

Be Gentle 2161

Chapter 2161

Only after Wanda had called attention to herself did the two old masters who were playing chess realize that Luca was here.

Old Master Crawford was all smiles as he watched Luca sit down. He said, "Luca, what brings you here? Did you purposely come over to visit me because you knew I was here?"

Old Man Rayne immediately waved his hand and said with a straight face, "I've seen my fair share of shameless people, yet I've never met anyone as shameless as you. Of course, Luca came here to visit me. Isn't that right, Luca?"

After saying that, he looked at Luca with all smiles as well.

Luca did not know whether to laugh or cry when she saw the two old masters behave like mischievous children. She put down the tray in her hands on the coffee table and said, "Old Masters, would you care to try my creations?"

The aroma of the cookies on the coffee table smelled amazing. Old Master Crawford could not help but drool a little. "Luca, of course, I know how good your cooking skills are. That boy, Tommy, thinks about the food you make every day."

Luca froze. The old master's slip-ups might actually reveal some information.

Sure enough, Wanda asked in confusion, "Tommy?"

Old Master Crawford glanced at Luca and realized that he had said too much, but his demeanor remained calm. "Before this, the child threw a tantrum and ran away from home. He happened to be picked up by Luca and she brought him home."

"I didn't even know this happened." Old Man Rayne sat on the sofa with the help of Wanda.

Luca's eyes lit up. "Old Master Rayne, you can walk now."

After your treatment, my joints don't hurt that much anymore. I can walk a few steps with Wanda's help. It's all thanks to your medicine, Luca," Old Master Rayne said delightfully. In fact, he had only started trying to walk in the past few days. He had gotten much better compared to

knew that he was getting old and it would be difficult for him to return to his old self, so he was satisfied to even be able to reach

Master Crawford sat on the sofa and praised her as well, "Luca is so capable. Let me try this cookie to see if it's really as delicious as they say

that, he picked up a cookie and

were delicious. They were crispy, and they instantly melted in his mouth. They were suitable for elderly people with bad teeth. He gave a huge thumbs up. "Yummy. It's the first time I've had such delicious

want to try them too.” Old Master Rayne took a piece, and after tasting it, he could not resist reaching for a second one. “They really

seeing how much the two old masters liked the snacks, Wanda placed each of their teacups in front of them and admonished, “Dad, no matter how delicious they are, you can’t have too much. You need to control your blood

are better than store-bought ones. You really are good, Luca.” Old Man Rayne complimented her and thought of Bianca. That girl used to love making such pastries in the

smiled and said, “Old Man Rayne, you can eat to your heart’s content. I’ve replaced the sugar in the cookies and cupcakes with xylitol, so your blood sugar won’t spike after

that Old Man Rayne still had high blood sugar, so when making them, she specifically rummaged through the cupboards to find

“**Brilliant.** It seems like I can eat my fill today.” Old Man Rayne took a sip of tea, while Old Master Crawford had already picked up the cupcake on the side. He took a *bite*.

Luca listened as he praised her, “It’s **so good.**”

Wanda watched as the two old master’s minds were no longer on chess but completely on tasting the snacks. She picked up a piece and ate **it too.**

It was indeed delicious, and it tasted even better than the ones made **in bakeries.**

Old Man Rayne always had a sweet tooth, and since Luca made these with sugar substitutes, he could have as much as he wanted and still feel at ease.

“**Luca,** don’t just sit there. Come and have some too,” said Old Master Crawford after he saw that she had not *moved*.

Luca nodded and picked up a cookie. She had specifically modified the recipe to make it easier to eat for people with bad teeth.

The four of them sipped tea while eating the snacks Luca made. As Luca listened to the two old masters bicker, happiness emerged in her heart.

Old Master Crawford used to bicker with her grandpa like this too.

This scene was like in the past as if nothing **had changed.**

On the other hand.

Nina left the Rayne family’s house, she did not run into Jean and Marie. She guessed that they came in a taxi and left in

into the car and was about to go to Jean’s

could even start her car, she received a call

is the problem solved?” Sue said

solved for the time being, all thanks to Luca...” Nina’s voice was filled

really did not know what to do with Jean. If not for Anna, she would rather have Jean be in the detention center to repent and not create trouble for himself and

solved it...” Sue was a little

briefly relayed the matter to her and said, “It was all thanks to Luca. If not, I would have called the

she gone through to be willing to have the police arrest her

her and said, “Well, it’s finally settled, so

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“Okay, I’ll be careful. I’m about to drive, so I’ll hang up now,” said Nina as she ended the call with Sue and drove to Jean’s home.

While waiting for the traffic light, she thought about what Sue said and reconsidered. She decided to send a voice message to Percy to tell him about what just happened and notify him that she was heading over to Jean’s place.

Percy did not reply. Nina assumed that he was busy, so she continued driving to Jean’s home without sending any more messages.

She parked her car somewhere nearby as Jean currently lived in the Langdon family’s old house. The parking spaces would be full if she went any farther, so she could only park her car here and walk inside.

Several motorcycles were parked in front of the house.

Nina frowned. It seemed like not only Jean and Marie were inside but their scoundrel friends too...

However, she could not tell whose friends they were.

Nina took out her keys and opened the door. The sound of an uproar came from the living room.

She walked in with a frown to see several men with vibrantly dyed hair drinking on the sofa. These people did not seem like the type of people that Jean hung out with.

