

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 1433-1464

Chapter 1433

Roxanne was moved when she heard Benny's sincere words, and she began to waver.

Lucian had already laid the groundwork. If Roxanne took the chance and told him the real identities of Archie and Benny, they could let things fall into place and be together. That way, they could also provide the three kids with a complete, happy family.

"Mommy, what are you guys talking about?"

Having been neglected by the trio for quite a while, Estella approached them unhappily.

Roxanne snapped out of her thoughts at the girl's voice. She reached out and pulled Estella into her embrace, asking, "Essie, do you want Daddy and I to live together?"

She seemed to be implying that she was ready to say yes to Lucian.

Immediately, the three children's eyes lit up.

Archie and Benny turned to Estella, who nodded firmly and answered in a childish voice, "Yes! I want Daddy and you to be together!"

The look in Roxanne's eyes softened following Estella's words. "Then—"

Before Roxanne could suggest that they should just live together, the doorbell to the mansion sounded.

Perhaps it was because she just read the announcement, Roxanne had a feeling it was Lucian who rang the doorbell.

He did something like that to protect me. Of course he'll come and claim the credit.

At that thought, Roxanne stood up and walked toward the door, her countenance looking a bit complex.

She had made up her mind. If it was really Lucian at the door, then she would confess the two boys' identities and accept his proposal.

With that resolve in mind, Roxanne felt somehow nervous when she opened the door.

Yet the moment she saw the person standing before her, her face stiffened.

The hopeful feeling she had was replaced with exasperation.

Roxanne had yet to adjust her expression when the person at the door spoke first.

"It's late already. Are you not going to invite me inside, Ms. Jarvis?" questioned Sonya contemptuously as she stood there and looked at Roxanne with arrogance.

Coming back to her senses, Roxanne frowned and remained silent for a while before stepping aside.

Sonya strode in unceremoniously. At the sight of the three children beside the couch, she shot Archie and Benny a disdainful look. Then, she stretched out her arms at Estella.

"Essie, come to Grandma."

Wordlessly, Estella took a few steps backward and hid behind Archie and Benny.

Meanwhile, the two boys couldn't help but feel dejected when they saw the way Sonya looked at them.

Although Lucian had acknowledged them as his sons, it seemed like Sonya still couldn't accept them and even despised them.

When Roxanne came in after Sonya and saw the latter's attitude toward the boys, her face turned grim. "Mrs. Farwell, you can just talk to me if there is any problem."

Turning to the children, Roxanne instructed, "Archie, Benny, bring Essie upstairs first."

They nodded obediently and turned around to head for the stairs, but Sonya's voice echoed behind them just then.

"Stop right there."

Sonya glanced at Roxanne coldly and stated, "I have nothing to say to you. I'm here to bring my granddaughter home."

Raising her voice, Sonya went on, "Come here, Essie. I came all the way here at this time of the night just to fetch you. Don't make me sad!" She refused to take no for an answer.

Estella stopped in her tracks and turned back to look at Roxanne and then at the scowling Sonya. Without a word, she moved to Roxanne's side and grabbed the hem of the woman's shirt.

In response, Roxanne took Estella's hand in reassurance. She began to regret letting Sonya in.

Chapter 1434

Originally, Sonya did not intend to cause trouble for Roxanne at such an hour.

Yet she did not expect her son to release such a shocking announcement on the internet, and she only found out while she was having dinner.

Sonya was so incensed that she didn't even finish dinner. After throwing her cutleries in a rage, she set off and drove to Roxanne's house.

She was determined to make Lucian and Estella cut ties with Roxanne as soon as possible.

Now that Sonya saw how dependent Estella was on Roxanne, her anger was further fueled.

"Roxanne Jarvis, give me back my granddaughter," she uttered frostily as if Roxanne had snatched Estella away from her.

Sensing Estella's nervousness, Roxanne gripped the former's hand to soothe her anxiety. Next, Roxanne lifted her head to face the woman opposite her.

If this had happened in the past, Roxanne might not know how to respond to a demand like this.

However, things were different now. She was Estella's mother, so she had the right to keep Estella by her side and the confidence to face the unreasonable Sonya.

"Essie is my daughter who was separated from me for years. It's only right that she stays by my side. What are you trying to do, Mrs. Farwell?"

Roxanne maintained eye contact with Sonya, showing no intention of backing down.

Her words caused Sonya's expression to change. "So you're aware that you're Essie's mother? Then where were you all these years? It was the Farwell family who put in so much effort to raise her. What did you do? You proclaimed that you're her mother right after coming back and took her away from the Farwell family. Have you ever considered our feelings?"

Sonya spoke as if she was doing this solely for the sake of Estella.

Feeling a pang of guilt, Roxanne looked down at Estella apologetically.

The girl sensed her gaze and raised her head to flash Roxanne a bright grin. She showed no signs of resentment toward Roxanne as her eyes shone with a look of reliance.

That made Roxanne regain her confidence. She met Sonya's eyes firmly and uttered, "That's why I need to spend more time with Essie to make up for all those years I missed out on."

The air of hostility around Sonya grew at that.

Roxanne continued calmly, "If, like what you said, you put in a lot of effort and raised Essie, then her bond with you won't change no matter how long she stays by my side. You don't have to worry about that."

"If you really want me to stop worrying, then give Essie back! Just because you're her mother doesn't mean I'll allow you to join the Farwell family!" snapped Sonya with a steely look.

As she said that, she even stepped forward in an attempt to grab Estella.

Roxanne stepped sideways and shielded Estella. With an icy expression, she voiced, "If that's the case, we should listen to Essie and respect her decision."

She turned around and looked at Estella. "Essie, do you want to go back with Grandma?"

Estella shook her head without a second thought.

She had gone through so much to finally be with her mother. It was only natural that she did not want to part with Roxanne.

When Sonya saw how Estella rejected her without hesitating at all, her face turned grimmer than ever. She accused, "Who knows? Maybe you told her something while she was with you all this time."

After glowering at Archie and Benny once again, Sonya added, "What if Essie spends too much time with you and becomes like these two b*stards under your care?"

Immediately, Roxanne's countenance darkened instantly. "Please watch your attitude toward the kids. They can understand what you're saying!" she warned, a forbidding aura surrounding her.

Chapter 1435

Sonya gazed at Roxanne, finding the latter different from usual. She seems... fiercer.

Realizing that, Sonya scowled. “How dare you talk to me like that? Do you really think you’ve become Lucian’s wife just because he posted that statement on the internet today?”

Roxanne responded curtly, “I never thought that way. I’m just telling you the truth. If you think my words are too harsh, why didn’t you wonder if you’ve gone a little too far?”

There was nothing wrong with her words, but her tone was sharp.

Sonya’s face contorted with anger, and she lowered her head to glance at Archie and Benny, who eyed her with hostile gazes.

The boys truly hoped Sonya could accept them, but they were displeased to hear the way she talked about them.

Moreover, it was obvious that Sonya was bullying Roxanne—all the more reason for them to glower at her.

However, Sonya’s anger only spiked further when she met the boys’ gazes. “Did I say something wrong? I really don’t understand what’s wrong with Lucian. How could he make an announcement saying these two are his?”

Now that Sonya had directed her malice at them, both Archie and Benny’s blood boiled, so much so that they almost pounced on her and attacked her.

Regardless, their expressions only made Sonya dislike them more. “How could these uneducated children be part of the Farwell family? Who knows? They might be products of your entanglement with another random man. The audacity of you to even attempt to make them heirs of the Farwell family? You’re delusional!”

At that point, Roxanne had forgotten all about being polite. “Mrs. Farwell! Essie, Archie, and Benny are my children. Even if they don’t get to live in the Farwell residence, I’ll still provide them with a comfortable life. Don’t worry. We don’t want a single cent from the Farwell family!”

Sonya scoffed, “Who do you think you are? What makes you think you can do that?”

As soon as she finished, Benny piped up, “We don’t want Mr. Farwell’s money! If we need money, we can earn it on our own!”

However, Sonya felt as if she had heard a joke.

These six-year-old kids are so full of themselves. They’re actually telling me they can earn money on their own! Hah! They’re willing to say anything just to be accepted into the Farwell family.

Sonya could not be bothered to argue with them, so she uttered coldly, "I applaud your courage and integrity for saying that. Since you've said so, you'd better not use Essie's name as an excuse to live with Lucian."

In other words, she believed they would use Estella as their stepping stone to earn themselves a place in the Farwell family.

Roxanne was so close to landing a tight slap on Sonya's face, but she put a lid on her anger. "That was never my intention! And please stop assuming the worst of my children. If you don't plan to communicate properly, then please go home. We don't welcome people who can't talk politely."

Sonya sneered, "I'm not here to communicate with you, anyway. Sure, I can leave, but Essie has to come home with me."

The tension between the two adults filled Estella with panic and fear. The moment she heard Sonya's words, her face turned red, and she said tearfully, "I don't want to! I want to be with Mommy!"

Sonya's face purpled with rage. "You'll have a better mommy in the future!"

Still, Estella kept shaking her head. "No! I just want Mommy!"

Roxanne's heart ached as she pulled the little girl into her embrace. "If you want to take Essie away, then please give Lucian a call. I won't say anything if he agrees," she said to Sonya.

Chapter 1436

"It was Lucian who let Essie stay with me. So, if you want to take her away, you'll have to get his consent first," Roxanne emphasized without a change in her expression.

The little girl in her embrace immediately chimed in, "I'll do what Daddy says!"

As Sonya watched the mother and daughter duo presenting a united front, she felt her temples throb.

After all, her son had already made such a statement. The answer she would get could not be more obvious if she made the call.

Roxanne's saying that because she has no plans to let me take my granddaughter away! Most importantly, my son is siding with her. Ugh! I can't do anything about it.

After waiting for some time and seeing that Sonya didn't take any action, Roxanne said, "If you don't want to make the call, then please leave now. It's getting late, and the children are hungry. I don't have the energy to prepare another person's portion."

With that, Roxanne put Estella down and gestured for the boys to take Estella upstairs.

Once the children had gone upstairs, Roxanne said, "Do as you please then."

Without waiting for Sonya's reply, Roxanne marched into the kitchen, completely ignoring the former.

Just like that, Sonya was left alone in the living room.

Glaring at the figure busy cooking in the kitchen, Sonya took a deep breath and hissed a warning, "Don't you dare think you can be a part of the Farwell family just because Lucian and Essie like you. It won't happen as long as I'm alive. Dream on!"

With that, she stormed out of the house in a huff.

Roxanne had her back facing Sonya the entire time. Though she looked calm on the outside, deep down, she was tense.

When she heard Sonya leave, she breathed a sigh of relief inwardly.

It was an ugly argument, but Sonya's appearance had reminded Roxanne that it was still not time for her to reveal the truth just yet.

Sonya's hostility toward the boys was obvious.

Even when Lucian had already declared to the public that the boys were his, Sonya still regarded the announcement as fake news without even bothering to clarify.

It was clear that she had never accepted Archie and Benny.

Even worse, the two boys weren't even considered decent children in her eyes.

That was all because of Roxanne's sudden departure back then, which gave Sonya a bad first impression.

With that thought in mind, Roxanne felt incredibly apologetic.

In fact, she began to regret not dealing with the situation properly.

I should've been more humble. After all, I wanted her to accept the boys.

Still, Roxanne could not think of another way to deal with Sonya when the latter kept pushing them into a corner.

Meanwhile, the children had been hanging out on the balcony the entire time. The second they saw Sonya's car leave, they ran downstairs and approached Roxanne.

"Mommy, are you okay?"

Roxanne recollected herself and sighed inwardly before forcing a smile and patting their heads. "I'm all right. Did I give you guys a fright just now?"

However, the children shook their heads and said indignantly, "Nope. We're just frustrated."

Archie and Benny then cast her a serious gaze. "We want to protect you!"

Roxanne was so moved that she pulled them into her arms. "Thank you, Darlings. Please don't take Grandma's words seriously, okay? You're all my precious darlings."

Nodding obediently, they responded, "We know. You're the best mommy on earth, too!"

The fact that they were so understanding made Roxanne feel sorry for them and at the same time guilty. She could not resist hugging them tighter.

