, they suggested dissolving the marriage contract. After all, they were certain Lucian would not stop supporting them

because of the favor he owed Old Mr. Pearson. If they delayed further, Lucian's patience might run thin.

Even so, Samuel and his family did not believe it as they clung to hope, only to backfire when the prophecy came true—Farwell Group ruthlessly oppressed Pearson Group as a result of a falling out.

"This is all your fault!" someone scolded. "What do you plan to do now?"

Forcing a smile, Samuel replied, "I'll ask Aubree to come here now so she can apologize to all of you."

As his words fell, Gina quickly had someone call Aubree to the living room.

Chapter 1360

Coming down the stairs, Aubree spotted her father surrounded by the other relatives pointing their fingers at him and questioning him.

"What are you guys doing?" Aubree asked after seeing the scene.

In the entire Pearson family, their family was the superior one; they had never received such treatment.

Hearing her voice, everyone turned to look at her.

"You still have the guts to question us, huh? You know, had you not offended Lucian, our family would not have been like this right now. Old Mr. Pearson established Pearson Group all by himself. It's not something you can toy with! You're the one who messed up, but why do we have to bear the consequences as well?"

Aubree appeared in a wretched state as her cheek was still swollen, and Samuel's handprint did not fade.

Aubree was so infuriated that her hand started trembling. "Oh, we're talking about that now, are we? Didn't all of you also bask in the glory when Pearson Group was at its peak?"

If not for the marriage contract between Lucian and me, there's no way Pearson Group would've been that magnificent. Yet, here they are, making all this noise.

Everyone exchanged glances, not knowing how to retort.

As for Samuel, he could finally heave a sigh of relief, but he still felt as if his family was at fault, so he stood in the middle of the room while wearing an unpleasant expression. "Aubree, apologize to everyone right now!"

"Why should I? I didn't do anything wrong!" Aubree retaliated. "Did they thank us when they enjoyed the things we achieved?"

These hypocrites are disgusting!

Aubree's words hit them like a truck as they stared at each other.

After some time, someone finally uttered, "The most important thing right now is to come up with a solution to this crisis. Bickering like this won't get us anywhere."

"That's right. We aren't here to bicker; we're here so everyone could think of something to solve this issue," another one quickly agreed.

Taking a seat on the couch tiredly, Samuel asked, "So what solution have you thought of?"

There was no way Lucian would let go of any Pearsons.

As Samuel had handled this all day long, he had no energy left.

The living room went pin-drop silent again.

All of a sudden, one of them muttered, "Farwell Group is targeting you; we're not the ones who crossed them. If you're willing to give up your right to manage the company and withdraw as the head of the authority, Farwell Group will probably be a bit lenient toward us."

In an instant, the others voiced their agreement.

"We don't have anything against you managing the company, but what he said makes sense. If you're not willing to do that, all of us will go down with you."

"As long as Pearson Group stands, you will always have food on your table."

Everyone spoke one after another as though Samuel and his family were some sort of sinners.

Samuel had his head down, unable to rebuke.

The others' behaviors enraged Aubree as she bellowed, "Shut up! Who do you think you are? You're just a bunch of hypocrites! How dare you point your fingers at us!"

Staring at her, everyone went silent, but they knew Samuel would do as they said.

Aubree looked at her father, about to ask him to reject their ideas.

However, before she could say anything, Samuel stated, "Understood. I'll do as you suggested. I'm willing to let go of some of my shares."

Chapter 1361

Upon hearing her father's words, Aubree felt her legs turn to jelly as she sat on the stairs.

We've sacrificed so much for Pearson Group, only for him to give in this easily. Lucian doesn't want me anymore, and I can't secure Pearson Group. I have nothing now!

As she was in a state of despair, all she felt was immense hatred toward Roxanne.

If not for that b*tch, I wouldn't be like this now!

The news of the Farwell family dissolving the marriage contract with the Pearson family spread like wildfire in the upper circle of Horington.

Once the marriage contract was terminated, Jack was aware of the situation.

He did not understand why Lucian canceled the contract, and he felt a little uneasy, so he had his assistant investigate the matter.

