

Divorced Me 491

Chapter 491

Lucas' expression hardened, his eyes turning icy as he stared at her.

He had been waiting for her to return, but thirty minutes had passed without a trace of her.

He texted her but got no response. He called, but she didn't pick up.

A chill ran down his spine.

He had someone locate her, only to discover she was at the movies with someone else.

Was she really so engrossed in a film that she couldn't even reply to him?

"Get in the car," Lucas said icily.

Aveline slipped her phone into her coat pocket, shaking her head. "You're a bit scary right now. I'm afraid you'll kill me if I get in." "Heh!" Lucas let out a cold laugh. "At least you're self-aware."

Aveline replied, "I'm standing under the surveillance camera. No matter how powerful you are, you won't do anything to me." Her fearless expression inexplicably made Lucas uneasy.

He pushed open the car door and got out, his tall figure instantly overshadowing her. An invisible pressure enveloped her. "You are right," he said in a deep voice.

He walked up to her and suddenly grabbed the back of her neck, bending down to kiss her.

It was a very brief kiss.

Aveline didn't even feel the warmth of his lips before he pulled away. She immediately raised her hand to wipe her lips with the back of her hand, frowning at him. "Lucas, are you crazy? We're already divorced!"

Lucas watched her disdainful reaction, his eyes dark and cold. "Is there a law saying we can't kiss after getting a divorce?"

Aveline was speechless by his reasoning.

She wiped her lips for a full minute before stopping. Her lips were rubbed red and swollen, looking even more alluring. Lucas noticed this and suddenly said, "I kissed you once, and you wiped so hard for so long. What if I kissed you for a minute?"

Aveline immediately took a cautious step back. "Lucas, please behave yourself!"

Lucas sneered, turning around. "Get in the car, or I don't mind kissing you under the camera for a while."

He got back into the driver's seat. Aveline glared at him with resentment, not daring to defy him, knowing he would really do it. She got into the passenger seat.

Aveline pulled over the seatbelt and fastened it. Then she asked, "Who sent me those photos?"

Lucas started the car and drove off in one direction without answering.

Aveline looked at him in confusion. "Lucas, why aren't you speaking?"

Lucas responded coldly, "I said earlier, we'll talk at the Tudor residence."

Aveline fell silent.

What was wrong with him? They were in the car together right then - why couldn't he just spit it out? Was he waiting for some perfect cinematic moment or something?

Aveline turned to look out the window. Now that she was in the car, jumping out wasn't an option.

The Tudor residence soon came into view. Aveline got out and walked straight inside, leaving Lucas with only a glimpse of her slender, graceful silhouette.

Lucas watched her disappear, then pulled out a cigarette. He lit it and leaned against the car, taking a long drag.

When Aveline reached the villa's entrance and realized he hadn't followed, she turned back to see him lounging casually against the car, a cigarette between his fingers. His handsome face looked deep and brooding, his demeanor cold and aloof.

He was smoking at a time like this?

Aveline was speechless.

After a while, he finally finished his cigarette and began walking towards her with long strides.

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Aveline averted her gaze. His eyes were too intense, and she realized she couldn't resist them.

Keeping her distance was a better idea.

She walked into the villa and looked at Lucas. "Can you tell me now?"

Lucas responded coolly, "It was an overseas virtual number. I had someone trace it, and it turns out it was one of the Tudor family's bodyguards."

Aveline frowned. "Who instructed this bodyguard to send me those photos? What's the purpose?"

Lucas asked, "What was your first thought when you saw the photos?"

Aveline pressed her lips together. "Compassion. I wanted to rescue him."

Lucas' tone grew colder. "But you know I won't release him. This goes against what you want. The person who sent you the photos wants to see us turn against each other."

Aveline said, "That's what I suspected too."

Lucas looked at her in surprise. "You figured that out?"

Aveline replied, "I'm not stupid. Also, I suspect that my previous imprisonment in that warehouse was intentional. How could it be such a coincidence that I climbed out the window and just happened to pass by the entrance to the basement?"

"Smart," Lucas praised.