Nina reckoned that they were with Marie.

bastard, not only became a mess after being charmed by Marie, but he even let her bring back all these

“Where’s Jean?” she asked the men.

vulgar language came to a stop as they turned to look at Nina. Their leader was a scrawny guy who leered at her. He asked, “Why are you looking

my revenge.” Nina crossed her arms in front of her chest as the way these people were looking at her made

could see through these men’s cunning expressions at

Jean, is up to something big right now. What did he do to you? We'll let you take it out on us. Why don't you tell us about it?" The leader of the hooligans smiled maliciously. They had seen their fair share of women who made a living on the streets, but it was their first time seeing someone like

quite pretty and had class. He thought to himself, 'Jean, that son of a b*tch, had such a good woman by his side, yet he never introduced her

knew what he meant by 'up to something', so she frowned and said, "He's in the bedroom, isn't that, she walked to

grabbed her arm. "Hey, don't bother others when they're up to something. Why? Did he cheat on you? Why not consider being with someone else? My name is Jonny, and I'm the boss of the streets here. Being with me is much better than being with that

Nina made a sour face. She looked at the man's hand and yanked her arm away. She was here alone and would be at a disadvantage if she were to lay a finger on him. Otherwise, she would definitely have slapped him across *the face*.

"Hey, you're a feisty one. Girl, Jean is with Marie now. Although you're better than Marie, he much prefers the playful type. If you come with me, I promise to make you happy for life." Jonny did not get angry as he had been pushed away countless times, but he always got his way in the end. Hence, being humiliated in front of others was not a big deal to him.

"Shut the f*ck up. I'm Jean's sister!" *Nina* frowned as she pulled out a wet tissue from her bag to wipe where the man touched **her**.

Disgusting, absolutely disgusting!

Nina started to regret her decision. She should have gotten Percy to accompany her or brought along the bodyguards **Percy sent**.

At least then she would not be taken advantage of nor be at a **disadvantage**.

"Oh, you're Jean's sister?" Jonny looked *Nina* up and down. "Jean had such a pretty sister, yet he never told me. Tsk tsk, how ungrateful. What was he hiding you *for*?"

Nina rolled her eyes and walked straight to the bedroom. She knocked hard on the door. "Jean, get your ass out of **here!**"

Jonny stepped forward and tried to pull *Nina's* hand. She noticed it and swiftly dodged. "What are you doing?"

her angry tone, Jonny chuckled and said, "Why are you ruining your brother's fun time? Come here. Don't be mad. Let's sit down and

Get out of my house!" *Nina* said furiously as she was annoyed by

got quite a temper, but I like it. You're Jean's sister, right? Why don't you come with me? I'll make sure you'll have a good life." Jonny liked fiery women. The more he looked at her, the more he

voice managed to startle Jean. He hurriedly walked out without even putting his clothes on properly and frowned as he looked at Nina. "Why are

came to fix your crap. Get this gang of friends of yours out of this house, or I won't tolerate it any longer!" Nina said with a frown. The environment here was already pretty shabby in the first place, but these people made it

once perfect home had been ruined by

why did you never introduce me to your beautiful sister? Which man are you trying to exploit?" Jonny accused Jean as if he did not hear Nina's order of

Jonny, let me explain." Jean could not attend to the woman who was still in the room. He planned to get rid of Nina first, lest she spoiled

more. Have your sister follow me and I'll give you two a good life. You'll be respected by people on the streets too." Jonny waved his hand and said to Nina, "What do you think? Come with me and I'll take care of

saw that his dirty hands were about to caress her face, so she took a step back out of disgust and said, "Go away. If you dare touch me, I'll make you

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Nina looked at Jean, and he subconsciously dodged her eye contact.

She could tell what was going on with just one gesture of his.

"Jean." Nina's voice was low and had a warning tone.

Jean could not help but shiver a little and hurriedly said to Jonny, "Jonny."

Jonny lifted his hand and interrupted him, "Shut up."

Jean shut his mouth instantly.

Jonny looked at Nina and said with a smile, "So you're Percy's girlfriend. Forgive me for the nonsense I said just now. It was ignorant of me to have failed to recognize you."

Nina was disgusted at Jonny's change of attitude. Before she could give another eviction order, Jean informed him, "Jonny, my sister is now Percy's fiancée."

Although the engagement was low-key, Percy's announcement after it happened was very high-profile.

Therefore, practically everyone in A City knew that Percy was engaged.

yes, I forgot. Your sister is already engaged to Percy." Jonny slapped the back of his head. "Hey, don't blame me. If you had made things clear earlier, there wouldn't have been this confusion, isn't that right? Anyway, you can be the bigger person and don't blame me. I'll be your underling from now on. I'll follow behind you and Percy. I'll help you solve all your

that Percy was renowned in A City's underworld and perhaps not just

that, Percy would never get involved with people like

people who helped Percy deal with things were professionally trained, and when confronted, it would not be an exaggeration to say that they could transform themselves into well-trained soldiers. Those people were absolutely not the type of people to abuse their power by relying on fighting to gain territory. They did not make a living

doesn't need your help," Nina said coldly. Since he was so afraid of Percy's name, she deliberately mentioned

was no shame in mentioning her own

did not expect her to humiliate

don't be angry. Some people just like assuming someone else's power. She's just using Percy's name to scare you." Marie's voice could be heard from

Nina looked toward the bedroom door.

already standing there, leaning against Jean as though she was without bones. She did not even properly put on her clothes. There was just a piece of fabric that sparsely covered

Nina looked at her furiously. This was how she bewitched Jean!

"Jonny, why don't you guys go first? She has something important to say to me," said Jean in **a hurry**.

