Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 389

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 389

Chapter 389

The next morning, Roxanne was in the research institute, troubled by the issue of business **partners**.

She had contacted everyone she could in the country in the past few days, but her efforts were to no avail.

Many did not have a wide network of connections in Horington. Even if they did, they were not going to fight against Farwell Group for her.

Three days after, Roxanne was lost.

Right as she was in the middle of despairing, someone knocked on her office door.

Colby entered with Jonathan behind him.

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"Dr. Jarvis, Mr. Queen has come," Colby informed her.

Hearing that, Roxanne raised her head in shock. When she saw the man behind Colby, she was momentarily taken aback.

Queen Group's herbs have already been delivered, so what is he doing here?

"Dr. Jarvis." Jonathan smiled at her before scanning her office.

He wanted to take the opportunity to find a photo of the children's father, but he only found a photo of Roxanne and the two boys on her desk.

Jonathan then looked back at her and sat down opposite her.

Colby already knew why Jonathan was there, so he also sat down on the couch without any hesitation.

"Mr. Queen, did... something happen?" Roxanne held her breath, worried that Jonathan was going to follow Queen Group's wishes.

Noticing her worries, Jonathan flashed her a reassuring smile. "Here's what happened. My grandpa chided me again after I went home yesterday. He told me that my compensation to you still isn't enough, so last night, I've been thinking about what else I can do for you."

Upon hearing him, Roxanne stiffened.

Nevertheless, Jonathan continued, "I'm in the medical industry too, so I know how much herbs the research institute would use. Queen Group's supply will only be of help for a short period of time, and our group's supply alone would not be enough for your work."

At that, Roxanne frowned and helplessly said, "You're right. I've also been seeking collaboration with other herb suppliers these few days, but I've been unable to find anyone for that. Mr. Queen, **it seems** like you have a plan?"

Jonathan bobbed his head. "I'll be honest with you. Although Queen Group isn't as powerful as

Farwell Group in Horington, we're still quite influential in the medical industry. Many herb **suppliers in Horington have received** Queen Group's help when they were just starting out, so **these companies** would more or less consider a collaboration with your establishment as long as I raise the topic with them."

Roxanne's heart skipped a beat at that, but she still hesitantly uttered, "Isn't this a little too risky for Queen Group? Queen Group has always been on good terms with Farwell Group, and I've seen the good relationship your family has with the Farwells. If Mrs. Farwell finds out that you've been doing this..."

Roxanne was grateful for Jonathan to offer her a helping hand in the matter, but she had to put herself in his shoes as well.

If Sonya were to find out that Jonathan helped her out, and if their families' relationship turned tense because of that, Roxanne would not know how she could make it up to Jonathan.

However, Jonathan gave her a nonchalant smile. (Naturally, I've thought about that as well. Don't worry, Dr. Jarvis. The few herb suppliers I've contacted aren't small–scale businesses in Horington. Moreover, trust me when I say that Farwell Group won't learn about this. Even if they do, they might close their eyes to this."

With Lucian backing him up, even if Sonya did find out about something, it was unlikely that she would be able to do anything about it.

However, Roxanne did not know that Lucian was involved. Thus, she was still ill at ease even after hearing Jonathan's response.

No one knew better than Roxanne the hostility Sonya had toward her.

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She was already glad that Queen Group was continuing with their contract as she did not want to drag Queen Group into the mess.

Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 390

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 390

Chapter 390

Jonathan could see that Roxanne was worried, and he could decipher what she was worried about, so he rephrased his words. "Queen Group won't have a falling out with Farwell Group because of something trivial as this, and I won't risk Queen Group either. Naturally, I've made all the preparations before coming here to talk about this with you."

The hesitance on Roxanne's face slowly faded away as she stared at his confident expression. However, she still could not stop herself from asking, "But why are you helping me out? Is it just because I cured Old Mr. Queen's illness?"

When Jonathan thought about his conversation with Lucian the night before, the thoughts he had whilst he looked into Roxanne's eyes changed.

However, Roxanne only felt strange as she stared back at him.