The next morning, his assistant reported, "Mr. Damaris, there's a rumor spreading among the public that Mr. Farwell's daughter is also Ms. Jarvis'. Ms. Jarvis has only recently found out about this. I can't say for sure if this is the reason Ms. Jarvis' attitude toward Mr. Farwell has changed, but they have both grown closer with each other lately."

When the assistant's words fell, Jack's expression darkened.

So Estella is Lucian and Roxanne's daughter. It's no wonder I always heard how Estella fears everyone but seems close to Roxanne. Now I know why Lucian has never broken off contact with Roxanne. It turns out they have this sort of relationship. I've always known they were once married to each other, but not to the point of having a child. This just makes things difficult for me.

Immense dissatisfaction filled Jack.

Ever since he made acquaintance with Roxanne in the medical consultation and observed her phenomenal medical skills, he knew she was the best choice for him as a life partner.

Yet, she already had a child with another man.

He had always been interested in the medical field and had been seeking to make a breakthrough in this industry.

To him, Roxanne was the first brilliant woman in the medical field, so he was inevitably attracted to her.

He hoped that Roxanne bore the same ideas as him—to improve medically so they could go further in this field, as that was the only way he could think of that could bring them together.

He believed as long as they got together, it would be of great benefit to each other.

Because of that, he had endlessly made efforts to get close to Roxanne, hoping he could be together with her naturally.

However, in the end, Roxanne still chose Lucian over him.

“Lucian! Him again! Why does he always meddle in everything I do?”

Out of anger, Jack swept everything on his table to the floor.

He snatched Herbscape Group and Roxanne from me!

At the thought of the incident with Herbscape Group, Jack felt his anger skyrocket.

Jack had always been the golden child who had never failed, and he grew up being showered with compliments.

The affair with Herbscape Group was the first time he confronted someone and was put in a disadvantageous position.

And now he’s snatching my other half away. There’s no way I’ll let that happen! I need to get Roxanne back! She and I will definitely conquer the world if we both develop further in the medical industry. So what if Lucian’s the cream of the crop in the business world? We can measure up to him medically!

Chapter 1362

Roxanne was totally unaware of the children’s involvement in Aubree’s predicament.

Upon waking up the following morning, she wasted no time browsing the discussion online.

Lucian’s announcement from the night before topped the trending topics, above the other popular topics from the day before that lay below, forgotten. The search phrases of the posts were also almost completely deleted.

Roxanne deemed the matter resolved and was finally appeased.

She was getting out of bed to prepare breakfast for the children when Jack suddenly called.

Roxanne picked up at once, thinking it pertained to the project. "What happened, Mr. Damaris?"

She sounded apologetic, as she feared her being the subject of tabloid gossip would affect the project.

Jack sounded concerned on the other end. "Are you all right? I saw the comments online yesterday and considered dropping by, but I was swamped. Now that I have some time to spare, I'm calling to check if the comments have brought you down."

Roxanne froze before a feeling of warmth engulfed her heart. "Thank you for your concern, Mr. Damaris. I'm fine. Besides, the matter has been resolved. I'm just concerned it might affect our project."

Jack laughed, seemingly unbothered. "I'm just glad you're okay. I got the project handled, and nothing will happen."

"Thank you for all your hard work of late," Roxanne said gratefully. "I'm well-rested now and will return to work next week."

"No rush. I'm not calling you for that," Jack said, his tone mysterious. "I thought you might be feeling down from the incident yesterday, so I called to ask if you'd like to have a day out to feel better."

This offer sounds like a date.

Frowning slightly, Roxanne rejected without hesitation, "No, thank—"

Before she could finish speaking, Jack cut her off, "Don't be so hasty to turn me down. Having a day out is the secondary reason for my asking. The first is that my grandfather wants me to take you to the Damaris family's medical consultation to teach you some of our family's medical arts while we're there."

Since he had invoked Hector's name, Roxanne could not say no.

Besides, she became tempted by the prospect of learning the Damaris family's secrets.

"There is a nursing home in Jadeborough. The person in charge disappeared with the funds and left behind many elderly people who needed help, plus some kind-hearted staff. Despite their best intentions to care for the elderly, there aren't enough funds. Some even starved to death, while others had a relapse." Jack spared no detail in

describing the condition of the medical consultation to her. "This is a mission with a lot at stake. The Damaris family is mobilizing every doctor from the project to Jadeborough next week to help treat the elderly. Grandpa recognizes your skill and left me repeated reminders to include you in this mission."