Jonny was grim-faced. "What about my *matter*?"

"I'll definitely help you," Jean said hastily. He had already taken his money, so of course, he had to say so.

"Alright, you said it. If you break your promise, you'll have to sever an arm for me." After Jonny warned him, he turned around to leave.

The people behind him followed him and left.

The living room fell silent.

Nina had a bad feeling about this. "What did you *promise him*?"

Jean had a sullen face. "It's none of your business."

"You think I want to know? If I didn't have to save your ass every time, I wouldn't even bother finding out. Jean, you've caused enough trouble. If there's a next time, I won't give a damn about you anymore," Nina warned.

this how a sister should act? Don't you know how to respect your elder brother?" Marie put her arm around

up and get out of this house!" Nina saw the intimacy between them and flew into a

had harmed Jean before, yet she still wanted to continue

brother's girlfriend and also your sister-in-law. This is your brother's house. Why can't I be here? Plus, watch your mouth. If the reporters find out that this is how you treat your family, I'm assuming that Percy will be disgusted, right? When that time comes, your dream of marrying rich would be shattered." Marie was not afraid

was not going to pay any attention to her. She looked at Jean instead and asked, "What exactly did you promise

need for you to know," Jean said

also taunted her, "What? You managed to join a rich family, so you don't care about your brother or your sick and dying mother. He has no choice but to stand on his own two feet by helping people do some things. Is there a problem with that? Unless you'll only be happy when he starves to death? Tsk, tsk, tsk, I don't know how someone could even fall for that evil heart of

slowly clenched her fists as she listened to Marie constantly stir up trouble. "Marie, do you think I don't know the sh*t you're doing behind his

"What did I do?" Marie frowned.

say it. Jean, listen up. Remember what happened at the bar? Marie teamed up with the owner of the bar to plot against you. I've investigated everything clearly, and it's not the first time she's done something like this. She's been going to different bars, cooperating with the bar owners to provoke people to fight and destroy the bar equipment. Then, she would have those people compensate for it. In your case, she had it all planned out, yet you're still protecting her like a fool. You even got back together with her. You almost became a murderer. Open your eyes and take a good look at the vicious woman beside you!" said Nina as she could not help but push her finger against his head, hoping to knock some sense

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Nina snorted when she saw Marie weeping and sobbing. "If you had gotten together peacefully, then I wouldn't have bothered. Besides, both of you are just two peas in a pod, hurting each other. I have no problem with that. But Marie, you compelled him to go to the Rayne family's house today with malicious intentions. That's why I brought this up. Jean, if you don't believe me, open your email in an hour."

She uploaded the video the bar owner gave her onto her cloud storage because phones could easily be lost.

Marie listened to her tone, and Nina did not sound like she was bluffing. She glared at Nina with bloodshot eyes and snarled at her. "Nina, why are you trying to screw me over?"

Nina acted as if she did not hear her. She stared straight at Jean and warned him, "In the future, don't even think of going to the Rayne family's house. I've already told Aunt Rayne that if you dare cause her trouble again, she can just call the police without informing me."

After saying that, she turned around and left. She no longer paid any attention to Jean and Marie's tug of war.

Besides, she had already said everything she wanted to say.

Nina turned to leave, and a loud slapping sound came from behind her.

She did not have to turn around to know that it was Jean who did it to Marie.

Nina returned to her car, only to find out that she had left her phone in the car. Her phone was ringing non-stop, so she immediately picked it up to see that it was Percy calling. Her heart skipped a beat as she accepted the call.

left my phone in the car," she explained first without waiting for the other person to

heard her voice, his tone was tense. "Did anything happen? I was in an international meeting earlier and my phone

usually would not silence his phone during meetings as he was worried that Nina would not be able to reach him in case anything happened, but this meeting was rather important. Plus, Nina had the day off and did not have any special plans, so he put his phone on mute out of respect for the other

did not expect to see her message after

called her, but she was not picking up. He called over ten times and was worried that Jean might have done something to Nina, so he had already arranged for someone to rush over

don't worry. I just went to talk to him about something and left my phone in the car. Sorry for worrying you." Nina felt all warm inside as this man clearly loved her and cared about her. What more could she

thing nothing happened. Don't do this again." Percy urged her. He had panicked when he could not reach her and was worried that something might have happened to

won't be t next time. Are you done with work?" asked

"I'm done. Stay there and I'll go pick you up." Percy gestured to indicate that he did not need a driver because he did not like other people bothering him when he was with Nina as he wanted to feel like they were the only two people in the world.

"You *don't* need to come over. I'll drive back now. It's troublesome and a waste of time if you come, so I'll see you at home." The corners of Nina's lips raised to form a smile.

"**Alright, see** you at home." Percy knew that Nina was not that pretentious. If she said that he did not need to pick her up, she meant it. If he still went over there to pick her up, she would complain.

"I'll drive the car back now." Nina ended the call and drove away.

In the Langdon family's house.

Marie's face was slapped by Jean three times in a row. She covered her face and cried out in pain, "Jean, you son of a b*tch! How could you beat me after listening to Nina? I loved you so much for nothing."

"Love me? If you loved me, would you have lied to me like I was a fool? Marie, tell me honestly. Did you set up everything that happened in the bar that day?" Jean pointed at her nose with a *ghastly expression*.