While confirming her suspicions, Aveline felt a heavy weight in her heart. This meant someone was watching them, waiting for the right moment to drive a wedge between them, ideally turning them into enemies.

Who could it be?

Lucas took a bottle of wine from the cabinet, poured some into a glass, and took a sip. His Adam's apple moved sensually as his eyes grew even colder. "Aveline, maybe we should put on a show." Aveline looked at him in confusion. "What?"

Lucas set down his glass and strode directly towards her. He reached out, pulling her into an embrace. As she began to struggle, he whispered, "Just play along. What if my place is bugged?" Aveline's hand pressed against his side, but she lessened her force upon hearing this, letting his cool and pleasant scent envelop her.

She whispered, "What do you mean?"

Lucas's eyes darkened as he stared at her flushed ear. He leaned in, his voice low and intense. "That person wants to see us at odds, caught in some twisted love-hate drama. So why don't we flip the script? Let's act like we're madly in love. Imagine how desperate that'll make them."

Aveline felt something was off but couldn't pinpoint it. She asked, "But how can you be so sure that the other party wants us to hate each other?"

Lucas replied, "Based on the current situation, that's what it seems like. Let's take a gamble and see if my guess is right."

His breath lightly touched her ear as he hoarsely asked, "Aveline, do you dare to take the gamble?"

Aveline felt as if a feather had brushed against her ear, causing her body to shiver slightly. She pushed him away immediately.

"I need to think about it," she said, turning to leave.

"Think carefully. We don't have much time left. Don't keep me waiting too long," Lucas said.

Aveline didn't respond and left the Tudor residence. It was already dusk, the sunset sinking, and a breeze carried the chill of late autumn, with winter approaching soon. She pulled her coat tighter, her mind in turmoil.

Why were things getting more complicated? She had divorced Lucas; did she really want to get involved again? Would she be able to ultimately walk away unscathed?

Lost in thought, she turned a corner when the roar of a motorcycle sped past her. Someone grabbed her arm, pulling her back just as the motorcycle narrowly missed her. She was so frightened her face turned a shade paler.

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Aveline was startled and turned to look, but she only saw the shadow of the speeding motorcycle gradually disappearing from view.

"Thank you," she said, turning back to the person who had grabbed her.

When she saw his face she was slightly taken aback.

"You're welcome," the young man replied.

He was tall and lean, wearing a mask that revealed only his eyes. His bangs naturally fell over his forehead, partially obscuring his stern expression.

Aveline was momentarily dazed. This man looked like Lucas!

The man turned to leave.

"Wait!" Aveline quickly blocked his path, hesitantly asking, "Have we met somewhere before?"

The man, still wearing the mask, spoke in a muffled voice that revealed no emotion. He shook his head. "No, I don't know you."

Aveline asked, "Did you work part-time as a waiter at the Tudor residence?"

A memory flashed in her mind - the waiter who'd rushed out just in time to stop Barbara from tumbling off the cliff at her birthday party.

Suddenly, the image of that waiter began to blur with the man standing before her. She'd been too shaken that day to get a good look at the waiter's face, but now a hazy recollection stirred.

The man before her resembled that waiter!

The man shook his head. "No."

A flash of disappointment crossed Aveline's eyes. She smiled apologetically, "Sorry, I mistook you for someone else."

The man said nothing and walked away.

Aveline watched his departing figure, still feeling a sense of familiarity. But since he denied it, she couldn't continue to press him.

Deciding not to walk anymore, she took out her phone to call a ride. She hadn't expected someone to be speeding in this area; it was really unsafe.

When the car arrived, Aveline got in, her mind preoccupied with what Lucas had said.

He wanted her to put on a show with him?

But what if the other party didn't make any moves? What if their guess was wrong from the start? Aveline's mind was in turmoil.

Moreover, she had already divorced Lucas and didn't want to have too many entanglements with him.

If she agreed to act with him, it would inevitably lead to more complications.

That was not what she wanted to see.

At Maple Garden.