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Half a beat later, Jonathan slowly stated, "My grandpa had been bedbound for years, and it's all thanks to you, Dr. Jarvis, that he can recover to this point. Moreover, you've said before that my grandpa was already on the verge of death when you took over his case. Therefore, you're his savior. This is a great favor you've done to the Queen family, and my grandpa even thinks of you as one of the Queens. He has asked me to be extra considerate with you."

Roxanne was suddenly reminded of the way Alfred tried to match-make her and Jonathan.

Hence, upon hearing Jonathan's words, she began wondering if Alfred had yet to give up on that.

An apologetic look then crossed her face as she solemnly told Jonathan, "Please thank Old Mr. Queen for me. It's my duty as a doctor to treat and save patients. Also, it's not as if I've not received anything in return; the Queen family has paid for my service, so we don't owe each other anything. Old Mr. Queen has no need to keep this matter in mind anymore.

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After a few seconds of silence, Roxanne continued in a grave voice, "Moreover, I already have two children. I've already given my clear rejection abput the thing Old Mr. Queen mentioned last time. I'm sure you don't agree to it either." –

Right as those words were out of her mouth, the expressions of the two other people in the room changed.

An exasperated look appeared on Jonathan's face. Is it that easy to misunderstand my words? Even Lucian misunderstood my words when I talked about this with him last night. Now, Roxanne's doing the **same**.

In contrast, Colby's heart sunk, and his eyes widened.

He knew that Roxanne had gotten closer to Jonathan after Roxanne treated Jonathan's **grandfather**.

However, he had no idea that Alfred had borne such thoughts before.

Even though Roxanne had not voiced it out loud Colby could guess that Alfred wanted to match **make her with Jonathan.**

It took Jonathan a while before he could dismiss the exasperation he felt. Amused, he then explained to Roxanne, "It has nothing to do with that. You've already rejected him, so how can my grandpa still insist on it? We just feel that the Queen family should have a friend like you after you saved my grandpa and after we learned about your personality."

Finally, Roxanne sighed in relief and smiled at him. "In that case, I'll have to go along with this, Mr. Queen. Regardless of whether the few herb suppliers you mentioned will work with us or not, I'm still grateful to the Queen family to lend us a helping hand. Please allow me to treat you to a meal another time."

Jonathan had an equally bright smile on his face. "Good to hear that. For that meal I'll be treated to, I'll definitely convince those herb suppliers. So, Dr. Jarvis, please wait for my good news!"

The two then chatted a little more about the herb suppliers before Jonathan rose to his feet to leave.

Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 391

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 391

Chapter 391

Roxanne meant it when she said she would treat Jonathan to a meal.

That very night itself, she booked a room at a restaurant and sent him a message to inform him.

Jonathan agreed to meet her on the weekend. He then sent Lucian a message and asked if he would be joining them.

In any case, the meal was a gesture of appreciation from Roxanne. Since Lucian also lent a hand, it was only right that he attended the dinner.

On Lucian's end, he frowned and hesitated when he saw Jonathan's message.

If he made an appearance, Roxanne might make a run for it.

Just as he was pondering on it, Jonathan sent another message: Dr. Jarvis is giving me a treat to thank me. Although she isn't aware that you have helped, I don't see why you can't enjoy a treat from her too.

As Lucian read the message, his gaze darkened as he replied after a long while: Let's go together then.

Jonathan raised his brows when he saw the reply. He could not wait to see what might happen during the weekend.

Judging from the way Roxanne and Lucian behaved, they must have had some kind of conflict.

Furthermore, with Sonya getting in between them, their relationship must have been difficult of late.

He wondered what might happen when they actually met each other that weekend for dinner.

The night of the dinner came, and Roxanne arrived at the restaurant ten minutes earlier.

Just as she entered the private room, she saw two men sitting in there.

Jonathan was talking to Lucian. When they heard her enter, both men turned and looked in her direction.

Getting to his feet, Jonathan greeted with a smile, "Dr. Jarvis."

Roxanne *no*dded in acknowledgment. However, she started panicking when she saw the man situing next to Jonathan.