Marie had intended to take it to her grave, but it occurred to her that Nina had the video, so she bit the bullet and said, "Yes, what that b*tch Nina said was true, but it wasn't my intention to harm you. I wanted to harm someone else. I didn't expect you to be involved, and things just got out of hand. I wasn't thinking straight. I was out of my mind and didn't know how to stop..."

heard her admit it and raised his

dodged it. "Jean, before you came, my target was Tyrone. I was thinking of finding someone else to do the deed. I didn't think that you'd come over, and that's when I tried to stop you. Have you forgotten? You were never

and recalled what had happened that day. Things did seem that way. When he walked into the bar, Marie was already sitting next to

went over there of his

noticed him frowning and knew that her plan was working. Now, she just had to make it all seem like an accident. Then, she would not have to be afraid of whatever video

first talked to the bar owner, she used the name of some kid from a well-off family in place of Jean's little detail had given her a good excuse to use today.

"Who was your target?"

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Jean squinted his eyes and looked at her red and swollen cheeks without a semblance of compassion. Instead, he felt resentment.

Marie saw that he did not respond, so she immediately pounced and hugged him. "Jean, I really love you. Don't give up on our relationship okay?"

Jean listened to her weeping with disgust and said, "You can't lie to me anymore."

"I swear, I'll never lie to you again! Let's live a happy life together, okay?" Marie reassured him.

It occurred to Jean that Marie still had the Rayne family behind her, and he became gentle. He touched her red and swollen face and asked in a low voice, "Does it hurt?"

Marie nodded.

"I did this because I got too angry just now. I'm sorry. Don't be angry at me," Jean apologized. He knew that Marie wanted to get close to him for a reason, but at the same time, he had an ulterior motive for getting close to her as well

The reason he overreacted was that he had just found out from Nina that Marie set him up.

After Marie explained things, he was no longer mad.

"I'm not angry with you. I did do some things that hurt you. Jean, after being through so much together, please don't give up on me." Marie hugged him.

Jean pushed her away and said, "I won't leave you. Sit down. I'll go get you an ice pack."

After saying that, he walked into the kitchen.

pitiful appearance changed instantly. She looked at a certain corner in the living room with sad yet vicious

Nina...

Jean...

remember what they did to her and make them fall into an abyss of

...

In the Rayne family's house.

Old Man Rayne and Old Master Crawford were done enjoying their snacks, they continued playing chess. Luca sat aside and watched with

would even talk to the old masters from time to

doing some work in her little workshop. She was at ease as Luca was there to help look after the old

it was 4:30 in the afternoon, Luca glanced at the time and realized that it was time for her to go pick up

was late, Lanie and Rainie would understand, but Tommy, the little one who did not want to go to calligraphy class in the first place, would have something

Luca saw that the two old masters were still playing chess, so she waited for a while. When the game was over, she said, "Grandpa Rayne, I have something to attend to, so I'll be **leaving.**"

Old Man Rayne stopped rearranging the chess pieces and looked at her, "So soon? Aren't you staying for dinner?"

Luca laughed when she heard him persuade her to stay. She wanted to spend more time with the old man too, but now was now the time. "No, I have some things to do, and I've promised some **other people.**"

"It's a pity. I was going to ask Wanda to cook more food tonight." Disappointment could be seen in Old Man Rayne's eyes.

Very few young people could sit here and watch them play for more than an hour. This showed that Luca was patient, and the old man liked patient *people*.

Old Master Crawford guessed that the people Luca said she had made a promise to were the three children, so he assisted her and said, "The most important thing for young people is to keep their promises. Don't make things difficult for Luca."

"*Alright, let Wanda send you off.*" Old Man Rayne agreed with Old Master Crawford's words that one should keep *their promises*.

Before Luca could say no, the old master had already called for Wanda, “Wanda, come out for a **moment**.”

His voice was sonorous when he called for her, which made Luca smile. It seemed like his health was getting better every day. He was completely different from back then when he always experienced shortness *of breath*.

Wanda walked out of the workshop and asked curiously, “Dad, what’s wrong?”

“Luca wants to leave. Please send her off,” said Old *Man Rayne*.

looked at Luca and urged her to stay. “Going back so soon? Why don’t you stay

Aunt Rayne. I’ve made an appointment with others, so I have to keep my word,” said

only nod and send

they arrived at the entrance, Luca picked up the jacket that had been dried off by the maid. When she saw Wanda put on her jacket as well, she hurriedly said, “Aunt Rayne, you can just see me off here. I’ll go out by myself. It’s cold

a big deal. I’ll wear something warm. I won’t freeze no matter how cold it is,” Wanda insisted on sending

no choice but to agree as her Aunt Wanda was very

both walked out the door and to the entrance of

Wanda asked, “Luca, can I ask you

said Luca as she could guess what she was about

have a boyfriend?” asked

was stunned as she did not expect her to ask such a question.

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“Alright, I won’t see you off, then. It’s snowing, so be careful of your safety when driving,” Wanda reminded.

Luca’s nose started to feel tingly. Wanda took care of her before she got married in Japan, and she did a better job taking care of her than anyone else. She realized that time and tide waited for no man as she saw the gray hair on her temples. The young ones were starting to grow old too.

She had no way of repaying Wanda for all that she did for her in the past.

“Okay, it’s cold. You should go in,” said Luca as she looked down and walked out of the gate.

When she returned to her car, she did not have the time to get all sentimental as the three little children were waiting for her to pick them up.

Luca drove off to pick up Lanie and the others.

The classes that Old Master Crawford enrolled them in were the best in A City, so the three children had classes in separate locations.

Luca would first pick up Lanie and Rainie, then she would go pick up Tommy.