Chapter 1437

Meanwhile, in the mansion on the outskirts, Aubree, too, saw the discussion on the internet.

Her hand that held the phone trembled with anger when she saw the statement made by Farwell Group.

Aubree could tell Lucian was basically informing the public of his relationship with Roxanne. In fact, he was close to revealing their marriage certificate.

At the same time, he was also responding to Roxanne and Jack's scandal, announcing to the world that Roxanne was his.

Lucian never announced our engagement in the past, no matter how subservient I behaved. And now, that b*tch made him do it so easily? And what's with those two b*stards?

Aubree did not believe they were Lucian's children, nor did she believe Lucian would acknowledge the identities of two illegitimate children just to protect Roxanne's reputation.

In the eyes of bystanders who were unaware of the truth, they might think that Lucian and Roxanne shared a loving bond.

However, those who knew them personally would think that Lucian had cheated on Aubree.

How could he do this?

No matter what the possibility was, Aubree refused to believe it.

Instead, she took out her phone to call Frieda for verification.

Similarly, Frieda was shocked when she learned about the truth from Jonathan and realized how important Roxanne was to Lucian.

Hence, Frieda was even more determined to stay away from Aubree.

Before she could even come up with an idea, Aubree called.

Frieda answered it reluctantly, hoping Aubree was only calling to ask for money.

If that was the case, Frieda could still fork out some. However, she would be at a loss for what to do if Aubree threatened her to harm Roxanne.

After reading Farwell Group's statement in the morning, there was no way Frieda would foolishly offend Lucian by messing with Roxanne again.

Unfortunately, Aubree still had dirt on Frieda, and the latter had no right to say no to Aubree.

Frieda was already uneasy before Aubree even uttered a word.

She even took the initiative to ask, "How much more money do you need, Aubree?"

When she finished speaking, Aubree's icy voice came through the phone speakers. "What's with the news on the internet? Are the two b*stards really Lucian's children?"

Even though they were only talking on the phone, Frieda could imagine Aubree's furious expression from the latter's tone.

She could also imagine Aubree's reaction after she had given her answer.

Hence, she gulped nervously as she racked her brain for a response that would not anger the person on the other end of the line.

Before she could even think of an answer, Aubree made a guess.

"It's not true, isn't it?" Aubree hissed.

Frieda's heart clenched. "Aubree, please calm down—"

Regardless, Aubree cut her off, "How am I supposed to calm down? I'm going to lose my mind from jealousy! What's so great about that b*tch? How is she able to make Lucian go to such lengths for her?"

Her words rendered Frieda speechless.

Nonetheless, Frieda could only pray and hope she would not be implicated because of Aubree's anger.

Thankfully, Aubree only spat out a few curses and ended the call.

Frieda sighed a breath of relief when she saw the phone screen darken.

Meanwhile, the more Aubree thought about it, the more frustrated she felt.

She scrolled through the phone for some time. Suddenly, her eyes gleamed, and she dialed the number at the bottom of her contacts list.

Chapter 1438

News about the Farwell family's two additional young heirs, who were given birth by Lucian's ex-wife, caused an uproar in Horington.

Of course, the journalists took action almost immediately. No one knew how they got the information, but they found and swarmed around Roxanne's research institute and mansion.

Roxanne was still asleep when she received a call from Linda telling her not to leave the house that day.

When Roxanne received that call, she was still in a daze.

However, the moment she got out of bed and saw the crowd outside, she panicked.

The crowd was clearly there because of Farwell Group's statement yesterday.

Noticing her room's curtains were pulled open, the crowd downstairs hurriedly focused their cameras in the direction of her room window and began snapping pictures.

Shocked, Roxanne hastily drew her curtains.

At the same time, her phone rang again.

She grabbed it to take a glance, only to see it was from an unknown number.

Suspicious, she answered it. The person on the other end of the phone asked, "Is this Ms. Jarvis? You and Mr. Farwell—"

Before the caller could finish his sentence, Roxanne hung up with rage swelling in her heart.

How on earth did they find my number and address? Are journalists so well-informed these days?

Just as Roxanne was feeling shocked and annoyed, Estella woke up in a daze.

She was happy to see Roxanne still in the room. With a smile, she stretched out her arms and said, "Mommy, I want a hug!"

Hence, Roxanne recollected herself and picked the girl up. As soon as she caught the latter's scent, she was instantly relieved of her frustration.

Nonetheless, Estella seemed to sense Roxanne was in a bad mood. She caressed the latter's face with concern. "Mommy, what's wrong?"

Smiling, Roxanne reassured, "It's nothing. Come on. Let's get you washed up."

Estella nodded and crawled into Roxanne's arms, curling up into a ball.

The weight in Roxanne's arms helped her calm down completely.

After all, she had to stay calm since the children were at home. If not, they might get a fright.

When Roxanne finished helping Estella wash up, she opened the room door, wanting to go down to prepare breakfast.

The moment she opened it, she saw Archie and Benny standing at the door.

Archie looked up at his mother, his expression tense. "Mommy, who are those people downstairs? Did Mrs. Farwell send them?"

That was their first time seeing such a scene.

Moreover, Sonya paid a visit yesterday. Naturally, they thought it was her doing.

Roxanne patted their heads to reassure them. "I don't think so. Anyway, you two better not go out today. I'll inform your teacher about this."

It was impossible for the children to go out when such a crowd was encircling the house.

The boys nodded. Their gazes were filled with wariness as they eyed the people outside who looked like they would barge in anytime.

In fact, the boys were already thinking of ways to protect Roxanne if they actually barged into the house.

In the meantime, Madilyn had just returned and saw the journalists swarming outside Roxanne's house.

She had been busy dealing with a major operation for the past few days and was unaware of the news that was spreading.

The first thing that came to her mind when she saw the crowd was that a medical accident had happened.

As a doctor herself, Madilyn knew how much fuss a medical accident could cause.

At that thought, she hurriedly pulled out her phone to get to the bottom of it. Instead of finding news about her best friend being involved in a medical incident, she found the latter's scandals.

Chapter 1439

Madilyn's eyes went wide when she saw the announcement made by Farwell Group.

What happened during the few days that I was away? Does Lucian know about Archie and Benny's true identities?

After taking a look at her phone and the journalists crowded in front of her, she began to understand why the journalists had gotten so worked up.

There are two new members in the Farwell family all of a sudden, so I can see why these journalists are freaking out. Honestly, even I'm a little shocked myself!

Whatever tiredness Madilyn had was completely gone at that point. With a frown on her face, she quickly gave Roxanne a call.

However, all she heard was a robotic voice that said, "The number you have dialed is currently busy. Please try again later."

She tried calling a few more times, but the outcome was the same.

Eventually, Madilyn put the phone aside in frustration and walked up to the crowd. She wanted to squeeze past the journalists and confront Roxanne about the situation, but she was no match for the journalists at all.

After a few failed attempts that resulted in her nearly being stepped on, Madilyn gave up and returned to the car.

I may not be able to see Roxanne right now, but I should at least be able to see Lucian. The fate of my godsons and my bestie are at stake here, so I absolutely need to get some answers!

With that in mind, Madilyn floored the accelerator and sped away from the mansion gate.

She got even angrier when she arrived at Farwell Group and saw no journalists outside the building.

Farwell Group was the one who made that announcement, so shouldn't the journalists be coming after Lucian for answers instead? Why are they swarming Roxanne and her kids? Are journalists these days cowardly pieces of trash who pick on the weak and fear the strong?

Madilyn was fuming when she stormed through the office building's entrance.

She was about to go upstairs when the receptionist at the front desk stopped her. "I'm sorry, but you will need to wait here if you don't have an appointment."

The receptionist had a conflicted look on her face when she found out that Madilyn was here to see Lucian.

It took Madilyn every ounce of willpower she had to keep herself from lashing out on the spot.

After taking a deep breath to calm herself down, she asked, "It was Farwell Group that made that announcement online, right? You know who Roxanne Jarvis is, don't you? Well, I'm her best friend, and I'm here to speak to her ex-husband! Why would you need me to make an appointment for that?"

The receptionist had nothing to say in response, but she didn't dare let Madilyn upstairs either.

Tension was starting to rise between them as they continued staring each other down.

Eventually, Cayden showed up and helped get the receptionist out of that awkward situation.

Madilyn had seen Lucian's assistant before, so she was able to recognize him instantly. "Cayden!"

As Cayden was acting upon Lucian's orders to help Roxanne out at the time, all he did was pause in his tracks to glance at Madilyn.

Huh? Who is this woman? She looks kind of familiar...

Madilyn then ran up to him, grabbed him by the collar, and dragged him toward the elevator. "Take me to Lucian right now!"

Cayden was still trying to recall who Madilyn was, so her actions caught him completely off guard.

By the time he snapped out of his dazed state, the elevator was already on its way up.

Having recalled that Madilyn was Roxanne's best friend, Cayden asked politely, "May I know the reason you would like to see Mr. Farwell, Ms. Xander?"

"To confront him about what happened to Roxanne, duh! Why else would I even want to see him?" Madilyn replied angrily as she stormed out of the elevator.

Not only did that scumbag hurt Roxanne badly in the past, but he also has the audacity to pester her after she returned from overseas!

Cayden was so intimidated by her that he simply kept quiet and followed behind her as she walked up to Lucian's office.

Madilyn opened the door and barged right in without even knocking.

Chapter 1440

Lucian had a gloomy look on his face as he stared at the screen of his computer.

He was looking at a video of the journalists swarming Roxanne's house and the research institute.

Lucian did not expect his actions to cause Roxanne so much trouble.

He was snapped out of his train of thought when the door to his office opened all of a sudden.

Lucian looked up at the door in displeasure. He was about to say something when Madilyn yelled, "Get over here, Lucian! You owe me an explanation for the announcement online!"

She then walked up to Lucian and slammed both hands down on his desk while glaring daggers at him.

Lucian frowned slightly as he stared back at her in confusion.

After taking a few seconds to recall that Madilyn was Roxanne's best friend, he suppressed his anger and politely motioned for her to sit down. "Please have a seat."

Naturally, Madilyn was not in the mood to sit down at that moment. "No, you explain this to me first! Since when have my godsons become your sons?"

She actually meant to ask Lucian when he found out about their true identities and how he won Roxanne's heart over.

However, Lucian's response caught her off guard and left her speechless.

"They may not be my biological children, but it's only a matter of time before they address me as their father. I will treat them as my own, so you don't have to worry about a thing," he said patiently while massaging his aching forehead.

Madilyn froze.

Huh? What does he mean by that? Does he still not know Archie and Benny are actually his children? Then, what's with the announcement from Farwell Group...

That was when Madilyn recalled the search results when she looked up Roxanne's name online.

Most of them were questioning Roxanne's relationship with Jack and the true identities of Archie and Benny.

Did Lucian make that announcement just to protect them?

Madilyn felt slightly better at the thought of that, but she wasn't about to let Lucian off the hook that easily. "What about the journalists gathered outside Roxanne's house, then? What do you plan on doing about them?"

After all, Lucian was the reason those journalists were there.

Instead of answering her question, Lucian simply shot Cayden a glance in response.

Cayden had a conflicted look on his face as he said, "I've already given the press a warning, but they..."

There was no way the media would sit around and do nothing after Farwell Group made such a shocking announcement.

It was only natural that the journalists would be fighting to get a scoop.

Nobody was willing to give up on that golden opportunity, and that mentality resulted in the crowd of journalists getting bigger and bigger over time.

There was nothing Cayden could do about it at that point.

Madilyn and Lucian understood what he was trying to say even though he didn't finish his sentence.

"What will Roxanne and the kids do? They can't just stay home forever!" she exclaimed anxiously.

"I'll go pick them up," Lucian replied with a grim expression as he stood up and grabbed his coat.

After taking a moment to recover from their shock, Madilyn and Cayden quickly stepped in front of him to stop him.

"Those journalists just want an answer, be it from me or Roxanne. They'll leave once they get it," Lucian said while staring at them with a straight face.

Cayden knew he couldn't let Lucian do that, but he didn't know how to talk the latter out of it, so he decided to let Madilyn do the talking.