Then, as if worried about making her uncomfortable, he added, "It'll take a little longer this time, so we will spend two days in Jadeborough. If you cannot spare the time, I won't force you. I understand you have your own children to care for."

Roxanne would not turn him down at the chance to learn the Damaris family's medical arts and to aid elderly people who were critically in need of medical attention. "All right, I will be there on time."

Jack's eyes flashed with glee. "Then I'll be there waiting for you."

Roxanne promised to go without hesitation.

Chapter 1363

After hanging up, Roxanne headed upstairs to summon the children to breakfast.

Estella was still in her bedroom, sprawled on her bed in a deep sleep.

Roxanne woke her and led her to wash up before knocking on Archie and Benny's bedroom door.

Already up, the two boys were huddled together to read the comments online.

Their respect for their father increased for how he had handled the incident when they saw that the posts had almost completely been deleted.

We'll see who else dares to slander Mommy after this!

Upon hearing the knock on their door, the boys jumped and slammed the laptop shut before running to answer it.

"You boys are awake! Come down and eat."

Roxanne beamed with pride when she noticed her sons had already brushed their teeth.

The boys nodded, shut the bedroom door behind them, and followed their mother down the stairs.

"I'm going on a business trip for several days starting tomorrow. Linda will be over to babysit. Be good and do as she says, understood?"

Roxanne brought up her trip to the children during their meal, causing them to suddenly lose appetite at those words.

“You’re going away, Mommy? Can we come along?”

As their mother had been staying home with them instead of being at work this whole time, her sudden declaration of going away for several days saddened the children.

Estella was most reluctant of all. “Let me come along, Mommy! I can’t be without you.”

The child felt uncomfortable with the prospect of parting with her mother so soon.

Roxanne gazed at Estella’s uneasy expression and felt her heart ache.

I know how hard I’ll be working once I arrive there, and I will not be able to give the children the attention they need. It’s better for them to remain at home.

Spurred by that thought, Roxanne turned her down firmly. “I’ll be very busy with work, but you can call me if you miss me. I will always pick up.”

Still looking a little upset, Estella turned to face the two boys, hoping they would speak up for her.

Archie and Benny gazed tenderly at their little sister, but they knew how busy their mother could be at work.

When they lived abroad, she would be gone for two to three days at a time, but not before handing them over to Linda’s care.

“Be good, Essie. Ms. Linda is fun and will take good care of us. Mommy will be back before you know it!”

Archie stroked Estella’s arm.

Estella puffed up her cheeks morosely before returning to her meal with her head bowed.

Archie then turned to his mother. “What is your current business trip about, Mommy?”

Not intending to keep things for them, Roxanne recounted Jack’s conversation with her while emphasizing the deplorable state the nursing home was in and that she would be too busy to pay them much mind.

The children nodded obediently after being informed she would be working at the medical consultation. “Those poor elderly people. You must help them, Mommy. We will be here waiting patiently for your return.”

"I will await your return patiently too, Mommy!" Estella chimed in.

Roxanne was deeply moved by her children's thoughtfulness. "Thank you. I will resolve matters as quickly as I can and hurry back to you."

The children finished their meal obediently, occasionally giving her bits of morsel.

The meal was a harmonious one.

Chapter 1364

Roxanne intended to take the children out after breakfast, but Archie and Benny rejected her offer. "We're still tired from yesterday, Mommy, and would like to stay in today. Besides, Essie must want you to herself since you'll be leaving on your trip tomorrow."

Estella did not know what the two older boys were planning, but she did want to spend time with her mother.

"Let's stay in today, Mommy!" She nodded without hesitation.

Roxanne gave in to the children's request. "Let me tidy up the kitchen first. You guys go ahead and play while I'm at it."

Archie and Benny nodded, then led Estella up the stairs.

The three children went straight for the bedroom, and as soon as they closed the door, Archie and Benny gave Estella a toy.

"Archie and I are going to watch the stock market for a while. Play on our own for a while, all right?" With the patience and shrewdness of an adult, Benny cajoled his sister into obliging him.

Estella grumbled when a doll was forced into her hands, but the two boys were already huddled together in a whispered discussion.