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In that instant, all she wanted was to leave.

Then again, it would make her look awkward.

Roxanne stood at the door and did not know what to do.

On the other end, Lucian was sitting in the private room with a deadpan expression. He stared at **Rox**anne like a beast targeting its prey.

In that instant, the atmosphere of the room became very tense.

Noticing something was amiss, Jonathan bumped Lucian on his arm discreetly before explaining to Roxanne with an innocent smile, "When I got here, Lucian has just finished his appointment, so I invited him along since all of us know one another. Dr. Jarvis, you don't mind, do you?"

Outwardly, he seemed to be seeking Roxanne's permission. However, in truth, Roxanne did not have a choice.

Since Lucian was already there, it would not be nice if she asked him to leave.

Furthermore, Jonathan had no idea about them. If she showed an aversion toward Lucian, Jonathan might start asking questions.

Roxanne had no wish for anyone to probe her about what had transpired between her and Lucian.

The two men did not know what was on her mind; they only saw her dimmed expression. Noticing that there was no response from her, the two men exchanged glances.

At that moment, Jonathan regretted his decision to bring Lucian along. He realized that it might have been too

abrupt. I hope I don't cause more problems between the two of them...

With the same deadpan expression on his face, Lucian got up and said, "Since Dr. Jarvis is here, I won't disturb the two of you."

With that, he was about to leave.

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It was only then that Roxanne returned to her senses and uttered, "Wait. You're a friend of Mr. Queen, Mr. Farwell, so you're always welcome. Please take a seat and join us for dinner."

Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 392

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 392

Chapter 392

Ignoring their responses, Roxanne proceeded to sit down in front of Jonathan.

When Jonathan saw that Lucian was still standing there, he stated quickly, "Lucian, since Dr. **Jarvis do**esn't mind, join us. Recently, Dr. Jarvis' research institute has encountered some problems. You may be able to help her!"

Lucian merely frowned before sitting down.

Since Roxanne did not run away upon seeing him, he decided to stay on as well.

However, Roxanne acted as if Lucian was not there after inviting him to join them. When the dishes were served, she raised her glass and remarked, "Thank you for helping me out with the herb suppliers, Mr. Queen."

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Jonathan did not make a big deal out of it. Clinking glasses with her, he re welcome, Dr. Jarvis. I'm not the only one who has helped you with regard to this issue."

Upon hearing that, Roxanne frowned, as she did not understand what he meant.

Jonathan was about to say more when someone glared at him.

Sensing Lucian's stare, Jonathan acted as if nothing happened and changed to another topic. "If your research institute isn't that great, those herb suppliers won't be bothered with me. So, I think you have yourself to thank. Your abilities are outstanding."

Roxanne smiled when she heard that. "Have the herb suppliers come to a decision yet? If necessary, I can speak with them personally."

After all, they would be working with her research institute even though they were doing that as a favor to Jonathan.

She would be the best person to explain the situation at the research institute.

However, Jonathan shook his head. "There will be no need to. A few of them have already agreed to cooperate with your research institute. However, you will still need to discuss the business proposal with them in detail."

In other words, the deal had been sealed. All she needed to do now was to discuss the proposal with the herb suppliers.

Seemingly pleased, Roxanne let out a sigh of relief. The issue with the herb suppliers had been bothering her for a long iime. She could finally relax.

The moment she resolved the issue for the research institute, she could relocate overseas with **Archie and Benny without any worries**.

No one would ever give her any problems again.

With that thought in mind. Roxanne subconsciously turned to look at Lucian.

However, she met his unfathomable gaze, and it startled ber.

Lucian had yet to start eating. In fact, he had been listening to their conversation all the while.

Since they were talking about business, he wanted to see Roxanne's reaction.

He realized that she gradually relaxed as the discussion about the research institute went on.

That was when his eyes dimmed. Once again, Roxanne had been under immense pressure, and he was not aware of it.

When Roxanne turned io look at him, he failed to look away in time.

Their gazes met for a long time before Roxanne returned to her senses. Clenching her fists hard, she averted his gaze.