"Do you really think an answer is all they want? Roxanne is the main focus of this incident, so they'd still continue to pester her even if you showed up!" Madilyn exclaimed.

Chapter 1441

It wasn't until Lucian heard Madilyn's words that he realized her point and stopped in his tracks.

"This whole incident might just blow over if you don't show up, but it will definitely worsen if you make an appearance. If that happens, they might even swarm Farwell Group along with Roxanne's house!" Madilyn reminded him.

She knew the mentality of those journalists all too well.

Lucian clenched his fists so tightly that his veins were bulging from underneath his skin. "What should I do, then?" he asked while trying to suppress his anger.

I wouldn't have acted so impulsively if I knew this would happen!

Madilyn rolled her eyes at him in response. Why is he asking us for a solution when he's the one who caused all this?

"Mr. Farwell, how about we send someone over to get Mrs. Farwell out of there?" Cayden suggested cautiously.

"How are you going to do that? There are so many journalists around!" Madilyn snapped at him.

Cayden fell silent and flashed her an awkward look in response.

"If you don't send enough men over, you might not be able to get through the huge crowd of journalists. If you send a lot of men over, people are going to say Farwell Group is throwing its weight around," Madilyn continued.

She knew all the dirty tricks that the press would use.

"Do you have any bright ideas, then?" Cayden asked as he had run out of ideas at that point.

"Hmm... Let me think..." Madilyn replied while stroking her chin.

The two of them then lowered their heads and racked their brains for an idea.

With a frown on his face, Lucian whipped out his phone and tried giving Roxanne a call.

However, her line remained busy no matter how many times he tried.

"Don't bother calling her. I tried to do so earlier as well, but her line has been busy the entire time. I bet those journalists are bombarding her with calls as well," Madilyn said.

Sure enough, Roxanne's phone had been switched off when Lucian tried calling again.

She must have switched it off because she couldn't stand those journalists calling her. I can't believe I caused her so much trouble...

Right as Lucian was starting to regret his actions, he saw his chat room with Benny and realized he had another option.

The frown on his face eased up significantly as he tried calling Benny's number.

Those journalists may have obtained Roxanne's number, but there's no way they could get the kids' numbers!

The call got through after a few seconds, and Benny could be heard greeting him excitedly on the other line.

"Hi, Mr. Farwell! There are lots of people outside our house, and we can't seem to get out at all! Could you come pick us up?"

Benny was leaning against the window and staring at the journalists outside the house.

Madilyn and Cayden froze in shock when they heard Benny's voice.

"Don't worry; I'll figure something out and get you all out of there," Lucian comforted him with an apologetic look in his eyes.

He then added after a brief pause, "Could you pass the phone over to your mommy? There's something I need to speak to her about."

"Okay!" Benny replied in an adorable voice as he hopped off the couch and handed Roxanne the watch.

Roxanne had a conflicted look in her eyes.

The kids may not be aware of it, but I know the journalists are here because of Lucian, and I'm sure he knows it as well. He must be calling to apologize or something. For some reason, hearing Benny address him on the phone set my anxious heart at ease. It's as though I have stumbled upon a lifeboat while drifting around at sea...

Chapter 1442

"How are things over there? I'm sorry for what happened. I acted without thinking about the consequences."

"How are things over there? I'm sorry for what happened. I acted without thinking about the consequences."

Roxanne heard Lucian apologizing the moment she answered the call.

The kids were leaning on her thighs and staring at her as they waited to hear Lucian's response.

However, Roxanne simply patted them on the head and made her way into the kitchen.

Realizing that she wanted to speak to Lucian in private, the kids knew better than to follow her.

After finding a quiet spot in the kitchen, Roxanne lowered her voice to a whisper as she said, "I know you did it to protect us, but that announcement was a little too sudden. Besides, Archie and Benny—"

Lucian cut her off, "It was my idea. Archie and Benny are going to become my children eventually anyway, so I figured I would grant them that identity right away."

That was one of the reasons he made that announcement.

A lot of people would surely gossip about Roxanne when she married into the Farwell family with Archie and Benny.

Since nobody would dare investigate the Farwell family, Lucian decided to announce that they were his kids.

Roxanne found herself wavering a little when she heard that.

Instead of waiting for her to respond, Lucian continued, "Are the kids scared?"

Roxanne nodded. "It's the first time they've seen something like this. I told them to stay indoors, though. As bold as those journalists may be, they wouldn't dare force their way into the house. As long as we don't step out the door, they won't be able to do anything to us."

"I'm the reason this whole thing happened, so I'll figure out a solution as soon as possible," Lucian said after a brief pause.

Noticing the self-blame in his voice, Roxanne comforted him, "I know you meant well. We'll be fine as long as we remain indoors, so you don't have to worry too much about us. Things are only going to get worse if Farwell Group makes another appearance now. I'll try to solve this on my own."

Madilyn shouted at her in the background, "Hang in there, Roxanne! I'll come save you right away!"

Roxanne froze when she heard that. "Madilyn? What are you..."

What is she doing with Lucian?

Lucian turned to look at Madilyn, who was standing next to him, as he explained, "She barged into my office demanding an explanation."

Knowing how aggressive Madilyn could be and from the way Lucian worded that sentence, Roxanne couldn't help but feel as though he was telling on Madilyn.

As though she were trying to calm an angry child down, Roxanne said in a gentle voice, "Madilyn is a little hot-tempered, so please don't take her words to heart. She's just worried about me and the boys."

Lucian simply remained silent after hearing that.

"Oh, I have an idea!" Madilyn exclaimed while slamming her fist into her palm.

She then snatched the phone over and said, "Hang in there, Roxanne! I'll come pick you up right now, so just stay where you are!"

Madilyn hung up the phone before Roxanne could even respond, much to Lucian's displeasure.

The look in Lucian's eyes grew increasingly colder as he glared at Madilyn.

Even Cayden was getting a little nervous as he watched from the side.

Did Ms. Xander just end the call between Mr. Farwell and Mrs. Farwell without his permission? I sure hope she has come up with a good idea to get Mrs. Farwell out of there...

As Madilyn had thought of a great idea, she ignored their expressions and began explaining her plan.

Chapter 1443

"Mommy, is Mr. Farwell coming to pick us up?" Benny shot her a look of anticipation.
"Mommy, is Mr. Farwell coming to pick us up?" Benny shot her a look of anticipation.

The children had gathered around Roxanne when they saw her emerge from the kitchen.

After returning the watch to her son, Roxanne reassured her children, "Mr. Farwell is thinking of a solution too. Don't worry. As long as I'm around, I won't let them enter."

As he put his watch back on, Benny looked at his mother earnestly. "Don't be afraid, Mommy. Archie and I will protect you and Essie!"

Roxanne kissed his forehead with a smile. "Thank you, boys."

After leading them upstairs, Roxanne peeked out the window to look at the swarm of reporters. What greeted her was a sight that filled her eyes with concern.

Before ending the call, Madilyn mentioned that she had a plan but didn't explain the details.

Worried that Madilyn would get herself in trouble again, Roxanne hoped to come up with a solution before the former did anything impulsive.

With that, Roxanne fell into deep thought.

All of a sudden, Benny looked up at the sky and gave her sleeve a tug. "Mommy, look out there!"

Roxanne quickly regained her senses and followed the trajectory of her son's finger.

Up in the sky, she saw a helicopter flying slowly toward their house.

Staring at it, she wondered if she was seeing things.

Nevertheless, the helicopter continued on its path and even seemed to be descending as if it was going to land nearby.

Roxanne couldn't help but be shocked by the scene.

As it was the first time the children saw a helicopter with their own eyes, all of them cheered in excitement.

"It must be Mr. Farwell coming to pick us up!" Benny's eyes glistened as he stared at the approaching helicopter outside the window. He was filled with the urge to rush outside to welcome it.

As for Archie, he watched the helicopter intently, secretly vowing to buy one with his own effort in the future.

No, I'll buy an even bigger one!

The baffled Estella clung tightly to Roxanne's sleeve. She tilted her head to look at the helicopter outside before returning her gaze to the boys and their contrasting reactions.

After hugging Estella in her arms to comfort her, Roxanne turned her attention toward the ground floor.

The closer the helicopter flew, the louder its rotors were.

Noticing the commotion above their heads, the reporters looked up at the sky one by one.

At the sight of the helicopter descending right above them, they quickly backed off when they felt the pressure of the swirling rotors against their skin.

"Mr. Farwell! It has to be Mr. Farwell!" someone in the crowd yelled.

Upon realizing what was going on, the reporters began snapping photos of the helicopter furiously.

Finally, the helicopter hovered in place upon reaching the same level as the balcony.

With her brows slightly furrowed, Roxanne got to her feet to get a closer look together with the children.

This must be part of Madilyn's plan. I wonder where she's going with this.

When they arrived at the balcony, they could see the helicopter hovering a single step away. The next moment, its door opened slowly.

Standing there was a smiling Madilyn, who waved excitedly at them. "Archie, Benny, I'm here to pick you up! Do I look cool or what?"

The sight brought a sparkle to the children's eyes as they exclaimed, "You're awesome, Aunt Madilyn!"

Chapter 1444

Meanwhile, Roxanne was still lost in a daze. "Madilyn, what..."

Meanwhile, Roxanne was still lost in a daze. "Madilyn, what..."Cocking a brow, Madilyn stepped aside to usher them in. "Come onboard. I'm here to pick you up."

Roxanne was blown away by the words.

Is she asking us to get in the helicopter and leave just like that? We might be able to escape this time, but what about when the reporters come for us again?

When she saw Roxanne remaining motionless, the puzzled Madilyn urged her, "Hurry up! What are you still hesitating for? Whatever concerns you have, we'll discuss it on board."

She extended her hand while speaking.

With the helicopter hovering right before her eyes, Roxanne realized that Madilyn's effort would go to waste if she didn't get on.

Holding that thought, Roxanne took the latter's hand. Given how close the helicopter was, all she needed to do was take a step forward to board it.

After carrying Estella over, Roxanne turned around to do the same with the boys. Little did she expect them to be raring to go.

Reciprocating their enthusiasm, Madilyn grabbed the boys with one hand each and pulled them over.

Roxanne, who initially assumed they would be afraid, was surprised to see the excitement on their faces. Once they got on board, they scrutinized every inch of the helicopter curiously. It was as if they had forgotten the reason they were on it.

Since they were not showing any fear, Roxanne breathed a sigh of relief.

While the helicopter gradually ascended into the sky, Madilyn stood courageously by the cabin door, whetting the reporters' appetite for pictures. She even gave them a delighted wave as if she was bidding them farewell.

"What are you doing? Come back in here. It's dangerous!"

Roxanne couldn't help but gasp at Madilyn's actions.

It wasn't until the helicopter was out of the reporters' sight that the latter closed the cabin door reluctantly.

"Is this the plan you came up with?"

Roxanne looked at her in disbelief.

She felt that the method was too dramatic and didn't solve the fundamental problem.

If the reporters were persistent in their pursuit, the helicopter would only help them to escape that one time.

Madilyn patted Roxanne on the shoulder to comfort her. "Don't worry. There's more to my plan than just picking you up."

Roxanne threw her friend a resigned look.

I wonder how a doctor like her gets all these outrageous ideas.

"To be honest, I was swamped with work the past few days. It wasn't until this morning that I saw the news on the internet. The fact that he has publicly declared all the children to be his has changed my perception of him," Madilyn lamented.

Even though she knew Archie and Benny were Lucian's children, Lucian didn't.

For a rich and powerful man like him to acknowledge another man's children as his own, he must love Roxanne a lot!

Now that Lucian had proven himself, Madilyn felt that she could strike his name off her list of jerks.

That said, she still needed time to consider whether she could hand over her best friend to him.

Upon hearing Madilyn's words, Roxanne felt her eyes twitch slightly, causing her to avoid Madilyn's teasing gaze out of embarrassment.

Nevertheless, Madilyn continued, "When I requested a helicopter from him, he provided one without hesitation. He's such a rich and generous man. Also..."

Pausing briefly, Madilyn leaned toward Roxanne's ear with an enigmatic smile. "It's quite clear to me that he's worried about all of you. He almost charged through the crowd of reporters to get you all!"