"Mommy mentioned she's going to the medical consultation. She must be going with Mr. Damaris!"

Worry was written all over Benny's face.

Archie was similarly glum. "But Mommy said she's going to help treat some old people. We can't stop her."

Compared to their parent's relationship, the children held the well-being of the troubled elderly people in higher regard.

Benny pulled a face at his brother's words. "I know, but what happens if Mommy changes her mind while she's there?"

Mr. Damaris once sent Mommy flowers, for God's sake!

The boys were worried that their mother would be moved from spending time with Jack and cast their father aside.

Would we become fatherless children?

Archie frowned and fell silent for a long time.

It is true. Benny has a valid point. We can't let Mommy be alone with Mr. Damaris.

"We can't stop Mommy, but we can tell Daddy," Archie said solemnly after a long pause.

Benny's eyes lit up.

That's right! Daddy will think of something if we tell him!

The children heaved a sigh of relief at that thought and took out their smartwatches to send their father a message.

"Archie, Benny, what are you guys talking about? I'm so bored!"

Cuddling the doll and looking aggrieved, Estella trudge over.

Unsure if she was mistaken, Estella noticed that her brothers had been having hushed discussions without her since they discovered the truth of her birth.

We used to talk about things together. How upsetting!

A trace of guilt flashed across Benny's face. He gave her a mysterious grin and said, "Nothing. We were talking about the stock market. You're too young, so we left you out because we thought you would be bored listening to us."

The boy had no choice but to tell his sister a lie while suppressing a powerful sense of disgust with himself.

Gazing at Estella's innocent expression, Benny changed the subject immediately, afraid of succumbing to his guilt and revealing the truth.

I cannot tell Essie that her daddy is ours too, can I? She will tell Daddy without thinking twice, which will undoubtedly anger Mommy. The only thing we can do is discuss matters behind Essie's back.

Chapter 1365

Estella nodded innocently in response to their explanation.

It is true that I know nothing about the stock market, and hearing about it would mean nothing to me, anyway.

“Then finish up your discussion and come play with me!” Estella whined.

Benny gave Estella a guilty nod.

As he watched her climb up the bed, he produced his watch to send his father a message.

Meanwhile, Lucian was displeased after learning from Benny’s message that Roxanne was going to the medical consultation again with Jack.

Though I can’t bear to say anything to her, I’m even more unwilling to keep this to myself.

After mulling the matter over, Lucian called Jonathan and blamed him for telling Roxanne about the medical consultation run by the Damaris family and for introducing Jack to her.

Jonathan was deeply amused by his friend’s accusations. “Are you kidding me? I did that to help you appease your wife! She would have left the country if not for the Damaris family’s project!”

Since learning about the Farwell family calling off the engagement with the Pearson family, Jonathan had practically treated Roxanne as his sister-in-law.

Lucian was relieved by those words, and the hostility in his tone decreased.

“Anyway, you have somewhat played the matchmaker to their relationship. I’m now courting Roxanne, but she still insists on going with Jack. I can’t say anything to her for fear of being accused of restricting her freedom. What do you think I should do now?”

Jonathan froze for several seconds before regaining his composure. “You could have just said that you want my opinion.”

Lucian answered carelessly, “Whatever. So, what do you have in mind?”

As he did not have an answer just yet, Jonathan did not respond.

This is between them, and it's best if I don't interfere. Besides, my old tricks have been proven not to work. Lucian is the one who finally convinced Roxanne to say yes, but it's evident from the way he's speaking that he's upset.

A second later, Jonathan asked tentatively, "You can't stop her from going and you don't feel good about her spending time alone with Jack. Is that it?"

Lucian hummed in response.

"Then why don't you go with her?" Jonathan suggested. "She can't stop you from going if you decided to."

Lucian remained silent for a long time.

Having thought his friend was dissatisfied with the idea, Jonathan was about to suggest something else when he realized that he had already been hung up on. He heaved an aggrieved sigh.

When will those two finally end up together, so my days of being the middle person can come to an end?

Standing in the CEO's office at Farwell Group, Cayden was looking blankly at his employer. "Are you sure you want to personally check the account in Jadeborough, Mr. Farwell?"

Lucian gave an indifferent nod. "Is there a problem?"