As Aveline entered the neighborhood, someone appeared in front of her. Sophia stopped her, barely concealing her disgust, and asked, "Do you know there's a new woman around Lucas?" Aveline's expression turned colder. "I've divorced him. Whether he has one woman or ten around him has nothing to do with me."

She walked past Sophia, not wanting to engage.

Sophia stepped forward, her voice sharp. "Aveline, how can you be so cold? After everything Lucas has done for you, you're still unmoved? Did you ever really love him at all?"

Aveline rolled her eyes, thinking Sophia was being absurd. She cut straight to the chase, "What exactly are you after here? You want me to help you get rid of that woman? You must be dreaming."

She gestured towards the night sky and added sarcastically, "It's dark out now. Why don't you wait till morning to dream? That's what we call daydreaming."

With a mocking glance, she walked towards the apartment building.

Sophia's hands balled into fists, rage boiling inside her. How could Aveline be so indifferent to this news? That woman, Judy, was always hovering around Lucas, using work with DK Group as an excuse to constantly throw herself at him!

Sophia was convinced she was the one who should be Lucas' wife. No other woman was worthy!

As she watched Aveline walk away, Sophia's eyes narrowed, her gaze turning increasingly venomous.

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Aveline thought about Lucas' proposal for three days but couldn't come to a conclusion. That afternoon, she received a call from Barbara.

Aveline was quite surprised and immediately asked, "What's the matter?"

Barbara's aged voice came through, "What? After the divorce, you don't come to see me anymore? I admit I said some harsh things before and forgot some details. Lucas has told me everything; I wronged you."

Aveline was taken aback. This proud old woman was actually apologizing to her? She almost wanted to check if pigs were flying outside.

However, considering she was a sick elderly woman, Aveline decided not to hold a grudge. "I've been busy with work. I'll make time to visit you."

Barbara replied, "Come over this afternoon. I'll send someone to pick you up. There are many things I don't understand, and I want you to explain them to me."

Aveline instinctively frowned. "But..."

Barbara interrupted, "Do I have to invite you personally?"

Aveline felt a hint of pressure. The current Barbara was very different from her when she was ill. Aveline had no choice but to agree. "Alright."

After hanging up, Aveline sat at her desk, lost in thought. It felt like things weren't as simple as they seemed. After all these days, why was Barbara reaching out now? She got up and went to the office to ask for leave from Maria.

Maria was surprised and asked, "Is something wrong? There's a dinner tonight, and I wanted you to come with me."

Aveline nodded. "Yes, I need to visit the hospital."

Maria's expression immediately turned serious. "Are you feeling unwell?"

Aveline shook her head. "No, I'm going to visit a friend."

Maria relaxed again. "Oh, as long as it's not you. Then go ahead. I'll take Sid to the dinner."

When she mentioned Sidney, a playful smile appeared on her face.

Aveline hesitated for a moment and asked, "Boss, about Sidney..."

"Hmm?" Maria raised an eyebrow, looking at her in confusion.

Aveline said, "His situation is unique. If possible, let him focus on designing and earning his performance. He doesn't need to attend dinners."

She tried to be as tactful as possible, but Maria seemed oblivious, smiling as she said, "Yes, he's met a lot of clients recently. It shows that taking him to various social events has its benefits." Aveline fell silent.

Leaving the office, Aveline glanced at Sidney, feeling he looked more haggard than usual.

Sidney stood up to get some water and noticed her looking at him. He paused for a moment before smiling, "Aveline, what's up?"

Aveline asked, "How have you been lately?"

Sidney grinned. "I've landed a few contracts and have been busy sketching. Finally starting to get my mojo back."

Aveline nodded. "That's good."

Just as she was about to say more, her phone rang. The driver sent by Barbara had arrived.

Aveline said, "I have to go. Take care of yourself."

Sidney nodded earnestly. "I will."

Watching Aveline leave, Sidney reluctantly turned his gaze away.

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At the hospital, Aveline saw a bodyguard standing by the door of the hospital room.

Did a hospital under the Tudor Group really need bodyguards?

Puzzled, she didn't dwell on it and pushed open the door to enter the room.