Chapter 1445

As Roxanne's ears burned, she pretended to stay calm and nudged Madilyn back before looking around.

As Roxanne's ears burned, she pretended to stay calm and nudged Madilyn back before looking around. "Where is he?"

The "he" in her question was self-explanatory.

Madilyn flashed a meaningful smile. "It seems to me that you're worried about him too."

Jolted by her friend's words, Roxanne lowered her voice. "It was just a casual question. Didn't you mention that the helicopter belonged to him?"

Knowing Roxanne like the back of her hand, Madilyn could see how embarrassed the former was. Hence, she decided to stop putting her in a spot. "Don't be anxious. I'm bringing you to see him, aren't I?"

The frowning Roxanne retorted, "Who says I'm anxious? I—"

Madilyn burst out in laughter.

The three children, who were engrossed in examining the helicopter's design, came over curiously upon hearing Madilyn's laughter.

"Aunt Madilyn, what are you laughing about?"

The puzzled Benny tugged at Madilyn's sleeve.

When she finally forced herself to regain her composure, Madilyn eyed her friend's reproachful expression before changing the topic smoothly. "Nothing, really. So, are you enjoying yourselves on the helicopter?"

The topic quickly caught the children's attention, to which they nodded vigorously. "We are!"

At the same time, they divulged Archie's secret. "Archie says that he wants to buy us a bigger helicopter next time!"

Madilyn burst into laughter again at the children's innocent words. This time, Roxanne couldn't help but join her.

However, when she saw the rare expression of embarrassment on Archie's face, Roxanne suppressed her laughter as she gave his hair a tousle. "You'll definitely be able to do it, Archie. Don't forget to let me ride in it next time!"

Roxanne's encouragement brought a smile to Archie's face as he nodded obediently.

Beaming, Madilyn suggested, "There's no need to wait till then. Your daddy already has a bigger helicopter. It's just not suitable to fly within city limits."

When she asked Lucian for the helicopter, she had overheard Cayden asking the latter which model to deploy.

The children's eyes lit up while their faces glowed with anticipation after hearing Madilyn's comment.

As for Roxanne, she was shaken to hear the way her friend addressed Lucian. The words caused her heart to suddenly tense up out of habit.

Madilyn clarified, "Those are not my words. Mr. Farwell acknowledged the children on the internet himself."

Only then did Roxanne regain her senses and smile awkwardly at the children.

Truth be told, Archie and Benny were the first to find out about it.

That was why they weren't surprised by Madilyn's revelation.

Whenever Madilyn was around, the children were always in good hands, for they got along very well with her.

After a short journey in the air, the helicopter landed on the rooftop of a hotel.

Madilyn stopped fooling around with the children and led them down.

The moment they emerged from the helicopter, they spotted Lucian standing on the landing pad waiting for them.

He was dressed in a suit and leather shoes, while his hair was strewn all over his face from the gale emitted by the helicopter rotors. As he stared intently at the cabin door, his eyes were brimming with concern and guilt.

"I've brought them back to you. You had better not cause them any more trouble!" Madilyn warned.

However, her words fell on deaf ears, for all Lucian could focus on was Roxanne and the children.

“Are you all right?”

He strode up to her and scrutinized her quickly.

After throwing Madilyn a glance, Roxanne returned her attention to the nervous Lucian. She maintained an indifferent expression despite her embarrassment. “I’m fine. It’s all thanks to Madilyn that we managed to make it here. However—”

“I just brought up the rough idea. It was Mr. Farwell who thought of all the details.”

Madilyn didn’t dare take any credit.

Chapter 1446

“Let’s talk inside the hotel. It’s getting chilly outside,” Madilyn suggested tactfully, mindful that the two were too shy to say anything in her presence.

“Let’s talk inside the hotel. It’s getting chilly outside,” Madilyn suggested tactfully, mindful that the two were too shy to say anything in her presence. Roxanne nodded before circling around Lucian to walk ahead. Just as she brushed past his shoulder, Lucian reached out his hand but retracted it at the last minute with a frown.

Given that he was the cause of her current predicament, he didn’t want to burden her any further as she already had a lot on her plate emotionally.

Meanwhile, there was no need for them to make reservations because the hotel they were in belonged to Farwell Group.

Lucian had ordered the penthouse to be cleared so that they could live there for the time being.

Upon arriving at the suite, Madilyn led the children to another room, cognizant that the two adults needed some privacy to talk.

No sooner had Roxanne entered the room than she heard the door close behind her.

Turning around, she realized that she was alone with Lucian. Madilyn and the children were nowhere to be found.

Thereafter, the frowning Lucian approached her with weighty footsteps.

“Where’s Madilyn and the rest?” Roxanne asked cluelessly.

Instead of replying, Lucian walked up to her and grabbed her hand in a domineering manner, preventing her from leaving.

“Are you guys all right?” Lucian repeated his question from the rooftop.

A warm smile gradually broke out across Roxanne’s face when she sensed his concern for her.

“We’re fine. The kids were frightened initially but calmed down after they learned that the reporters couldn’t enter.”

As she spoke, she glowered at him. “Instead, it was the sudden appearance of the helicopter that gave us a shock.”

Brows knitted, Lucian explained helplessly, “I couldn’t think of any other way. Besides, I sent the smallest helicopter we have in Farwell Group.”

He, too, had his doubts when Madilyn first raised the idea.

It wasn’t until he deliberated upon it that he decided rescuing the mother and children was the priority.

Even though Roxanne was just joking, the mention of the helicopter did frustrate her.

“I understand, but isn’t sending the helicopter too dramatic? I’m not sure how this incident is going to blow up subsequently. I’m afraid...”

The distraught look on Roxanne’s face caused Lucian’s eyes to darken as he pulled her into his embrace. He reassured her, “Don’t be afraid. I’ll deal with this. I won’t let them interfere with your life.”

Roxanne, who was about to push him away, decided against it when Lucian’s calming scent filled her senses. Thereafter, she hesitated for a few seconds before wrapping her arms around his waist.

Even though they ran into trouble today, Roxanne was touched by Lucian’s acknowledgment of Archie and Benny as his own children, a choice he made without knowing the truth about their origins.

In that instant, a warm atmosphere descended upon the room.

The room door flung open abruptly, heralding Benny’s childish voice. “Mommy!”

Behind him was an anxious-looking Madilyn. “Don’t go in. Your daddy and mommy need to talk.”

No sooner had she spoken than she saw the two adults locked in a tight embrace.

The sight caused Madilyn and the children to stop in their tracks.

The two groups stared at each other, the newcomers wondering if they could still back out of the room and pretend that nothing happened.

At the same time, the disruption caused Roxanne to freeze. Upon regaining her senses, she pushed herself out of Lucian's arms by reflex.

Chapter 1447

"We didn't see anything!" Madilyn smiled mischievously as she feigned ignorance.

The children nodded along. "We didn't either!"

Then, Madilyn attempted to sneak away with the kids as though nothing had happened.

Just as she turned around, Roxanne said, "Come over here. Let's talk."

Thus, Madilyn twirled around again and saw a resigned expression on her best friend's face.

Roxanne and Lucian, who was slightly displeased, proceeded to sit next to each other on the couch.

Upon hearing their mother's summon, the children rushed over to sit around her.

Only Madilyn was left standing at the entrance of the room.

Glancing at the family of five, she cleared her throat, stepped toward the single-seat couch, and plopped down.

Frowning, Roxanne questioned, "You said you've devised a way to handle the fallout. What do you suggest we do?"

In response, Lucian shifted his line of sight to Madilyn, too.

Madilyn could still sense the cold look in his eyes, so she did her best to ignore him and focus on Roxanne. "It's not that difficult. It just depends if you all are willing to spend some money."

A perplexed expression was set on Roxanne's countenance.

Meanwhile, Lucian asked, "How much?"

After a brief silence, Madilyn said, "Nowadays, news on the internet updates fast. While Farwell Group is an influential entity in Horington, the public still cares more about celebrities."

She paused and stared at the people before her.

The smart couple understood her intentions immediately.

"So you're saying we should buy and spread celebrity scandals on the internet to shift the public's attention?" asked Roxanne.

Smiling, Madilyn nodded. "That's right. Though the amount of money required to pull this off isn't little, I don't think it's considered plenty for Farwell Group." Since Lucian's the one who caused the trouble, it's only fitting for him to bring an end to this matter. I doubt he'll refuse.

Upon understanding her plan, Lucian contacted Cayden to do as she suggested.

The internet was set on fire again that afternoon.

Scandals about various celebrities were exposed to the public. Almost every trending title started with the phrase "explosive news."

The public swiftly shifted their attention from Farwell Group to the celebrities.

Many reporters did the same as they promptly surrounded the celebrities with their cameras.

In just a short time, all reporters who previously encircled the research institute and Roxanne's house were gone.

Roxanne was stunned when she saw the drastic shift on the internet.

Glancing at Lucian, she remarked, "This... You must've spent a lot of money." Earlier, I saw plenty of scandals on the internet and even an official announcement of a high-profile celebrity's romantic relationship! No wonder the focus of the public changed so fast.

Lucian acted as though it was nothing noteworthy. "Money is never a concern for Farwell Group. Besides, not all matters can be solved with money."

Deals with celebrities more often involved resource exchange than money.

What they needed were fame, resources, and many more.

Thankfully, Farwell Group's contract with a product spokesperson had just expired. Therefore, when the high-profile celebrity proposed a collaboration, Lucian agreed.

"You don't need to worry about that for Mr. Farwell, Roxanne. Farwell Group is so rich that they won't even bat an eye at how much he spent! Moreover, minor celebrities would die for a chance to help Farwell Group!" Madilyn comforted.

Chapter 1448

Roxanne contemplated her best friend's words and thought it made sense. Thus, she stopped speaking.

Meanwhile, when Madilyn registered the point she made, she believed Lucian hadn't done enough to make up for the fright her best friend and the children endured.

In a concerned tone, she advised, "While the public's focus has been shifted away, it'll still be for the best if all of you stay out of the media's sight for the time being."

Roxanne nodded in agreement. "I don't think it'll be a problem. In my case, I'll only be either at home or at the research institute, so unless the reporters specifically sought me out—"

"That's what I'm worried about!" Madilyn interrupted. "I'm concerned some reporters won't give up!"

That outburst stunned Roxanne because she had more to say.

Lucian's expression darkened slightly while he gripped Roxanne's hand as though no one was around. "For now, you shouldn't go to the research institute anymore. Just in case."

Upon detecting his movement, she felt her heart clenching. As she glanced at her friend, she tried pulling her hand away, but he was stronger than her. Hence, she reluctantly and awkwardly allowed him to keep holding her hand.

Madilyn gazed at Lucian assertively. "Don't you think you should make up for the trouble you brought Roxanne, Mr. Farwell?"

In response, Lucian knitted his eyebrows and gave her statement some genuine consideration.

Resignedly, Roxanne clarified, "It's nothing serious. I can do overtime later to make up for the work I missed—"

Madilyn shot her a glance, silencing her, before turning to look at Lucian.

"You have a private plane, right, Mr. Farwell? Why not use it to bring her to Miralaea for a trip? You two can hide from the reporters there and use the opportunity to relax."

Lucian was moved by her proposal. I did tell Roxanne I'd bring the children out for a trip when we went to Jadeborough some time ago. However, after she returned here, she was busy with her work, so I never got the chance to fulfill my promise. I suppose now is an excellent opportunity to do so.

Hence, he turned to Roxanne and inquired, "How about we visit Miralaea, Roxanne? We did talk about bringing the children on a trip before."

Roxanne hesitated because the collaboration with the Damaris family to develop a new medicine had just been moved ahead of schedule.

Benny grabbed the hem of her shirt and asked excitedly, "Are we really going to Miralaea, Mommy?"

Estella blinked and stared at Roxanne with anticipation.

The children's stares were making Roxanne waver.

Still, she wondered, "What about school?"

Madilyn shrugged. "Just apply leaves for them."

Then she turned to the children. "Do you three want to go to school or Miralaea?"

Without hesitation, the kids answered, "Miralaea!"