The moment Tommy got into the car, he kept complaining about how boring the calligraphy class was. After learning that Lanie and Rainie's extra-curricular classes were fun, he pouted and said, "Brother, come with me to tell Great-grandpa that I want to go to the same class with you."

Lanie shook his head coolly and refused. "You're too young. It's not suitable for you."

"Why?" Tommy stared at him with his big round eyes. He hated calligraphy.

can't sit still." Lanie patted his brother's head and stated, "There must be a reason why Great-grandpa wants you to

reason would be to bore me to death," Tommy said mercilessly. Then, he looked at Luca with his big innocent sparkling eyes. "Ms. Luca, why don't you talk

think it's good that you're learning calligraphy. Didn't you say that you envied your dad's neat handwriting?" said Luca as she remembered everything the children had

Daddy's handwriting is very nice." There was admiration in Tommy's voice when he

sent Daddy to learn calligraphy since he was little. Brother, if you want to have nice handwriting, you have to practice calligraphy. That way, your handwriting will look as good as Daddy's," said Lanie as he smoothly continued Luca's

eyes widened. "Why did Great-grandpa never tell me

it in the past. Back then, we lived with Great-grandpa," said Lanie. When Luke was busy and during the time before their mother returned, they were put under Old Master

Master Crawford would often talk about Luke in front of them, so they naturally knew more about him than

also remember that Great-grandpa said that Daddy used to write sloppily like you. He fixed it after learning from a calligraphy teacher." Rainie

frowned. He also wanted to write as nicely as Daddy, but calligraphy was too torturous for

calligraphy is so boring. How did daddy do it?" he

Lanie and Rainie looked at each other and giggled, then Luca replied, "As long as you have the desire to, you can learn to do well. If you complain about calligraphy every day, how are you going *to learn*?"

Tommy was determined all of a sudden. He waved his hand and said, "I must do a good job in calligraphy and write as beautifully **as Daddy!**"

"Good luck, Brother." Rainie cheered for him, then she looked at Luca and said, "Ms. Luca, are you free tomorrow?"

Luca glanced at the child through the rearview mirror and shifted her focus to the road ahead again.
“Yes, what is it?”

“We have a small recital tomorrow, and it’s held at Star Carnival. Daddy happens to be away on a business trip, so can you come to see me perform, Ms. Luca?” said Rainie. All of her friends who learned dance with her said that their parents would go see their performance, so she wanted Luca to go **too**.

Luke was far away, so she had no choice. However, she still had her **mother, right?**

“Sure, I’ll send you there,” Luca agreed in a heartbeat and thought of pushing back all of tomorrow’s **plans**.

Research may be important, but her children were even more important.

Although she could not be by their sides as their mother, she could still care for them.

“**Thank you**, Ms. Luca.” Rainie smiled sweetly as she was worried that she would get rejected at **first**.

“I’m the one who should be thanking you for giving me the opportunity to see your beautiful dance,” said Luca playfully. She remembered that Rainie loved to dance when she was younger.

not think that she would still like it three

interest of hers may accompany her for life, which was a

heard Luca’s words, and a big smile appeared on her face. She knew that their mom still loved

got home, Luca parked the car, and the children could not wait to get down from the car. Tommy asked Luca, “Ms. Luca, did you prepare snacks

stunned. If not for the incident at the Rayne family’s house, she would have prepared snacks for them for

closed the car door and said to him apologetically, “I went out this afternoon, so I couldn’t prepare any. I’m sorry,

and shook his head. “It’s okay, Ms. Luca. You didn’t promise to prepare snacks

make dinner. You kids go play for a while. It’ll be done in a bit,” said Luca. The kids had finished their school homework last night, so other than the extra-curricular classes, they could do whatever they want on

go practice calligraphy. Today, that old man, no, the teacher gave us homework. He said that we need to write two full pages and turn them in when we go tomorrow,” said Tommy as he hopped into the house.

and Lanie also followed

walked into the house and took off her jacket, she walked into the kitchen to see that Aunt Neile was already busy in the kitchen. As Luca instructed, she did not prepare the dishes but just washed all the

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Rainie puffed her cheeks out and explained, "I'm the leading role, so the teacher said that my costume should be different from the other students."

The teacher also knew that she had plenty of dance costumes at home, so she did not prepare one for her.

Lanie frowned. "But I don't know how to pick one."

"Brother, aren't you the smartest?" Rainie looked at the tutus. These few were the best-looking ones, but she somehow could not pick a favorite among them.

Lanie raised his hand and flicked her forehead.

"Ouch, what are you doing?" Rainie touched her head and looked at him in confusion.

"I'm just a few minutes older than you. You should let mommy help you pick," said Lanie. How could she let him pick when he knew nothing about tutus?

"Shh." Rainie immediately covered his mouth when he referred to Luca as Mommy. She looked back. Thank goodness no one was there.

They had agreed to not address Luca as Mommy even behind her back to avoid Luca finding out.

Instead, they should get used to calling her Ms. Luca until their dad straightened things out.

"Okay, don't be so scared. She's downstairs preparing dinner right now. She won't come up." Lanie patted her head. Although they were twins, Lanie took after his father's height and was half a head taller than Rainie.

Rainie shook her head and scolded him with a stern face, "Brother, Great-grandpa has said it before. Better safe than sorry. We need to be careful. We can't let Mo—Ms. Luca find out."