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Her heart skipped a beat when she thought of the way Lucian looked at her.

The notion of her going abroad made her glance at Lucian,

But why was he looking at me?

When Roxanne retracted her gaze, Lucian did the same, albeit unhappily.

Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 393

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 393

Chapter 393

Jonathan noticed the way they looked into each other's eyes and had the sense to say nothing.

Only after they retracted their gazes did he smile and say to Roxanne, "Those herb suppliers that **I have conta**cted only have branch offices in Horington, but they should be able to provide a consistent flow of supply to your research institute. Is that all right with you. Dr. Jarvis?"

Pulling herself out of her reverie, Roxanne put on an appropriate smile. "Since they are introduced by you, I am confident of their capabilities. Furthermore, a small research institute like ours won't be requiring lots of herbs. The branch offices should be able to satisfy our demands."

Raising his brows, Jonathan uttered, "It may be small now, but with you around, who knows what may happen in the future?"

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Roxanne smiled and did not respond. Instead, she asked, "What is the plan for the business proposal with those herb suppliers?"

Right now, all she wanted was to resolve the issue before Sonya could react.

Once she settled the supply issue and left the country, she would have nothing to do with the research institute. That way, Sonya would not make things difficult for them again.

Jonathan answered her query, "Their main offices are in Summerbank. It's best that you go there in person whenever you're available, Dr. Jarvis."

Hearing him, Roxanne agreed in a heartbeat, "I can go there anytime. Once they confirm the time, please inform me."

Jonathan nodded.

Once the discussion regarding business was over things were a bit awkward in the private room.

Jonathan began to panic when he looked at the two of them.

Although Roxanne did not chase Lucian away, the both of them had not spoken a single word to one another.

In the end, Jonathan decided to help them.

"Lucian, how has Essie been for the past two days?" asked Jonathan innocently as he took a mouthful of food.

Both Lucian and Roxanne's expressions changed when they heard that.

Not expecting Jonathan to mention Estella out of the blue, Lucian instinctively glanced at Roxanne, only to see she was busy eating. Furrowing his brows, he replied unhappily, "She's fine, **but** her mood has been unstable. James has been coming to see her quite frequently."

Ever since Estella knew that Roxanne planned to relocate to another country, it had been bothering her. Even though Estella was trying her best to get well, her mood swings were still

evident.

Estella had become like that because of Roxanne Yet, the latter did not seem to care about her condition.

At that thought, the temperature around Lucian dropped gradually.

The moment Roxanne heard Jonathan mention Estella, she tried her best to keep calm and not ask about the girl's condition.

Upon hearing Lucian's reply, she felt even guiltier.

Roxanne was aware she was the cause of Estella's mood swings, but she still said those harsh words to the latter.

Essie must hate me very much now...

Once again, Jonathan spoke. "What exactly happened? Essie's condition has been stable for quite a while now. In fact, I thought she was getting better. Before we can celebrate the good news, her condition worsens again. At this rate, how is Essie ever going to make a full recovery?"

As he was saying that, Jonathan cast a glance at Roxanne, who was sitting in front of him.

Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 394

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 394

Chapter 394

All the mention of Estella's condition, Roxanne heart clenchied. Yet, she couldn't show it in front of Lucian,

Just when she was determined to leipni indifference, Jonathan aborty tumical the subject to her "I remember Essic like you lou back when you came to rent my grandfather, Dr. Jarvis I wonder if her condition will improve it she spends more time with you."

Alier saying that he nonchalantly added, "I was the first time I have ever seen her showing such Giver for someone else that I was shocked them."

Roxanne's hand lightened around the fork in de hand. She didn't know how to tell him that she was the reason for listella's gravanced condition

At the side, Lucian agreed with Jonathan and stable at her with lyrim look in his eyes,

In the past, shed relent as long as I brought up Essieu torchee But this time, it's painfull y clear that she has already handened her heart to it all.