"That's more like it." Madilyn nodded satisfactorily. "I've also been busy for a long while, so it's about time for me to wind down—"

Suddenly, she shut herself up after realizing something.

Roxanne narrowed her eyes at her best friend. "You just want to visit Miralaea without paying for the trip."

Realizing her intention had been exposed, Madilyn argued, "Since you all need to avoid the reporters, you may as well visit another country instead of hiding in your home. Besides, I saved you, so I don't think bringing me along on your trip is too much to ask for."

Roxanne wasn't sure what to do with her friend, so she turned to Lucian, asking for his opinion.

In response, Madilyn tacitly raised her hand and vowed, "I promise I won't disturb any of you!"

Chapter 1449

In the end, Lucian called Jeffrey and requested a week's leave for the children.

With that out of the way, the three adults took the three children on a trip to Miralaea.

Just as Jeffrey hung up the phone, a gentle-looking teacher entered the room.

"You're here, Ms. Smith," he greeted. "You understand the situation about the class, yes? Mr. Farwell's children are in it, and the assistant teacher is on leave. I'm worried Ms. Ward won't be able to manage the class alone, so you'll be helping her out for now."

Smiling, Ophelia Smith nodded. "I understand, Mr. Bauer. You don't need to worry a thing."

Jeffrey scrutinized her and thought she looked pretty gentle. "I'm leaving them in your hands, so don't mess things up."

"Should I greet them now?"

"They've just started their one-week leave. Once they've returned, Ms. Ward will introduce them to you."

When Ophelia heard that, the look in her eyes imperceptibly darkened for just a moment. "I see. If there's nothing else, I'll take my leave now."

Jeffrey told her a couple more things before allowing her to leave.

The instant she stepped out of the office, her smile was replaced with a glower.

She strode to a corner and called someone.

The other person picked up the phone quickly.

"How did it go? Have you come in contact with them?" questioned Aubree in a grim voice.

Apologetically, Ophelia answered, "I've just arrived at the kindergarten, and Mr. Bauer told me the children will only return after their one-week leave."

"What?" Aubree growled unhappily. "I can't wait even a single second longer anymore, yet they'll only return after a week?"

Ophelia explained in a whisper, “There’s nothing I can do. I didn’t expect things would be so coincidental. Once they return, I’ll definitely...”

In response, Aubree pinched her palm to calm herself down. When she opened her mouth again, serenity had returned to her voice. “It’s fine. They can’t run, anyway. In the meantime, familiarize yourself with the kindergarten. Contact me again once they return.”

She treated Ophelia rather politely because there weren’t any benefits binding the latter to her.

Nodding, Ophelia assured, “I’ll do that the moment they return.”

Since Ophelia hadn’t gotten a chance to interact with the children, Aubree had nothing much else to say and ended the call.

The latter then glanced at her phone, which was displaying her social media app.

When Aubree saw that news about Roxanne had been flushed away by a staggering number of celebrity scandals, she scowled. I thought the reporters this morning could cause Roxanne some trouble and force her to give up. To my bloody surprise, Lucian took her away via a helicopter! I recognized it in the pictures the reporters were taking of her! Also, it’s evident these celebrity scandals are due to Farwell Group’s intervention! I can’t believe how much Lucian did for that b*tch. What about me, huh? The only thing he did for me was take away my house! No, I refuse to let that b*tch live a comfortable life!

Chapter 1450

Meanwhile, Roxanne and her family were having a wonderful time in Miralaea.

The boys clung to Lucian for practically their entire stay, but he didn’t mind. In fact, he brought them to experience plenty of exciting activities.

As for Estella, Roxanne and Madilyn brought her along while they took plenty of pictures of the ocean view. They even helped her dress up like a cute mermaid.

They had a lot of fun during that week of vacation.

While the children wanted to stay for a couple more days, Roxanne had to return home for work.

Madilyn and Lucian couldn’t stay for long as well.

Therefore, they all returned to their country when the week was up.

After a week, the public had forgotten all about Farwell Group's incident, and Roxanne was free of the reporters.

However, Lucian was still worried about his family, so he ordered a few bodyguards to watch over her and the children in secret.

The morning after they returned to the country, Roxanne sent the children to the kindergarten before heading to the research institute. I wonder how much the project has progressed during my week of absence.

Just as she stepped into her office, Linda approached her. "Dr. Jarvis."

Roxanne nodded. "Did the research institute face any troubles over the past week?"

She had been under Madilyn and Lucian's surveillance during the past week, so she had minimal opportunities to contact the research institute. Her concern that the reporters would visit the research institute and negatively affect the researchers' work never left her mind.

If the reporters did that, she'd have no idea how to face the employees because she ran away after causing such a big mess and left the staff to fend for themselves.

Thankfully, Linda shook her head. "No. After that morning, the reporters were distracted by all the celebrity scandals. A few who wanted to interview us sent their requests through proper channels, but I rejected them."

Hearing that eased Roxanne up.

However, Linda was still grimacing.

"What's the matter?" inquired Roxanne, perplexed.

"Mr. Damaris has been visiting the research institute over the past week to meet you. It was apparent he was quite upset you weren't present."

It was something Linda should've reported as soon as possible because it was an official matter of the research institute. However, because of the news on the internet some time ago, she hadn't been sure if she should.

After all, Jack didn't reveal his intentions every time he visited. She didn't know if he came because of the project or because of the online discourse.

Roxanne was taken aback upon hearing that. Jack visited the research institute to meet me?

In response, she checked her phone but saw no unanswered calls from Jack. It would seem he wasn't looking for me due to an urgent matter.

Still, she called him out of courtesy.

The phone rang for a while before Jack answered the call.

"I didn't expect you to have the time to call me, Ms. Jarvis, since you're such a busy woman." Mockery was obvious in his tone.

It was the first time she heard him use that tone, so she was stunned for a few seconds before she apologized, "I'm sorry. I wasn't in the country during the past week. Linda just told me you visited the research institute to meet me. Is there a problem with the project?"

The mockery didn't subside from his tone as he spoke again. "Is that so? I wonder what you were doing overseas last week."

Of course, he knew why she was in another country and that she had gone there with Lucian.

Chapter 1451

While the reporters' photos depicted a woman standing at the helicopter door, Jack knew Lucian was behind it.

He thought the matter had ended when the celebrity scandals dominated the public consciousness that afternoon. Thus, the next day, he planned to meet up with Roxanne by using the project as an excuse.

To his surprise, her assistant told him she wasn't in the research institute.

In fact, he received the same answer over the next few days.

By then, no matter how stupid Jack was, he could still realize what was happening.

He knew Roxanne had left with Lucian, so he wondered how long it would take them to return.

To his surprise, it was a whole week, and that enraged him.

Jack was still upset as he spoke. "Even though the development of our project was about to begin, the person in charge of the research institute was nowhere to be found. What do you think I should say about that, Ms. Jarvis?"

When he brought up the project, Roxanne felt guilty and apologized further. "I'm really sorry. Due to a personal issue, I had to lie low for a while and inadvertently delayed the project. You've every right to be angry, Mr. Damaris. I promise that I won't disappear again after the project starts. You'll be able to find me whenever you want!"

Her answer satisfied him. Knowing where she went with Lucian or what she did during the past week doesn't matter. What matters is that I can win her over as long as she remains within my reach!

When his train of thought ended there, Jack complained with a softened tone, "Don't you think you should make up for all my wasted trips here, Ms. Jarvis? An apology isn't enough!"

Upon detecting the change in his tone, Roxanne sighed in relief in her mind and grinned. "Of course! Tell me when you're free, and I'll treat you to a meal."

"Sure, but I'll decide the location of our meal as well. You'll be spending quite a bit of money, Ms. Jarvis."

"As long as I can lighten your mood, I'm willing to spend as much money as necessary."

"We'll also use the opportunity to speak about the project's progress. The research development was delayed because of your absence, after all."

"I'm sorry."

"Forget about it. There's nothing we can do to regain lost time. I'll be pleased as long as our collaboration is successful. I still believe in your research institute's capabilities."

After exchanging a few more words, they ended the call.

Roxanne turned to Linda and blurted, "You're right. Mr. Damaris was a little angry at me. Were any other projects in the research institute delayed?"

Shaking her head, Linda answered, "Everything was fine."

Then she stared at Roxanne carefully. "Dr. Jarvis, about the news regarding Mr. Damaris from a few days ago, I—"

Roxanne had already guessed what Linda was going to say and explained, "Don't believe what you see on the internet. Damaris Group is an important partner of ours. Just treat him as you used to."

Upon receiving a clear answer, Linda nodded.

After a while, Jack texted Roxanne the location and time of their meal.

She read the text, spared a few more words to Linda, and left the research institute.

Chapter 1452

The location Jack picked for his meal date with Roxanne was a café with a quaint flair. In fact, it had a vibe similar to the Damaris residence.

When she arrived, Jack was already waiting for her inside. Upon noticing her, he stood and gestured at her.

She quickened her pace and sat opposite from him.

Having learned their lesson from the last time, they sat at a table in the corner this time. A sandalwood incense was burning nearby them.

Roxanne felt strangely comfortable when she took in the scent of the incense, possibly because she was used to the smell of traditional medicine.

Hence, she didn't give it too much thought because she assumed it was the café's specialty.

"I'm sorry for being late again," apologized Roxanne with embarrassment after taking her seat. We're meeting up this time because I wanted to make up for the fact that my disappearance last week caused a delay in the project's progress. Yet, I'm late again. I feel so rude.

Jack smiled nonchalantly and poured her a cup of coffee. "It's fine. This café is quite far from the research institute, and I just happened to be near this area."

As he spoke, he casually fiddled with the incense burner.

Seeing that he didn't seem to mind her tardiness, Roxanne let out a sigh of relief.

"I should be the one apologizing to you," Jack abruptly said.

That puzzled her. Why is he apologizing to me?

"In the end, I was the reason the public focused on you." Gazing at her apologetically, he continued, "If I hadn't changed the time to nighttime, those reporters wouldn't have taken those pictures and said those things on the internet."

When he brought that up, Roxanne felt conflicted. I suppose he is right.

As though Jack had read her mind, he explained sincerely, "I really did have something I needed to attend to during noon that day. One of Damaris Group's companies that sells medicinal herbs had a bit of a problem that required my assistance."

Of course, she had no intention of blaming him. She merely thought what happened that night was too coincidental.

Thus, she replied, "I know you didn't change the time without reason. Neither of us would've expected reporters to be following us. Besides, the incident's over."

Out of nowhere, Jack sighed a little. "So, you've gotten back together with Mr. Farwell."

That dumbfounded Roxanne for a few seconds. What am I supposed to say to that? My relationship with Lucian can't be easily explained.

The look in his eyes darkened when she didn't immediately respond.

However, when her line of sight landed on his countenance again, he acted normal and questioned icily, "I'm assuming you spent your time away with him?"

Instead of denying it, Roxanne answered, "We needed to lie low because the media had their sights on us."

Jack was displeased that she didn't reveal where she went or what she did with Lucian. However, he didn't want to keep himself in a bad mood, so he changed the topic. "In the period you were away, I did some research related to the development of the new medicine. I feel like perhaps we can change the trajectory of the project. The market's been lacking in anti-cancer medicine, especially ones centered on traditional medicine."

In response, Roxanne pondered the issue with a grim expression. "I noticed that previously. However, it'll be difficult to pull off because the public prefers to rely on western medicine to combat cancer."

He proceeded to brief her about the result of his research and concluded, "Perhaps we can be the first to achieve that feat."

Chapter 1453

Roxanne was moved by his words but remained hesitant. "Perhaps, but I lack enough knowledge of cancer to support the research on an anti-cancer medicine."

Over the past few years, she had been more focused on researching how to treat patients through acupuncture. She simply didn't know enough about medicinal herbs to be confident in developing an anti-cancer medicine.

Sensing her worries, Jack said, "I won't lie. Only a few medical books kept in the Damaris residence touch on this research. However, the reason the research in those books was halted was due to technical issues at the time. It was also these books that inspired me."

Roxanne's eyes glinted upon hearing that. If I can take a look at those books, perhaps I'll get some inspiration, too. Then again, those books are properties of the Damaris family. I don't know if he's willing to lend them to an outsider.