After seeing his sister like this, Lanie could not help but wonder why they had to be so cautious just to have their mother around them when they were still kids.

in the world happened to their mother that she so heartlessly refused to recognize

are you thinking about something?" Rainie looked at Lanie who was lost in thought. She called his name in

twins were telepathic, so Rainie could roughly guess what he was thinking

Ms. Luca pick one out for you later," said Lanie as he could not possibly pick out a

had to give up the idea of letting him help her, so she held the tutus in her arms and walked out of Lanie's

Luca finished preparing dinner, she asked Aunt Neile to bring the food to the table while she called the children down

Tommy heard that dinner was ready, he cheered and ran downstairs after putting down

not help but shake her head when she saw the child behave like this. She walked into the room to look at his writing, and she shook her head

seemed like Old Master Crawford had done the right thing by sending him to calligraphy class. Other than stabilizing his mind, his handwriting needed more practice

matter how smart the child was, if he was behind other people in the future just because of his handwriting, it would be hard

helped put his pen away and informed

put down his book, nodded, and walked out of

His nature was calm and steady just like a miniature version of **Luke**.

Luca pushed the door open and walked into Rainie's room to see her staring into the blank space on *her chair*.

"Rainie, what are you doing? It's time to eat," said Luca.

Rainie turned her head, and her eyes lit up when she saw Luca. She stood up to take her hand and said, "Ms. Luca, can you help me pick a tutu for tomorrow's performance?"

Luca looked at the tutus on Rainie's bed and blinked. "We'll pick it out after *dinner*."

"Okay. Thank you, Ms. Luca." Rainie did not let go of her hand and walked out of the room. She asked, "Ms. Luca, have you told my brothers?"

"I've told them, and they've gone downstairs," said Luca.

"Then let's go too." Rainie held her hand and went downstairs. Before she went into the dining room, she could already smell the aroma of the dishes. It was the smell of their **mother's cooking**.

"It smells so good," she could not help but exclaim.

"The vegetables Aunt Neile washed today were all your favorites, so I made the usuals," said Luca. Not only did Aunt Neile wash the vegetables, but she also indirectly helped her decide what to cook too.

"Great. I love everything that Ms. Luca makes." Rainie walked into the dining room only to see that Lanie and Tommy were already sitting at **the table**.

Lanie sat upright while waiting, whereas Tommy was stealing sips of *the soup*.

If not for the strict education in the Crawford family, the kids might have already gobbled up the *food*.

need to wait. Let's all eat," said

moment, Tommy stretched out his meaty arm to stop her. "Ms. Luca, let's take a

shocked. "Why do you want to take

"Just take it." Tommy pouted.

did not know what he was trying to do, but she took out her phone and opened the camera app regardless. "Do you want to be in the

take the food,"

as he said and took a photo of the food.

send it to me, Ms. Luca?"

nodded and sent the photo to him. "Alright, now can you tell me what you need this

course, it's for Daddy to see that he's missing out on this delicious food while he's on a business trip. I'm sending it to him to make him

his words, Rainie shook her head helplessly. "Did Daddy make you

me to listen to Great-grandpa and that I could only learn calligraphy, so that's why I'm doing this,"

Tommy said with determination as he held a grudge against his dad. Since he was on a business trip, he could not do anything to Tommy. Moreover, Ms. Luca was there to protect him, so he had nothing to be

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Tommy could not help but exclaim, "I'm so full."

Aunt Neile was cleaning up the dishes and chuckled when she heard the child's words. "With Ms. Craw here, Ms. Rainie and the young masters are not picky eaters at all."

Luca patted Tommy's head. "Go walk around the living room okay? Aunt Neile will cut fruit for you later."

"Okay, Ms. Luca." Tommy had always been hyperactive, so walking around was not a difficult task for him.

Luca looked toward Lanie, who also ate a lot today.

Lanie took the initiative to say, "Don't worry, Ms. Luca. I'll walk around to digest the food too."

"Ms. Luca, I don't need to, right?" said Rainie as she was a girl, and her appetite was not very big. Although the meal Luca made was delicious, she did not eat as much as her brothers.

The food on the table was mostly eaten by Lanie and Tommy.

Luca shook her head. Girls were more concerned about their bodies and diet, so Rainie did not eat much.

Rainie stood up and said, "Ms. Luca, help me pick out the tutu I'm going to wear for tomorrow's performance."

"Sure." Luca remembered her promise, and Rainie took the initiative to hold her hand. Both of them walked out of the dining room.

The moment Luca looked down, she saw the child smiling sweetly at her.

Luca's heart warmed up, and she did not want to let go of Rainie's hand.

The two of them walked into the bedroom.

Luca looked at the tutus on Rainie's bed and asked, "What dance are you performing tomorrow?"

Rainie said, "The Nutcracker."

stroked her chin as she let go of Rainie's hands and held up the tutus in front of

Luca, do you watch ballet performances?" Rainie stood there, letting her hold up the tutus in front of

"I do, but not a lot. I've seen the show you're performing,

saying that, she decided on a tutu. "What do you think of this

picked up the tutu and stood in front of the mirror to see what it looked like. She then beamed with delight. "Ms. Luca, you have

when she received the compliment from the child and turned to look for accessories on Rainie's dresser.

"How about putting

looks good!" Rainie approved of her

be looking forward to your performance tomorrow." Luca touched her soft

grown up to become as fair as

How pretty.

a few years, Nyla on the Island of Despair would probably grow up to become like

Luca, can I ask you for a favor?" Rainie stared at

tell me. As long as it's within my abilities, I'll definitely help you,"

photos for me when you watch the performance tomorrow. I want to show them to Daddy," said Rainie as she remembered that her mom and dad were both there when she entered a competition a few

Her mom held a camera and recorded her beautiful moments on **stage**.