Silence reigned at the dining table, and Roxanne could distinctly scuse the women's gazes on her. It was as though they were both forcing her to respond

Verily, she had no idea how the meal turned into such a crise allir

A long while later, she forcclully composed herself. Then, she liliced her cycs calmly and said to Jonathan, "I'm also very worried about Essie's condition, but I don't think i have that much influence over her. In terms of keeping her company, I led that Ms. Pearson is far more suited to do so. After all, they're going to be mother and hughter in the future."

As her words rang out. Jonathan was inexorably stunned,

He instinctively wanted to refute that, for she was Estella's biological mother despite Aubree wanting to be Estella's stepmother,

However, hic then abruptly realized that she had no inkling about it

Authat thought, words cluded him, and he didn't quite know how to reply to her. He glanced at the man beside him in embarrassment,

The instant Lucian heard Roxanne's response, hik gaze darkeneala shade, and his lips curved into a siirk. "Ms. Jarvis is right. Essic has nothing to do with her, so wlay should she help to take care of Essie?"

Roxanne's expression stillened for a heartbeat when she heard that, but she ultimately didn't contradict him.

At her tacit agreement, fury blazed in Lucian's eyes

Noticing the tense atmosphere between the two of them. Jonathan felt a touch guilty and **regr**etted having broached that subject.

I initially thought that Roxanne would relent slightly upon hearing about Essie's condition and decide to visit her since she's the latter's birth mother. Alas, I forgot that she's in the dark about the truth. Besides, she was the one who personally told her that she was going abroad. Therefore, she likely knows full

well that she's the reason Essie is emotionally unstable. But really, I never thought that she'd be so cruel to that little girl.

Following that line of thought, a scrutinizing look entered his gaze as he studied Roxanne.

I wonder if she'd regret her remark today if she were to learn the truth in the future.

Regardless of his wandering mind, he still remembered to clean up the mess in his wake. He casually cleared his throat. "It was just an offhand suggestion. I forgot that you've still got to deal with the matters concerning the research institute, so you probably haven't the time anyway, Dr. Jarvis."

Roxanne remained silent.

Chuckling sheepishly, Jonathan raised his glass to her. "Let's not talk about this anymore. Here's to a smooth collaboration with the medicinal herb suppliers, Dr. Jarvis! I'll contact you right after they've confirmed the time."

At that, Roxanne forced a smile. "Thank you for acting as the middleman, Mr. Queen."

Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 395

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 395

Chapter 395

Jonathan expended a great deal of effort before he managed to smooth things over. He then kept on engaging Roxanne in conversation about the present pharmaceutical industry in Horington.

Roxanne patiently chatted with him.

Meanwhile, Lucian didn't utter a single word further, merely downing his wine silently,

When Jonathan glimpsed more than half the bottle of wine gone, he hastily concluded the meal. "It's late now, so let's call it a day. I'll urge the medicinal herb suppliers to finalize the time as soon as possible."

Roxanne didn't want to stay any longer, so she agreed unequivocally.

The three of them went downstairs side by side. Roxanne was going to foot the bill, but Jonathan stopped her from doing so.

"I was merely joking back then. How could I possibly have you treat me to a meal? If my grandfather were to learn about it, he'd skin me alive!"

While saying that, he quickly went over to settle the bill. Subsequently, he quirked a brow smugly after walking back to Lucian.

Lucian frowned without saying anything.

Seeing that Jonathan had brought Alfred up, and the pittance was indeed a drop in the bucket to him, Roxanne didn't insist.

By the time they left the restaurant, it was already close to nine o'clock.

Although they were all acquaintances, Roxanne had drunk quite a bit at the dinner table and was slightly buzzed. As the night breeze blew past, it sobered her up considerably.

Jonathan's voice rang out beside her. "How are you going home, Dr. Jarvis? Would you like to hitch a ride with me?"

In truth, Roxanne drove there. But since she had imbibed, she naturally couldn't drive home.

Hearing that, Roxanne lifted her eyes and scanned the traffic. "Thank you for the offer, Mr. Queen. But it's okay since my place is out of your way back to the Queen residence. I'll hail a taxi myself."

After she had said that, she headed toward the side of the road.

Jonathan cast a look at the man beside him.