"The books about traditional medicine I lent you in the past were a part of that collection. If you're interested, I can lend you the whole set."

Without hesitation, she nodded. However, she thought about something and inquired, "Is it really okay for me to read them? Don't those books contain content the Damaris family wants to keep confidential?"

Medical prestigious families tended to have a few techniques they wouldn't share with anyone.

It was why Roxanne was overjoyed when Jack taught her Root Thirteen and why she was skeptical about his proposal to lend her those books.

He grinned. "I can't hide anything from you, can I? Indeed, there's a condition you need to fulfill if you want to read those books."

"What condition?" She frowned. I have a bad feeling about this.

"As you said, those books contain secrets the Damaris family doesn't want anyone else to learn. If you want to, you'll have to sever your relationship with Dr. Lambert as his apprentice and join the Damaris family." As though he was afraid she wouldn't agree, he added, "The content of these books isn't something an ordinary apprentice can access. Old Mr. Damaris has to acknowledge their capabilities first before they can read those books. Only three members of this generation in the Damaris family have earned the right to read them. If you join us, you'll be the fourth."

Someone else in Roxanne's position probably would've accepted Jack's condition without hesitation after listening to his tempting offer.

After all, she had learned almost everything from her teacher. Even if she severed her relationship with Harvey at that moment, she wouldn't be negatively affected.

Yet, she rejected, "In that case, I'm afraid I'll have to say no."

The look in Jack's eyes darkened. "Why? Don't you want to read those books? Aren't you curious about the Damaris family's medical skills?" If I remember correctly, she joined the medical consultation because she wanted to take a glance at the Damaris family's collection.

Roxanne nodded. "Of course I do. However, a few books aren't enough to make me betray Professor Lambert, who has helped me multiple times in the past. He's more than a teacher to me."

An imperceptibly cold look flashed past his eyes. If she had accepted my proposal and become a member of the Damaris family that way, I could have settled for that as the next best thing. However, I didn't expect her to reject it!

"Since you're putting it that way, I'll seem despicable if I try to persuade you further." Suppressing his rage, Jack pursed his lips nonchalantly. "I hope you won't regret your decision, Ms. Jarvis."

Chapter 1454

Is it just me, or does Jack's attitude seem different from his usual? Stifling the strange feeling in her chest, Roxanne grinned at Jack. "I won't regret it. If you wish for us to research anti-cancer medicine, I'll still do my best."

He lifted his coffee cup at her. "In that case, let us toast to our collaboration's success with coffee instead of wine."

Without delay, she clinked her cup with his.

After the two of them briefly discussed the research progress, they determined the project's starting date. They also talked about when Damaris Group would provide how much medicinal herbs to the research institute.

When their meeting concluded, it was already evening.

Standing up to leave, Roxanne glanced at her phone and saw it was time for classes in the kindergarten to be dismissed.

Then Linda called her, asking her if she should pick up the children.

Roxanne said no because the children had been complaining about her occupation with her work and voicing their desire for her to pick them up.

Based on the result of my discussion with Jack, I'll be getting busy again in the next few days. I think I should spend my free time with the children when I still have some. As she thought, she drove to the kindergarten.

Upon arriving at her destination, she saw two teachers leading the children out of the kindergarten in a line.

Then she noticed an unfamiliar teacher standing next to Pippa. She looks gentle.

"Ms. Jarvis, this is our kindergarten's new teacher, Ms. Smith. She's taking care of Archie's class with me," Pippa introduced.

In response, Roxanne smiled politely. "Nice to meet you, Ms. Smith. I'll be counting on you to look after my children."

Silently, Ophelia scrutinized Roxanne.

Before returning to the country, I often listened to Aubree complaining about Roxanne on the phone and describing how Roxanne snatched Farwell Group's CEO from her. It's why I've been curious about what kind of person Roxanne is. Now that I've seen her for myself, based on her face alone, I think she does have the potential to be a vixen. When her train of thought ended, she greeted Roxanne politely.

Soon, the entrance was clogged with the parents of other children. Roxanne bade the two teachers goodbye and brought the children into her car.

"Do you like the new teacher?" she asked caringly on the ride home.

The children exchanged glances with odd expressions.

"What's the matter? You don't like her?"

Benny answered, "No, we just thought she was a bit weird because she kept staring at us." Even during group activities, that new teacher constantly tried to approach us, but she was hindered by the other children.

In response, Roxanne glanced at the children through the rearview mirror apologetically. "I'm sorry. It's probably because of what happened a few days ago and the fact Ms. Smith is a new teacher that she's curious about you all." When I returned to the research institute after Lucian announced the children's background to the world, plenty of employees there stared at me with slightly different looks, too. I suppose the new teacher is just like them, curious about us.

She comforted, "If you all don't like it, I'll tell Ms. Ward tomorrow to remind Ms. Smith not to stare."

The children nodded.

Chapter 1455

Roxanne's life was soon back on the right track while Lucian's was still in chaos.

Lucian considered going to Roxanne's place in the evening after handling all the accumulated work in Farwell Group. However, he received a phone call from his mother, who asked him to return home as soon as possible.

Lucian furrowed his brows at his mother's annoyed tone. Nevertheless, he still drove back to the manor.

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

“Why are you here?” he questioned with a frown.

Sonya turned to look at him and said unhappily, “If I hadn’t come here, I wouldn’t even know you were back!”

He had not mentioned to anyone about him going overseas with Roxanne.

Sonya had come over every day to ask her son for an explanation but always ended up empty-handed.

When she called him and mentioned Roxanne and the kids, he would always give a half-hearted response before hanging up.

Hence, Sonya had nowhere to vent her anger.

Since they were finally back, she naturally had to have a talk with her son.

Lucian knew she didn’t have good intentions, and his expression darkened. He walked over to the couch but didn’t sit down, making it clear that he had no intention of engaging in a lengthy conversation with her.

Sonya’s expression turned dark when she realized this. “What do you mean by this? Roxanne hasn’t married into the family yet, but you’re already on her side?”

Lucian was used to Sonya’s animosity toward Roxanne and said calmly, “I’m on her side because of your hostility toward her. If you can stop being like this, I would love for you and her to get along well.”

Enraged, Sonya slammed the table. “Unbelievable! Do you believe you’re right? What’s the deal with the two kids? Do you even know who you are? How dare you accept the two illegitimate children and even fabricate their backgrounds!”

Lucian looked at his mother without saying anything in response.

As she spoke, she gradually sounded angrier. “Do you know how many relatives called me recently? They even prepared monetary gifts for those two bastards! What do you want me to say to them?”

Those relatives were so eager to get in their good books that they even suggested having a welcoming party for the two children!

When Sonya heard the suggestion, she almost fainted from anger.

How dare they suggest having a welcoming party for those two bastards! Not only has Lucian gone insane, but are these relatives going senile too?

Nevertheless, Lucian had already made a public statement. Sonya couldn't publicly chastise her son, so she could only give half-hearted responses to her relatives' questions.

Lucian was unfazed and stated matter-of-factly, "I already asked for Roxanne's hand in marriage. She accepted it, so it's only a matter of time before Archie and Benny become my children. They aren't illegitimate children. When those relatives ask you, you can tell them they are the sons of the Farwell family."

Sonya was hit by another wave of dizziness.

It was more shocking to hear this from her son's lips than reading it on the Internet.

He's adamant about accepting the two illegitimate children into the family!

After a long moment, she finally regained her senses. She massaged her forehead and said, "I don't accept this. There are so many people eyeing Farwell Group's assets. Even those relatives can't wait to get their hands on some of it. However, you're giving them to two children from unknown backgrounds so easily. This is unacceptable to me!"

Chapter 1456

Sonya had never entertained the thought of her being in the wrong. She had always thought she was looking out for the Farwell family and that it was Lucian who was becoming more and more unreasonable.

With that, she glanced at her son expectantly. She only wished for him to understand her intentions.

However, there was no change in Lucian's expression. "Farwell Group's success is largely attributable to me. I'll manage how I split my assets on my own."

If Archie and Benny had the capability, he didn't mind passing Farwell Group on to them.

Sonya was rendered speechless upon hearing this.

Lucian glanced at her. "Besides, they are still young. It's too early for you to worry about this!"

Sonya wanted to say something, but Lucian interjected, "On the contrary, take a look at your age. You should stop meddling in such insignificant matters. I am capable of

managing my own affairs. Why don't you go out with my father and travel if you have so much time? It will be beneficial to your health."

With that, he headed upstairs without giving Sonya a chance to speak.

Looking at her son's retreating figure, Sonya huffed in anger. "What do you mean by that? Stop right there!"

As if he hadn't heard her, Lucian vanished after making a turn on the stairs.

"Old Mrs. Farwell, calm down."

Catalina tried to pacify Sonya's anger by giving her a cup of coffee.

Seeing this, Sonya became even more agitated. "Even you are making a joke out of me! Do you want that Jarvis woman to come back as well?"

Catalina sighed quietly to herself. "Mrs. Farwell is—"

"Who told you to refer to her like that? She will never marry into the family as long as I'm alive!" Sonya uttered pettily.

Catalina remained silent. She knew Roxanne would soon be part of the Farwell family again, and Sonya's opinion of her would undoubtedly change eventually.

Sonya was in no mood to talk to her anymore. After sitting on the couch for a while, she took her bag and left the house in a fury.

Elias returned to the Farwell main residence at the same time Sonya did. Seeing her furious demeanor, he approached her with a puzzled look and asked, "What happened? Why are you so angry?"

His question jogged her memory of what Lucian had said to her. Her mood instantly soured, and she retorted, "Why are you asking me? You should go and ask Lucian!"

Elias sat beside her. "What did Lucian do?"

He had never gotten involved in Lucian's relationship matters because he was confident his son could handle them well. However, he was aware that his wife was constantly concerned about it.

Now that the marriage engagement with the Pearson family had been canceled, he felt Lucian's marriage was the latter's personal matter, so he didn't understand what Sonya was mad about.

Sonya glared at him. "Didn't you see Farwell Group's statement? Lucian must be insane! Shouldn't you do something about it as his father?"

Elias was dumbfounded upon getting scolded by his wife.

Naturally, he had seen the public statement, but he knew the two children would need to have legitimate identities when Roxanne and Lucian got together.

Compared to letting the children enter the family with unknown backgrounds, Lucian's method would spare the family a lot of trouble in the future.

Of course, this was on the pretext that Roxanne was going to marry into the Farwell family.

Sonya's expression turned darker when Elias didn't reply to her. "Do you also think that he has done nothing wrong?"

Chapter 1457

Elias frowned, and when he spoke, his voice was tinged with a hint of exasperation.

"I've long since told you to let Lucian make the decisions himself when it comes to his marriage. Everyone is free to live their own lives. Why must we meddle so much?"

Disapproval was written all over Sonya's face. "How could I possibly allow that? Is Lucian's marriage his business alone? Never mind if he wants to marry some other woman, but why must it be that woman?"

Why must it be Roxanne? Worse still, she comes with two little bastards!

Seeing that she was still dissatisfied with Roxanne, Elias patiently cajoled, "No matter who he wants to be with, that's his business. He matured into an adult ages ago. We can't interfere in everything."

But still, Sonya remained obstinate and griped, "If he had finalized his marriage with Aubree earlier, all this wouldn't have happened."

After saying that, she shot the man beside her a chagrined look. "You're no better. It's because you allowed him free rein in everything that he delayed the marriage until now."

"Reality has proven that Aubree is indeed unsuited to be the mistress of the Farwell family."

On the contrary, Elias felt that Lucian hadn't done anything wrong.

"Aubree only did something wrong out of her anxiety to get engaged with Lucian. If he had settled down with her earlier, she wouldn't have done all those foolish things," Sonya riposted.

Upon hearing that, Elias stared at her in vexation, his gaze probing.

Feeling a tad guilty from the way he was scrutinizing her, Sonya muttered, "I'm not saying she was right in doing all that. I merely feel that she's sincere in her feelings toward Lucian."

As she finished saying that, the wretched state of the Pearson family at present flashed across her mind. Melancholic, she heaved a sigh. "Ultimately, the Pearson family has been friends with us for many years, but they've now been reduced to a miserable existence by the Farwell family. It makes it appear as though we're too ruthless."