Cayden was filled with despair when his employer summoned him and stated his wish to inspect the account of one of their branches in Jadeborough.

That task never involved Lucian himself, as only the presence of the CFO would be required.

He could not imagine why his employer would make such a trip when there were many other urgent matters in the headquarters that required his attention.

At the sight of Lucian's determination, however, he could not say much else.

"One more thing, I will be there for a few days, so push everything on our itinerary back during this period," Lucian instructed without the slightest change in his expression.

Cayden could do nothing else but nod.

Chapter 1366

Linda arrived on time the following morning as Roxanne was leading the children down for breakfast.

"Ms. Linda!" Archie and Benny greeted her warmly when she arrived.

It was Linda who had babysat them when Roxanne was occupied with work abroad.

To the children, Linda, like Madilyn, was their godmother.

Linda was similarly warm when she greeted, "Long time no see, my darlings!"

After hugging Archie and Benny, she turned to regard Estella, who was standing behind the boys. Estella was still a little wary of strangers.

"You must be Essie!" Linda offered her hand politely with a gentle smile. "How do you do? I'm Linda, your mommy's assistant, and I'll be here to care for you for the coming few days."

Estella gazed at her mother and brothers.

When they indicated she should take the hand, she slowly offered hers and shook Linda's.

Aware of the little girl's condition, Linda did not urge her to say anything but instead let go after shaking her hand and straightened up to look at Roxanne.

"How are things at the research institute?" Roxanne asked in concern.

As soon as the online discussion simmered down, she rushed to prepare for the medical consultation. Upon recalling that Linda would be coming that day, she planned to ask her in person.

Linda smiled. "It's almost resolved. The many suppliers who wanted to terminate their contracts had a change of heart and asked to be partners again. What do you think about that?"

Roxanne fell silent for several seconds. "Then keep the partnerships going. Those suppliers are just opportunistic parasites. We cannot hold them to very high standards."

Because her involvement in the online discussion had risked their interests, the suppliers had asked to have their contacts terminated.

As they had no private dealings, Roxanne saw no reason to ask them for more faith in the research institute.

Businessmen are, by nature, opportunistic and self-serving.

Linda was not surprised by her answer and promptly agreed to it.

"I'm not sure how long I'll be away for. I have to trouble you to look after the research institute and the children during my absence."

Roxanne sounded apologetic.

Linda shook her head. "This is my job. Besides, I'm fond of them. They are good children."

Archie and Benny nodded in agreement.

They were angels in Linda's presence.

Roxanne smiled as she caressed the children's heads. "Be good, behave yourselves while I'm away, and don't give her any trouble. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Mommy," the children replied sweetly.

After leaving further instructions to Linda and the children, Roxanne glanced at her watch and found it was time to go.

"I'm leaving. Be good, all of you."

Dragging her suitcase behind her, Roxanne turned to leave.

At the sight of his mother's departure, Benny could not help feeling anxious on his father's behalf, as the latter still had not shown up.

"Mommy!"

In a panicked fit of inspiration, the boy called out to Roxanne.

She stopped, confused. "What is it?"

Benny gazed at his brother and then at his sister, who did not seem eager to speak.

After a moment, he said, "You left us with so many words, but do you have any for Mr. Farwell? We can pass the message!"

His words jolted Roxanne to a realization. Her brows creased lightly.

Chapter 1367

I have never needed to inform Lucian about impending business trips, but things are different now. Knowing how much he dislikes Jack, I should inform him it is with Jack

I'm making this trip. I have gotten so used to leaving whenever work crops up for the past six years that I would have forgotten if not for Benny's reminder.

Benny watched his mother's expression soften and knew his timely words worked. Although his face glistened with anticipation, he was also silently urging his father to hurry up.

Roxanne fell silent for a long while before grabbing her phone to give Lucian a call.

Just when she found his number, a horn sounded outside the mansion.

Somehow knowing exactly who it was, Roxanne put her phone away and walked to the entrance with her suitcase in tow.

She saw Lucian's Bentley at the door. Clad in a smoky gray vest with sleeves rolled up halfway, he emerged from the car and strode toward her.

"What are you doing here?"

Roxanne had a funny feeling as she watched him approach.