With a frown marring his countenance, Lucian stared at her fragile back in the night with a dark gaze.

"It happens to be rush hour now, so it'd take eons for you to get a taxi. I'll give you a ride. Anyway, we'll be traveling by car, not on foot," Jonathan hurriedly called out to Roxanne.

Roxanne halted in her

steps. It's rather inappropriate for me to turn down such a trivial offer repeatedly when he has just done me such a huge favor:

Clocking her hesitance, Jonathan added, "Don't stand on ceremony with me. My grandfather specifically urged me to take good care of you when he knew that I'd be having dinner with you."

Unable to decline further, Roxanne turned around and walked back to the man. She flashed him a polite smile. "My apologies for troubling you, then."

Jonathan fervently waved his hands in dismissal. |"Not at all! It'd only be troublesome if you'd adamantly refused to allow me to give you a ride."

As he said that, he glanced at Lucian beside him meaningfully.

However, Roxanne didn't catch the implicit meaning of his words. She thought he was referring to Alfred, so she merely chuckled without replying to that.

And so, the three of them walked to the parking lot side by side.

Only when they arrived at the parking lot did Roxanne notice that Lucian had been following them all the way. She promptly found it a tad strange.

When they reached Jonathan's car, she noticed Lucian's car parked right next to it. At once, a conjecture popped into her mind.

Earlier. Jonathan's so-

called accidental encounter was actually just an excuse. In reality, they came together!

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That suspicion flashed across her mind.

But on second thought, he didn't have to tell

such a lie. After all, he has no idea about my relationship with Lucian, so such a ploy would be superfluous..

Putting it at the back of her mind, she got into the car with Jonathan.

Previous Chapter

Next Chapter

Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 396

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 396

Chapter 396

"Mr. Farwell?"

When Cayden saw his employer walking over with Roxanne, he subconsciously presumed that the latter would be getting into their car. Unexpectedly, he saw her getting into the car with Jonathan while Lucian stood outside.

After a moment, he decided to call out to the man cautiously.

His brows furrowing slightly, Lucian bent down and climbed into the car.

Cayden slowly started the car and drove out of the parking lot.

Meanwhile, in the adjacent car, Jonathan asked Roxanne for her address and ordered the driver to drop her home first.

In response, the driver murmured an acknowledgment.

He moved to start the car, but it simply wouldn't start.

It still didn't work after multiple tries. "The car seems to have broken down, Mr. Queen," the driver reported helplessly.

Upon hearing that, Jonathan imperceptibly swept his gaze over Roxanne beside him. He wore a grim expression. "It was just fine when we came over. Why did it suddenly break down?"

A conflicted expression manifested on the driver's face. "Uh... I haven't been driving this car much. I didn't take it for maintenance either, so I don't know what happened. How about you wait here for a while, and I'll go back and retrieve another car before coming back to pick you up?"

Following that, Jonathan turned to Roxanne to seek her opinion.

Roxanne similarly didn't expect such an incident. When she heard that the driver had to go to such trouble, she wavered for a while before suggesting, "My car is nearby. We can take my car."

I've got to return to retrieve my car tomorrow, so it makes no difference if I go to the Qu een residence instead.

As soon as Jonathan heard that, his expression froze. Unbidden, a headache assailed him,

Gah! I actually forgot that she drove here. If we were to take her car, the arrangements to onight would go to waste!

In the front, the driver wore a troubled expression on his face. He eyed Jonathan, waiting for the **latter's instructions**.

Frowning, Jonathan countered solemnly,

"There's no need to go to such trouble, Lucian is definitely still nearby, so we'll just ask him for a ride."

At his proposal, Roxanne's brows knitted together. At the same time, disapproval stained her

features. She was going to demur, but the man had already made the call.

In no time, the person on the other end of the phone answered the call.

Thus, she had no choice but to swallow the demurral on the tip of her tongue.

"What's the matter?" Lucian's alluring voice echoed in the car.

"Where are you now, Lucian? My car has seemingly broken down. Do you mind giving us a ride if you're still nearby?" Jonathan queried.