Elias was likewise aware of the Pearson family's current condition. However, he didn't find any problem with his son's actions.

Since Aubree dared to make a move against a member of the Farwell family, she naturally had to be taught a lesson.

As for the Queen family seizing advantage of the situation to pounce and take a bite out of the Pearson family, that was just the usual competition in business. There was no right or wrong.

"Elias, can you talk to Lucian about letting the Pearson family off the hook? They've already been punished enough. He won't listen to a single word I say, so you're the only one who can persuade him," Sonya ranted, grasping Elias' arm.

Lifting his hand, Elias placed it over hers in consolation.

"To put it bluntly, the Pearson family's current condition is a result of business competition. We can't be of any help. Furthermore, if word gets out that the Pearson family had walked all over us, yet we still helped them, is the Farwell family not going to be easy prey whom everyone can attack in the eyes of others?"

His voice was gentle, but it left no room for negotiation.

With the Farwell family's reputation coming into play, Sonya had no choice but to nix her plan.

Nonetheless, she was still loath about allowing Roxanne to marry into the Farwell family.

Sighing softly, she remarked in what appeared to be an unintentional manner, "Speaking of the Pearson family, I wonder how Essie is doing right now."

Elias also missed Estella then, so he replied, "Go and visit her if you're worried. It so happens that I haven't seen her in a while either. We'll go and visit her together another day."

Shifting her gaze to him, Sonya lamented in feigned helplessness, "How I wish! But Lucian has sent her over to Roxanne's place. I wanted to go and visit her, but Roxanne didn't allow her to approach me. It was as though I'd hurt her."

Chapter 1458

Puzzlement inundated Elias. "Why? You're Essie's grandmother. Why would Roxanne forbid you from visiting Essie? Is there some misunderstanding between you both?"

At that, Sonya sighed bitterly. "What misunderstanding could there be? She never liked me when she left six years ago. That aside, I'd always wanted Lucian to be with Aubree and objected to her being with him. Thus, she holds a grudge against me."

While saying that, she hung her head and nestled into the man's embrace as though she had suffered untold grievances.

Subsequently, she added, "She's already treating me in such a manner now when she hasn't gotten back together with Lucian. What should I do if she were to really marry into the Farwell family in the future? Am I going to be prohibited from visiting my own son and granddaughter?"

Elias knew absolutely nothing about the issue between the two women.

After hearing his wife's complaints, his first reaction was to mediate a peaceful resolution.

"There must be some misunderstanding between the two of you. Everything will be fine after talking things out."

At the end of the day, he didn't believe that his son would take an interest in a petty woman.

When Sonya noticed that the man showed no signs of siding with her, panic swamped her. She even eked out some tears.

"It's all on me. I shouldn't have poked my nose into her relationship with Lucian. But it wasn't me who forced her to leave six years ago. After she left, I even searched for her for a long time. And now, she wants to come back. What does she take the Farwell family for?"

Tightening his grip on her, Elias stated solemnly, "I'll ask Lucian about it."

Only when Sonya heard that did she feel somewhat gratified.

Right then and there, Elias took out his phone and gave Lucian a call.

Meanwhile, Lucian was working in the study.

As soon as he saw that his father was calling, he could surmise that his mother must have said something to the man upon her return.

However, he knew that Elias rarely interfered in his relationships.

Without giving it further thought, he answered the call. "Is something the matter, Dad?"

Elias' baritone voice rang out from the other end of the phone. "Where's Essie right now?"

"At her mother's place," Lucian answered honestly. Then, he asked, "What about it?"

"Your mother claims that Roxanne didn't allow Essie to approach her. What's that about? Does she have some misunderstanding toward your mother?"

Verily, that was the only possibility Elias could think of.

Lucian had known that his mother would undoubtedly complain to his father after returning home, but he had never expected her to make such a bogus claim.

His head throbbing, he put aside the work at hand and explained patiently, "It's true that Essie isn't close to her these days, but I can promise you that it isn't because of Roxanne."

Hearing that, Elias lowered his eyes and studied the woman in his arms. "Are you saying that it's your mother's fault?"

At a loss for words, Lucian went silent for a few seconds in contemplation before elaborating, "Precisely speaking, there's some misunderstanding between her and Essie. For some reason, Essie has a slight aversion to her. It has nothing to do with Roxanne."

Elias' eyes brimmed with confusion.

Essie has an aversion to Sonya? We watched Essie grow up, and I've seen how much Sonya doted on her. All this while, their relationship had been pretty great. Why has that changed recently?

Seemingly having guessed his father's thoughts, Lucian added, "If you're worried, you can go and see for yourself. I'll tell Roxanne about it. You can go over anytime."

It so happened that Elias wanted to go and have a look personally. Hence, he agreed without any hesitation when he obtained that reply. "It's decided, then. I'll go and pick Essie up from kindergarten tomorrow evening."

Chapter 1459

Lucian didn't expect his father to be in such a hurry to go and pick Estella up.

After hanging up the phone, he glanced at the time. Seeing that it was still relatively early, he wanted to phone Roxanne to inform her about the situation. But on second thought, he snagged his jacket and went downstairs.

Downstairs, Catalina had just prepared dinner. When she saw her employer coming down, she hollered, "The food is ready, Mr. Farwell."

Lucian halted in his steps for a fleeting second. "Go on and eat. I'm not having dinner at home."

Having said that, he left in huge strides without waiting for a response from her.

Catalina stared at the man's back, bewildered for a moment. In the next heartbeat, understanding dawned upon her.

Aha! Who else could induce such an expression on Mr. Farwell's face? He must be on his way out to visit Ms. Jarvis once more. Thus, he's also likely having dinner there!

Roxanne had just finished cooking dinner and led the three children to the dining table. They had all taken their seats when the doorbell outside rang.

Putting the fork in her hand down, she got up for a look. The instant she saw the person on the screen, she was momentarily stunned before she spun on her heel and went to open the door.

Lucian was waiting at the door, tenderness showing in his eyes at the sight of her.

After the few days they spent at Miralaea, the man's demeanor toward her had grown increasingly gentle.

Despite being used to seeing him with such an expression, Roxanne still felt a sense of dissonance.

After all, he had only ever been cold to the outside world.

"Why are you here? Didn't we agree on you staying away for two days?" Corralling her thoughts, she regarded Lucian before her in mystification.

On the way back from Miralaea, Madilyn suggested that they avoid meeting each other for the next two days on the off chance that someone might spot them together.

That was also Roxanne's plan, but she didn't expect Lucian to pay her a sudden visit.

The man at the door quirked a brow, his tone teasing. "Shouldn't you allow me in first if you want to avoid being seen with me? If I continue standing here, and the media gets a snapshot of me..."

A flash of panic flittered across Roxanne's eyes, and she hastily turned sideways to allow him in.

Thereafter, she carefully peeked out. It wasn't until after she had darted her eyes around and found nothing amiss that she closed the door.

At the sight of her all tense and wary, Lucian assured in a deep voice, "Don't worry. I had the bodyguards do a sweep of the area."

Only then did Roxanne truly rest easy.

The project was getting back on track these few days, so she really didn't want a repeat of her experience a few days ago.

Lucian's arrival appeared to thrill Archie, Benny, and Estella greatly. They didn't even bother eating anymore but crowded over to him intimately.

Deep within her, Roxanne still found it pretty unbelievable.

She had always thought the man's character would be off-putting to Archie and Benny. Unexpectedly, he was extraordinarily patient with them.

In fact, the boys almost liked him as much as they did her.

As astonishment flooded her, she also couldn't help feeling relieved.

Since they like him so much, I don't have to worry that they won't be able to accept the reality when they learn about their identities in the future.

Roxanne took a set of tableware for Lucian. "You haven't had dinner, right? Let's eat together."

After her interactions with him the past few days, her attitude toward him had also done a one-eighty. She was no longer as awkward before him.

Nodding, Lucian sat down across from her.

"Is something the matter that you came over at this hour?" Roxanne asked once more.

Lucian glanced at the children around them before murmuring, "We'll talk about that later. Let's eat first."

Clocking his expression, Roxanne bobbed her head in understanding. She didn't press him for an answer anymore.

The family of five was finally together again. That made the three children so happy that they were all smiles even as they ate.

After dinner, they knew their parents had something to discuss, so they tactfully went to the back garden to play.

Chapter 1460

Roxanne took the tableware into the kitchen. Initially, she thought that Lucian had something important to say and planned to take him to the study to talk.

To her surprise, Lucian was standing at the kitchen door with his head lowered as he rolled his sleeves up when she whirled around.

Before she could wrap her mind around it, the man had already strolled over casually. Picking up the bowl she had washed, he wiped it dry.

Seeing that, Roxanne was again startled.

That action of his gave her the illusion that they were a couple who had been married for a long time.

Moreover, the picture of the high and mighty CEO of Farwell Group entering the kitchen gave others the impression that he had stepped down from his pedestal.

Sheer shock deluged her.

Conversely, Lucian nonchalantly started speaking of the purpose of his visit. "My father wants to go to the kindergarten to take Essie home tomorrow."

As his words drifted into her ears, Roxanne abruptly snapped back to reality. "Have you agreed?"

She remembered him saying back then that his consent was required if his parents wanted to take Estella away.

"Yeah. He seems to have misunderstood the relationship between you and my mother. For that reason, I think he should have a look for himself," Lucian replied.

Although his father didn't spell things out, he knew the man suspected that Estella was only hostile toward his mother because of Roxanne's instigation.

Since Elias had such a concern, he didn't mind allowing his father to see where exactly Estella's aversion to Sonya came from.

Roxanne nodded in acknowledgment. "Got it. Essie might be reluctant to leave me for the time being. Anyway, I'll talk to her."

At that, Lucian cast her a grateful look. "Thank you."

Lowering her gaze, Roxanne chuckled airily. "They were the ones who raised Essie in the first place. It's normal for the elderly to miss their grandchildren. However, Essie is pretty stubborn. I'll do my best to coax her."

Despite saying that, she was actually worried inwardly. For some reason, Estella was exceedingly averse to Sonya. Hence, she was afraid that the latter would upset the little girl.

Seemingly seeing right through her, Lucian softened his voice and promised, "I'll get my mother to see reason slowly. I'm sorry you have to put up with her."

When Roxanne heard that, she stilled imperceptibly. A glimmer of elation flashed across her eyes.

I thought he would, at the very least, maintain a neutral stance between me and Sonya. I honestly didn't expect him to side with me. It turns out that I'm not the only one working hard when it comes to his mother's attitude toward our relationship.

For a moment, she didn't quite know how to describe her feelings.

Some time passed before she gradually composed herself. Lifting her eyes to him, she whispered, "Thank you."

Lucian stared at her intently. "I should be the one thanking you for your willingness to persist until now despite my mother's attitude toward you."

After he had said that, his gaze darkened a shade. Guilt stained his eyes. "If she realizes her mistakes in the future, I think—"

Before he had finished speaking, Roxanne had already chortled aloud. "As long as Mrs. Farwell can divest herself of her prejudice toward the boys and me, I'll be more than glad to be a family with her."

She sounded incredibly sincere, her voice devoid of any pretense.

Locking gazes with her earnest eyes, Lucian couldn't help leaning toward her bit by bit.

Meanwhile, Roxanne was inexorably taken aback when she sensed his approach.

By the time she gathered her wits about her, the man had already captured her lips. His hands spanned her waist, leaving her with no way of escaping.

Fortunately, Lucian merely kissed her briefly. Shortly after, he dropped his hold on her.

Chapter 1461

Upon seeing that Roxanne was still in a daze, Lucian couldn't resist lifting his hand and caressing her face.

"You..."

Roxanne was stupefied for several seconds before she belatedly snapped back to her senses. Mild embarrassment showed in her eyes.

While the man had sneaked up on her countless times when they were in Miralaea, she could more or less postulate the reason after the fact.

But this time, I didn't do anything. Why did he simply kiss me?

Innocence was written all over Lucian's face. "Sorry, I lost control."