Lucian frowned at her luggage. "What about you? Where are you going?"

Roxanne followed his gaze and felt a twinge of guilt about her business trip with Jack.

Unwilling to discuss it in the children's presence, she said carefully, "I'm going to Jadeborough for a business trip. I was about to tell you when you came."

As soon as the words were out of her mouth, Lucian came over and took her luggage.

Roxanne frowned in puzzlement. "What are you doing?"

He placed her suitcase in the car while she followed suspiciously behind.

Benny heaved a secret sigh of relief at the arrival of his father. He made a face at his mother's back before turning to Linda.

"We're going to be late, Ms. Linda. We need to get going to the kindergarten!"

There's no way we're getting involved.

Linda glanced at the time and, with a jump, bid Roxanne farewell before ushering the children into the car and driving off.

Suddenly, Roxanne and Lucian were the only ones left at the mansion entrance.

She was still uneasy even after he placed her suitcase into his trunk. "I'm running late. Let's talk about it when I get there."

Meeting her eyes, Lucian grabbed her wrist and dragged her to the passenger seat.

Too confused to resist, Roxanne found herself forced into the passenger seat. Then she watched as he got in on the other side.

"Just as well. I, too, am here to inform you that I'm going to Jadeborough to take care of some business. Since we're heading the same way, let's travel together," Lucian said placidly and started the car without giving her a chance to turn him down.

Soon after, Lucian drove out of the mansion.

Roxanne, seated in the passenger seat, mulled over Lucian's words.

What a coincidence! Lucian never mentioned anything about going to Jadeborough before this.

In fact, even Lucian did not know he would be making a trip to Jadeborough.

Observing the side of his face, Roxanne could not detect any deception amidst his relaxed concentration behind the wheel.

She felt disappointed by her suspicion as soon as the thought occurred to her.

Why would Lucian lie? This is not something worth lying about!

Chapter 1368

"Are you going to Jadeborough for business?" Roxanne couldn't hold back the question any longer as the car picked up speed.

Lucian nodded in response to her question, his eyes never leaving the road. "There's a problem with the account, and I need to check it out."

Suspicion shone in Roxanne's eyes. "And you have to go there yourself?"

She thought Lucian showing up to check the account was a bit much despite her limited business knowledge.

Lucian's expression remained unchanged. "The person in charge is someone from the Farwell family. Anyone else may be unable to keep them in line, so I must go."

It was a reasonable explanation, one that Roxanne reluctantly accepted.

She assumed Lucian's job entailed nothing more than sitting in the office and devising strategies, oblivious to the fact that many trivial matters still demanded his time and attention.

"Well, what about you? Why are you going on a business trip after just recovering?" Lucian turned and gave her an unreadable look.

Guilt snapped her back to the present. She had mentally braced herself to tell him the truth, but words eluded her now that she was sitting beside him.

"I..." Roxanne hesitated for a long moment before answering evasively, "I'm going to help out with an emergency in a nursing home in Jadeborough."

"Help out?" Lucian echoed, puzzled. "With whom? Is it set up by the research institute?"

Roxanne averted her eyes sheepishly. "No. It's by the Damaris family. Mr. Damaris contacted me yesterday morning asking if I was interested. He said the situation is quite dire, and this time I'll be able to learn medical skills from them, so..."

She snuck a peek in the rearview mirror at Lucian, fully expecting him to disapprove of her traveling plans with Jack.

However, his expression revealed nothing, and he simply nodded. "You should do it if the geriatrics need help. Take care of yourself and avoid overworking."

"That's it? You have nothing else to say?" Roxanne couldn't stop the words from coming out of her mouth.

Lucian arched a brow in bewilderment.

She realized she had said something she shouldn't have, and regret instantly filled her. Yet, words, once spoken, couldn't be retracted.

It was a while before Lucian's voice rang out in the small space. "There's nothing to say. Saving patients is your job, and I can't choose your work partner. Jack is indeed an exceptional doctor. I'm confident that both of you will keep your relationship strictly professional."

She felt an overwhelming sense of dissonance remembering Lucian's prejudice toward Jack and then hearing what he said now.

She was so caught up in her astonishment that she didn't notice Lucian's white-knuckled grip on the wheel during the conversation.

He clearly didn't mean what he said.