On the other end of the phone, Cayden tactfully slowed the car without waiting for Lucian's orders. He lifted his eyes and peered at the latter's expression.

Lucian inclined his head a fraction.

Immediately discerning his meaning, Cayden turned back around and drove toward the parking lot.

"Come out. I'll meet you at the entrance of the parking lot," Lucian replied in a deep voice.

Jonathan agreed with a grin.

After hanging up the phone, he turned to Roxanne nonchalantly and exclaimed smilingly, "Let's go! Lucian is at the entrance of the parking lot. He'll drive past your place on his way home anyway."

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At long last, Roxanne had the opportunity to turn him down. "I'll just take a taxi home instead of troubling Mr. Farwell."

Having said that, she swung open the car door and alighted from the car...

Taken aback, Jonathan swiftly got out of the car and chased after her. Trailing behind her, he riposted, "It won't be any trouble at all since he's going the same way. Besides, I'll worry if you take a taxi alone at this hour,"

Roxanne's brows creased. Just when she was about to decline again, the man abruptly remarked meaningfully, "By the way, the atmosphere between you and Lucian seemed off at the dinner table earlier. I remember that everything was fine when I last saw you with him. Are you both keeping some secret from me? Did he do something to you?"

At that question, Roxanne regarded him suspiciously.

However, Jonathan remained calm and unruffled.

Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 397

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 397

Chapter 397

Naturally, Roxanne wouldn't tell Jonathan about the matter between her and Lucian.

Apart from that, however, she indeed had no reason to refuse a ride from Lucian.

After mulling it over, she relented in the end. She slowed her pace and walked side by side with the man.

When they reached the entrance of the parking lot, they promptly spotted Lucian a near distance away.

The man was wearing a black trench coat, standing next to his car with his back ramrod straight and his eyes fixated in their direction. The instant his eyes alighted on the woman beside Jonathan, his gaze seemingly darkened imperceptibly.

"Why didn't you wait in the car? It's so chilly," Jonathan commented casually.

Lucian merely ordered, "Get in the car."

Having said that, he swept his gaze over Roxanne before bending slightly and climbing into the car.

Roxanne had made up her mind to hitch a ride with him. But for some inexplicable reason, a sense of apprehension slithered into her when she laid eyes on the man.

Hence, she stood by the car, incapable of moving.

Clocking her hesitation, Jonathan urged, "Quick, get into the car, Dr. Jarvis.".

Roxanne snapped back to her senses. Hoping to keep him from noticing any oddity, she nodded impassively and headed toward the passenger seat.

Since she had no choice but to sit in the same car with Lucian, she wanted to minimize her contact with him as much as possible.

Unfortunately, Jonathan had already opened the passenger door when she made to head over and declared, "It'll be too cramped with two men sitting in the back. Make do with Lucian, Dr. Jarvis."

Right after saying that, he bent down and slid into the passenger seat.

In a flash, Roxanne was the only one lest standing outside the car. She stared at the back seat, caught between a rock and a difficult place.

She wasn't sure whether she was overthinking things, but everything that happened that night seemed too much of a coincidence.

Jonathan was behaving very strangely as well.

It was as though he had planned everything.

If she hadn't known that the man had no idea about her relationship with Lucian, she was almost **positive that it wa**s all his scheme.

After standing outside for several seconds, Roxanne bit the bullet and circled over. Swinging open the car door, she got into the car.

When she had settled in, she reflexively glanced at the man beside her.

Lucian seemed to have imbibed a little too much. He appeared rather indolent as he reclined against the seat with a hand propped against his temple languidly. His eyes were closed lightly, and he didn't react to her getting into the car.

Seeing that, Roxanne surreptitiously breathed a sigh of relief. She did her best to stick as close to the car window as possible to keep her distance from him.

The car then started moving slowly.

Roxanne furtively rejoiced that she would be alighting from the car before Jonathan so things wouldn't be overly awkward.

Unexpectedly, Jonathan exclaimed out of the blue when the car passed an intersection, "I suddenly remember that I've got something to do nearby! Just drop me off here."

When Roxanne heard that, her heart instantly clenched.