At that answer, Roxanne's eyes went wide in fury. However, she couldn't really censure him either. All she could do was turn around as though nothing had happened and put the washed tableware aside.

The two of them spent some time doing the dishes. When they exited the kitchen, Archie, Benny, and Estella pestered Lucian to play with them for a while.

Only when it was rather late did Lucian drive home.

Needless to say, Roxanne saw him off with the three children.

When they had gone back into the mansion, she watched as Archie and Benny got into bed before making her way to her bedroom to take care of Estella.

"Essie, would you like to go home with your grandpa and grandma tomorrow?"

Lying on the bed, Roxanne only started coaxing Estella after spending a long time bracing herself mentally.

As soon as Estella heard that, her initially smiling face fell. She clutched at Roxanne's arm tightly. "No! I want to be with you, Mommy!"

Roxanne hugged her comfortingly. "I want to be with you too, Essie, but your grandpa and grandma miss you. Why don't you go back and keep them company for two days? Then, I'll go over and bring you back here again. How about that?"

It took a lengthy persuasion before Estella was finally less averse to that idea.

Early the following morning, Roxanne sent all three children to the kindergarten. When she was planning to leave, Estella clung onto the hem of her clothes, unwilling to loosen her grip.

She patiently cajoled the little girl for a while before the latter entered the kindergarten at long last.

Nevertheless, Estella remained morose the entire day as her mind was occupied with the fact that she had to go back with her grandparents later in the day.

In the afternoon, the kindergarten hosted a mini sports competition. Only then did Estella's spark of life gradually return. Under Archie and Benny's lead, she got along smashing with the other children.

At the sight of the children all fired up, Jeffrey and the other teachers wore expressions of gratification.

"I never expected Ms. Jarvis to be Essie's biological mother," Jeffrey lamented.

It wasn't until he had spoken that the others dared comment on that subject.

"Exactly. I didn't expect Essie to be Archie and Benny's biological sister. No wonder she always clung to the boys when she used to like to keep to herself."

Likewise, gladness shone in Pippa's eyes as she regarded the three children.

She had been teaching Estella for a long time, so she was happier than anyone else to see the little girl's personality turning bubbly.

Hearing that they were clearly favoring Roxanne, Ophelia was disgruntled. Even so, she went along with the flow. "I know, right? The world of the rich is really complicated."

The instant those words rang out, Pippa eyed her strangely.

She couldn't shake off the feeling that Ophelia's words carried an underlying meaning to them.

Sensing Pippa's gaze, Ophelia chuckled blithely. "But then, they've got a happy ending. The fact that the kids have a whole family is far more important than anything else."

Following that remark, the sense of incongruity within Pippa finally dissipated. She bobbed her head in agreement.

No sooner had she retracted her gaze than a chilly gleam glinted in Ophelia's eyes.

Hah! Isn't Roxanne and her family's so-called happy ending thanks to that b*tch stealing my best friend's man? If it weren't for her, Aubree wouldn't have ended up in such a state today! I'll definitely teach this family a lesson on Aubree's behalf!

Chapter 1462

Ophelia couldn't help but recall how she lived frugally overseas as she watched the kids having fun.

Without Aubree's assistance, she likely would have encountered difficulties in carrying on with her studies.

Initially, Aubree wanted her to join Pearson Group after she returned to the country.

Ophelia was filled with deep gratitude for Aubree, who went above and beyond to assist her.

When Aubree voiced her discontentment about Roxanne, Ophelia was quick to join in, expressing her own disdain as well.

Alas, none of them expected that Pearson Group would meet its end before Ophelia could return to the country.

According to Aubree, the downfall of the Pearson family was mainly due to Roxanne's influence on Lucian. She was able to snatch him away from Aubree and convince him to do whatever it took to destroy the Pearson family. There were, of course, other causes that culminated in the eventual demise of the Pearson family, but Roxanne's interference was ultimately the most decisive factor.

Roxanne had hurt her friend and brought about the ruin of the Pearson family, leaving Ophelia without any opportunity to achieve her ambitions.

Hence, it was only natural for Ophelia to despise Roxanne.

Getting a job at the kindergarten after her return was also Aubree's idea.

Since Roxanne was the cause of their misery, they must teach her a lesson!

Ophelia agreed to Aubree's suggestion readily.

Her goal was to inflict harm upon Roxanne's children in order to teach her a lesson, but she hadn't gotten a chance to do so for the past few days.

The sports competition was the perfect opportunity for her to carry out her plan.

Ophelia kept her gaze on the kids as she racked her brains to figure out a plan.

Meanwhile, the children were focused on the games.

The first game they took part in was the puzzle game.

It was a competition, so the teachers had selected some difficult puzzles for the kids.

The other kids had been born into affluent households and had received additional tutoring beyond their regular schooling, yet they were completely bewildered by the challenging puzzles.

Archie and Benny were pleased with themselves after completing their puzzles with ease. They started clapping their hands smugly and turned around to find that Estella was also clapping her hands with them.

The boys exchanged a look and assumed Estella had yet to complete her puzzle. They were about to go and help her when they realized she had already finished her puzzle.

"Essie, you're so smart!" Benny praised her excitedly.

Estella's lips curled into a smug grin.

The other children forgot to complete their own puzzles and gathered to lavish praises on the three of them.

The three children were surrounded by their friends.

The next game was an obstacle course that required them to put on blindfolds. Archie and Benny were the first ones to make it through the obstacle course with their blindfolds on. After taking them off, they turned their attention to Estella, offering her assistance as she attempted to complete the same challenge.

Under their guidance, Estella soon completed the course. Her grin grew wider.

They were so engrossed in completing the games that they didn't notice Ophelia's gaze on them.

Jeffrey and the other teachers were paying attention to the kids, too.

It took Ophelia some time before she came up with an idea. Carefully, she observed her surroundings.

Once she made sure no one was looking at her, she sneaked away and ran to the equipment room.

The children's sneakers for their upcoming game were neatly arranged in the equipment room.

Their parents had lovingly prepared the shoes for them, taking great care to label their shoes with their name stickers.

Ophelia meandered around the area until she eventually spotted Benny's shoes at the most outward corner. Her expression was dark as she picked them up.

Chapter 1463

The next game was hopping on one foot. The kids filed to the equipment room to change into their sneakers.

After changing into his shoes, Benny felt slightly uncomfortable. He assumed that it was probably because he had not worn these types of shoes in quite some time and wasn't used to the fit. Nonetheless, he didn't give it too much thought and kept going.

Archie and Estella were urging him to hurry up, so he pushed aside the thought of his uncomfortable shoes and hurried over to them, beaming happily.

This was an individual game, and Benny's turn wasn't until later.

After Archie and Estella finished their turns, they stood aside to watch Benny play.

"Remember to be careful. Safety comes first," Pippa told them repeatedly.

Ophelia stood aside and acted like she was ready to spring into action and protect the children at any moment.

The three children had done a good job in the previous games, so when it was Benny's turn, their friends cheered him on and watched him expectantly.

Benny's competitive nature was unleashed, and he began to hop quickly.

He picked up speed as his friends cheered him on.

When he realized something was wrong, it was too late for him to stop.

"Benny!" Archie yelled.

He was the first one to take note of Benny's strange behavior and ran over to his brother hastily.

Benny did his best to halt in his tracks.

However, the harder he tried, the more out of balance he got.

In the end, he toppled to the ground.

Beneath him was a hurdle that they were supposed to hop over.

Crack!

Benny crashed into the hurdle, breaking it in half. Wincing in pain, he landed awkwardly, his hand twisted beneath him in an unnatural position. He felt a sharp pain flaring up his arm.

Without warning, Benny, who was typically strong, burst into noisy tears.

"Benny, what happened? Let me see your injury!"

Ophelia stood the closest to Benny, so she was the first one who rushed up to him and embraced him tightly. She was also careful to wipe away the oil on the ground discreetly with her free hand.

Archie soon arrived and knelt down beside Benny. Spotting Benny's injured wrist, he exclaimed, "Ms. Smith, I think Benny's wrist is fractured!"

The boys practically grew up in the research institute. They might not be skilled in medicine but had learned something from their time there.

It was rare to see Benny wailing loudly, so Archie was sure that his younger brother was seriously injured.

"Ms. Smith, let's bring Benny to the doctor! He must be in pain!"

Ophelia pretended to agree. "Calm down. I'll bring him to the doctor now!"

Despite saying that, she slowly removed Benny's sneakers, taking the time to put them away in an obscure location before any of the other teachers arrived. She then brought Benny to the infirmary.

Benny didn't stop bawling his eyes out during the entire journey.

Estella had never seen Benny crying hysterically before. She felt a stab of pain in her heart as she took Archie's hand. "Is Benny seriously injured? I think he... I'm scared."

Her eyes turned red as she urged, "Let's call Mommy and ask her to come. I'm sure she's capable enough of treating Benny!"

Archie was feeling quite flustered, but he managed to assure her calmly, "There's no need to be scared. The doctor will look at Benny and assess his condition. If it turns out that something serious has happened, then we'll call Mommy right away. She's busy at work, so we shouldn't disturb her unless it's absolutely necessary."

After hearing his comforting words, Estella calmed down a little. She stopped talking and clutched Archie's clothes nervously.

Chapter 1464

Jeffrey, Pippa, and Ophelia brought Benny to the infirmary while the other teachers stayed back to take care of the remaining children.

Benny was sobbing uncontrollably, so the atmosphere in the infirmary was incredibly tense.

"Doctor, how is he?" Jeffrey asked in a tight voice when the doctor completed the examination.

Never mind if this had happened in the past. Benny is now Mr. Farwell's son. If something were to occur while he was under my watch in the kindergarten, I can't bear the consequences!

Beside him, Archie and Estella lifted their heads to gaze at the doctor earnestly.

The doctor retrieved a medical kit to dress Benny's scratches. "The abrasions aren't concerning, but I believe he may have a bruised cartilage. It's advisable to take him to the hospital for a comprehensive examination."

Hearing that, Jeffrey's vision swam, and he nearly stumbled on his feet.

Archie's expression was grim as he led Estella out of the infirmary to call Roxanne.

He knew that Benny's injury was serious as the doctor advised them to send him to the hospital.

Roxanne was immersed in her research for new medication in her laboratory when her phone suddenly lit up, indicating an incoming call. However, she was too busy to take it.

"Dr. Jarvis, it's Archie," someone told her.

Hearing that, Roxanne put a halt to her work and paused her experiment to answer the call.

As soon as the call was connected, Archie spoke in a rush without giving her a chance to say anything. "Mommy, Benny is hurt. I think he needs to go to the hospital. Are you free to come over now?"

Roxanne was stunned. Benny is hurt?

Archie's voice sounded composed. "If you're busy, I'll call Mr. Farwell."

"No. Wait for me. I'll be there right away." Roxanne snapped out of her reverie and asked sternly, "Is your teacher with you? Give the watch to her so I can talk to her."

After learning that Roxanne would be there, Archie relaxed and obediently gave his watch to Pippa.

Roxanne asked which hospital they were sending Benny to before hanging up in a rush. She then informed Linda and left the research institute hastily.

She had no intention of snubbing Lucian by not wanting him to be present.

It was simply that she was a doctor and knew that her expertise was more beneficial than his in this situation.

In the infirmary, Pippa and Jeffrey prepared to send Benny to the hospital.

Ophelia pretended to ask, "Should we all go together? What about the other kids from the class? Should I tell the other teachers to take care of them?"

Pippa answered without hesitation, "It's fine. I can manage, so you should go back to the class."

Jeffrey wasn't about to let her go to the hospital alone. "Ms. Ward and I will go together. You can leave now."

Ophelia expressed her concern pretentiously before turning to leave.

When she returned to the field, the other kids had already started another game under their teachers' lead.

Ophelia made sure no one saw her retrieving Benny's shoes which she had hidden earlier. She worked diligently to rid the footwear of the oil stains and then arranged them alongside the other sneakers.

Once all that was done, she returned to the other children with a smile on her face.

The children gathered around Ophelia to inquire about Benny's injury. Internally, Ophelia was elated, though on the outside she kept a worried expression.

“I’m not sure, but you must be careful to avoid getting hurt as Benny did.”

The children nodded readily.