At that time, she was the happiest little princess in the *whole world*.

Now...

Rainie smiled and begged her.

"Of course, it's no problem. You're so beautiful and you dance so well. I'll definitely record it," Luca promised. "I can't use a phone, so I'll go look for my **camera**."

With that, she stood up.

Rainie said, "Okay, Ms. Luca. I'll leave it to **you**."

"Don't worry. I'll take care of it. I'll go look for my camera first. It's been a long time since I've used it."

Luca walked out of Rainie's room after she *finished talking*.

Rainie's words brought back her memories from the past.

Her life with Luke and the kids was a **happy one**.

Luca walked back to her room and found her camera in the cabinet.

She bought this camera not too long after she left the island. She did not know how long she would be staying here, so she wanted to take photos of the scenery in A City. When she returned to the island, she could show Nyla how A City looked **like**.

It was the place where she and her father fell in *love*.

Luca also wanted to capture Luke's appearance so that Nyla would know what her father looked like and as a reminder for herself *too*.

did not expect so many things

had no way of getting a close-up shot of Luke, nor did she have the free time to capture the scenery of A

few photos in the camera were taken when she first returned to A City. Afterward, she got so busy she did not even have the time to pick up

at the photos in the camera. She was not a professional, so she could only go by

was poorly photographed, but the photos showcased the

took photos of life in A City to tell Nyla that the world outside of the Island of Despair was

would work hard to bring her child out of that

picked up a tissue to wipe the camera and placed it on the dresser so that she can take it with her when she headed

she was ready to go downstairs, she received a message

[Have you eaten?]

sat down and replied:

[I received the photo Tommy sent.]

at a loss for words. If he had received the photo, then why did he still

sensed Luca's loss for words after she did not reply for half a minute. He sent her another message: [The meal you made looks good. Can you make some for me when I get

trembled. The tone in his words sounded like it was a request, yet it also sounded like a normal conversation between a

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"Okay. Thanks, Tommy." Luca took it from him and had a bite.

"Ms. Luca, is the apple nice?" asked Tommy as he looked at her eagerly.

"It's delicious." Luca took another bite. Aunt Neile was the one who picked out the apples, so there was no doubt that they would taste good.

Tommy also picked up a slice of apple to eat as he snuggled next to Luca. He ate the apple while watching cartoons. He was over the moon.

After the show ended, Luca urged the children to wash up and go to bed.

The kids listened to her. An hour later, after Luca had made sure that everyone had gone to bed, she went back to her bedroom.

She picked up the phone on her dresser to see that she had multiple missed calls. Her heart immediately dropped.

When she opened her phone, she saw that they were all from Amur.

Luca immediately called him back.

The call went through, and Luca immediately asked, "Amur, are you back from your mission?"

Amur sounded a little tired from the other end of the line. "Yes, I'm back."

"Is everything okay?" said Luca worriedly as he had left his phone here before going on the mission. Although it was not a difficult task, she was still worried.

good, and the mission is completed," said

hurt, are you?" Luca noticed how he did not mention anything about his current state or the details of the mission. She got even

not hurt. I saw the note you left me when I came back, so I called you," said Amur. His voice was

something wrong with his condition and was a little worried, but she was the only person in the villa. It would not be safe to leave the children at

looking at my phone just now, so I didn't answer your calls, Amur. Thank goodness you're okay." There was some guilt in

worry, I won't let anything happen to me," said Amur. Although he sounded tired, he still gave her a firm

as she still felt that Amur was in

can't go out tonight. Let's meet up tomorrow," she said as she could not be relieved until she had confirmed that Amur was

missions Amur took on now were related

narrow-minded. He did not want anyone guarding her, so he purposely sent Amur to perform these difficult

stream of warm current flowed into Amur's heart when he heard Luca's words. "Okay, I'll go look for rest first. I have some things to do tomorrow morning. I'll go look for you when I'm done." Luca did not forget her promise to Rainie. She could not go back on her word when it came to the

Otherwise, the children would be disappointed and would not trust her again.

“Okay.” Amur was a little disappointed as he thought that Luca would be eager to go over and see him.

She should be with Luke right now, so it was only natural for her not **to come...**

Amur ended the call and glanced at the gauze wrapped around his body.

His mission was to negotiate with a gang in Southeast Sorria. The deal was destined to fail as he was representing Abel, and the conditions Abel gave were unacceptable to the *other party*.

Thus, a conflict happened just a few minutes into **the negotiation**.

In the end, he orchestrated an entire fight to take down the other side for **Abel's benefit**.

However, he got injured from it as well.

After getting simple treatment, he immediately went back home without recuperating as he was worried about Luca.

Amur frowned as he looked at the blood oozing from the gauze. He took off his shirt and undid the gauze in front of a mirror. A hideous wound was revealed. He picked up some iodophor and sprayed it on the wound to disinfect it. Then, he directly applied some medicine on it. Lastly, he got a new gauze to *bandage it*.

He did not pay much attention to it as he never received any medical training on the Island of Despair, so the bandage was poorly done. It was a good thing it was winter, so no one could tell with clothes on. If it were summer and he wore something thinner, Luca would be able to tell.