It's still a distance away from my place, so I'd have no choice but to face Lucian if he were to get out of the car here...

At that thought, the urge to do the same seized her.

Regretfully, that would appear too deliberate.

While she was still hesitating, Jonathan had already opened the car door and climbed out of the car. He even prompted Lucian, "I'm entrusting Dr. Jarvis to you. Make sure to drive her home safely."

Lucian nodded non-committally.

Then, Jonathan said to Roxanne with a smile, "Remember to text me when you arrive home so that I can put my grandfather's mind at ease, Dr. Jarvis."

Roxanne murmured her acquiescence stiffly.

When the car door had closed, the car continued driving slowly.

Leaving The Country After Divorce Chapter 398

Leaving The Country After Divorce

Chapter 398

Chapter 398

Dead silence reigned in the car. One could sense that the atmosphere was entirely different from when Jonathan was present earlier, giving off a sense of an impending storm.

Roxanne was sitting straight, her gaze trained right ahead. She tried her best to ignore the man beside her.

She wasn't sure whether she was imagining things, but his piercing gaze seemingly locked on her since Jonathan alighted from the car. It had her tensing up subconsciously.

All of a sudden, Lucian's voice rang out beside her.

"Have I offended you in any way, Ms. Jarvis?"

Relief suffused Roxanne when she heard his voice. She flashed him a detached smile. "Why would you say that, Mr. Farwell?"

Lucian eyed her with a dark look, his voice threaded with displeasure. "If that's not the case, why are you avoiding me thus, Ms. Jarvis?".

Frowning slightly, Roxanne feigned ignorance. "When have I avoided you, Mr. Farwell? Precisely speaking, I don't have much of a chance to meet you since our work doesn't intersect."

In other words, they didn't have a personal relationship besides a professional association.

lesSlona In fact, they even had no interaction at work.

They had no opportunity to meet anyway, so avoiding him made no sense.

The moment her words rang out, the temperature in the car plummeted.

While driving, Cayden cautiously stole a peek at the two people at the back through the rearview mirror. Inwardly, he worried on Roxanne's behalf.

Why is Ms. Jarvis provoking Mr. Farwell when she knows full well that he's in a bad moo d now?

As he was fretting, he noticed Lucian lowering the partition in the back seat.

He silently retracted his gaze, not daring to observe the situation in the back anymore.

When Roxanne saw Lucian lowering the partition without warning, her heart lurched. She instinctively twisted sideways and plastered her back against the car window to put some distance between them.

Glimpsing that, Lucian narrowed his eyes in chagrin and questioned icily, "Roxanne Jarvis, why are you shying away from me in such a manner How when you said I hadn't offended you in any way? Are you afraid that I'd bite?"

A frown marred Roxanne's countenance, and fainht wariness showed in her eyes. In a distant tone, she explained, "I merely feel that we're not that close with each other, and your action was rather: sudden to me, Mr. Farwell."

At the sight of her wary expression, Lucian smirked scornfully. "What do you think I'm planning to do?"

Roxanne said nothing, but their kiss at the hotel when they first bumped into each other after her return to the country flashed across her mind.

That was the only time he took the initiative with me since we got acquainted. Alas, it was when I no longer needed it.

The current situation was inexplicably similar to the circumstances back then.

Lucian stared at her with a dark look, a storm brewing in his eyes.

Ever since we parted ways at the café back then, she had been avoiding me. That aside , she even had her housekeeper send Archie and Benny to the kindergarten and pick th em up. It's only today that I've got a chance to see her again, thanks to Jonathan makin g up an excuse. But she has been distancing herself from me the entire night, unwilling to even utter a single word to me!

He initially thought he could understand her thoughts, but he merely felt livid after seeing her for real and experiencing her treatment of him.

His plan had been to vent by drinking, but the alcohol coursing through his veins was only fanning the flames within him.

Roxanne could distinctly sense the oppressiveness in the car intensifying. Her hands by her side unconsciously balled into fists, her nails digging into her palms as she forcefully suppressed the panic within her.

Previous Chapter

Next Chapter