Amur did not plan to tell Luca about his injury as to not worry **her**.

was only Luke in her

The next day.

sending Tommy and Lanie to their extra-curricular classes, she drove Rainie to Star

took out her performer ID, so she did not need to purchase tickets to enter. She led Luca toward the center of the

for the children's performance was set

Rainie backstage where the teacher was waiting for her. She was the main character in this ballet show, so the teacher paid extra attention

here. Did you bring everything?" The teacher looked at Rainie with a smile as Rainie was the most talented student she had ever taught in the past few

teacher wanted Rainie to learn dance professionally, but when she mentioned it to Luke, he said that studies were the most important thing for the kids right now. Wherever she wished to branch out in the future was for the future her

teacher understood what he was saying. The Crawford family was well-off anyway, and the children did not need to earn

she took extra care of Rainie in hopes of maintaining this interest of hers. If she planned to become a ballerina in the future, Rainie would prioritize her as her

back at Luca, where all her things

here are Rainie's costume, shoes, and accessories." Luca handed her the two bags filled with

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Rainie's teacher understood immediately. None of Rainie's family members came. That was why the woman in front of her who claimed she was Luke's subordinate came here.

She said, "I see. Then will you stay to watch Rainie's competition?"

"Yes. I will," replied Luca. Was it not obvious enough with Luca carrying a camera with the camera strap on her shoulder?

"We've reserved seats in the auditorium for the kids' family members. It usually starts on the second row. Please wait there," said the teacher.

Luca nodded. She put a smile on her face when she saw Rainie walk out of the room after getting changed. The look in her eyes was gentle and kind.

"Ms. Luca, can you help me tie this?" Rainie walked past the teacher and asked for Luca's help.

Luca nodded, squatted down, and helped Rainie tie up every strap that needed to be tied.

"Done." Luca rose to her feet and encouraged her, "I'll be watching your performance from out there. You got this!"

"Alright, Ms. Luca." Rainie smiled. She was used to performing on the stage, so she was not feeling nervous at all. All she knew was Luca would be watching her down the stage, and she wanted to perform well.

Rainie's teacher helped her to tie Rainie's hair after Luca left.

walked to the auditorium. She found the seat labeled with Rainie's name and sat down.

were labeled with Rainie's name. Luca chose to sit on the rightmost seat and waited for the performance to

the dance academy that Rainie went to was one of the top schools in A City in the whole country. The dance teacher was an experienced teacher who worked in famous theaters abroad, and she came back to the country to start her career as a dance teacher.

was why many parents in A City who wanted their kids to attend dance classes would try their best to send their kids to

was not a place where the kids could join by simply paying expensive fees. The academy only accepted

public performance they held was able to attract many kids and parents who were interested in dance. Although it was snowing out there, there were still many of them who came to see the show.

on the camera and looked at the previous photos captured. The empty seats around her were occupied in a few

two seats beside Luca were empty. She turned around and glanced behind her. Many people were already seated, so there were hardly any empty seats left.

at her watch to check the time. She had caught a glimpse of the posters hanging outside the auditorium when she came in. The performance was about to start.

A figure passed by Luca and sat on one of the chairs reserved for Rainie's family members.

Luca was startled. She lifted her head and saw Yuri. Thea was sitting beside her.

Yuri raised a brow when she saw that Luca was here too, and she asked, "Why are you here?"

"I came to watch Rainie's performance," answered Luca. She was also wondering why Yuri and Thea would show **up here**.

Yuri glanced at the chair Luca was sitting on. She was able to see it clearly as Luca was not leaning against the back of the chair. The words written there clearly stated the seats were for Rainie's *family*.

Yuri sat down as she recalled how Old Master Crawford favored her. She was secretly feeling uncomfortable with it.

It was not that Yuri was trying to vie the old master's attention, but Luca's existence had caused Old Master Crawford to neglect Louis' family.

"I came to watch the performance too. Thea loves ballet, but she can't get into the academy. That's why we came to watch. The academy told us that they reserved three seats for the student's family members. I was thinking of asking Louis to come, but he happened to have something to do today. That's why he didn't come. Fortunately, he didn't come. Otherwise, he'd have to squat to watch the performance," Yuri deliberately said to her.

Luca could sense that Yuri's words carried an overtone of menace. She was accusing Luca of occupying another seat.

"Rainie didn't expect her aunt and cousin to come to watch her performance." Luca fiddled with the camera in her hands. When she was still Bianca back then, she might be able to tolerate her behavior to make things easier for the old *master*.

she had a new identity now. There was no need for her to be concerned about the harmony in the Crawford

knew Yuri would not be kind to Rainie even if she treated Yuri kindly. Only Old Master Crawford and their father were kind to the children in the Crawford

Rainie's aunt. And the seats are obviously meant for Rainie's family members. What about you? Although Rainie addresses you as Miss, which makes you sound a lot younger, you can't possibly assume that you're also Luke's daughter, right?" Yuri

clenched her fists as Yuri continued talking, "Rainie's mother is still abroad. It's just a matter of time before her mother comes back. Judging from how faithful Luke was, other women won't even stand a chance when Bianca's back. What's the big deal if someone is able to get along with the kids? Luke is the one who chooses his wife. There's nothing much to do with the kids. Besides, the ties of their kinship are much deeper than some hypocritical affection."

Yuri scoffed and judged her.

grudges she held against Luca came from Old Master Crawford and Susan's influence. The biggest reason was still Yuri thought Luca was

used to be messing around too. Although he had reigned himself and stopped doing such things after getting married, Yuri would still doubt him. At the same time, Louis' ex-girlfriends who worked as supermodels would still provoke Yuri now and then when they ran into her. They would show off how generous Louis was to them and how he had treated them

was why Yuri hated Luca. She did not show her hatred for Luca in front of Old Master Crawford. After all, as the younger generation, she would be criticized if she showed her emotions in front of the elders.

down and reminded her, "Is that how you educate