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The sunlight streamed in at an angle, casting a soft glow on the hospital room's white walls. Barbara sat on the hospital bed while Sophia sat beside her, feeding her fruit. Aveline stood at a respectful distance and greeted, "Madam Barbara."

Barbara didn't even glance at her. Instead, she said to Sophia, "It's a good time now, how about you take me for a walk?"

Sophia nodded. "Alright."

She and the nurse helped Barbara from the bed into a wheelchair, and then pushed her out of the room. As they passed Aveline, Sophia glanced at her with a cold smirk.

Aveline frowned slightly and turned to follow, but a bodyguard at the door stopped her.

"Madam Barbara instructed you to wait here."

Aveline's heart sank with a sense of foreboding. She stepped back a couple of paces, and as the door closed, she pulled out her phone to contact someone, only to find there was no signal. The room was equipped with a signal jammer!

Her expression darkened immediately. What was Barbara up to? Why was she being kept here? Aveline couldn't understand.

With the bodyguard preventing her from leaving, she had no choice but to stay and wait. She sat on the sofa, watching the minutes tick by as the sun set, and Barbara did not return.

Rising to her feet, Aveline moved to the window and looked out at the bustling city below. The floor was too high for her to jump.

Returning to the door, she tried to leave again, but the bodyguard still blocked her way.

She asked, "Where did Madam Barbara go?"

The bodyguard replied, "I don't know."

Aveline persisted, "Can you at least take me to find her?"

The bodyguard remained silent and did not budge his stance firm.

Aveline's expression grew even more grim. These bodyguards weren't Lucas' men, so she didn't dare to act rashly. Feeling helpless, she returned to the sofa to continue waiting. When she got tired, she lay down on the hospital bed to sleep. The environment was decent, though she was starting to feel hungry.

Selena arrived at Maple Garden, and entered the apartment after inputting the code, but didn't

see Aveline. There were no shoes at the door either.

"Huh? Not back yet?" Selena was puzzled and took out her phone to call Aveline. The call couldn't get through. What was going on?

Selena's brows furrowed as she recalled Aveline's previous troubles, her face turning pale.

She immediately left to check Aveline's workplace.

However, everyone there had already left for the day!

Aveline was missing!

Selena was growing frantic when a car slowly pulled up beside her.

Russell's strikingly handsome face appeared, and he asked, "Selena, what are you doing here?"

Seeing him was like seeing a savior. She immediately said, "Ave is missing!"

Russell's brows knitted together. "Get in the car and tell me everything."

Selena hurriedly explained the situation.

Russell tried calling Aveline, but couldn't reach her either. He quickly contacted his people to start tracking Aveline's whereabouts.

Selena, pale with worry, clutched her seatbelt tightly. "Russ, Ave will be okay, right?"

Russell reassured her, "Don't worry, she will be fine."

About half an hour later, Russell's phone pinged. He glanced at it and said, "We've found her."

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As night fell, Aveline groggily opened her eyes. She was still in the hospital room, and Barbara had not returned. She got up and turned on the lights.

Just as she gathered her thoughts, the door to the room opened. Thinking it was Barbara, she turned her head, only to see two bodyguards walk in. "Miss Young, Madam Babara is waiting for you outside."

This time, Aveline didn't believe a word.

She sank into the sofa and said, "It's pretty late. Madam Barbara still isn't back? It's already getting chilly out there. At her age, catching a cold could be serious."

Seeing that she wasn't leaving, the bodyguards exchanged glances. They then approached her, took out a spray bottle from their pocket, and sprayed it in her face. Aveline was startled and instinctively tried to avoid it, but it was too late. The strong, unpleasant smell filled her nostrils, and she immediately felt dizzy. "You... you..." She couldn't finish her sentence before passing out.

The hospital bed was pushed into the elevator and taken out through the back door of the hospital, unnoticed by anyone.

When Russell arrived with his men, Aveline was already gone from the room.

Selena, full of anxiety, asked, "Wasn't Ave here? Where is she?"

Russell inspected the surroundings, then closed his eyes and said, "There's a scent of tranquilizer. She's been moved."

Selena's face turned even paler. "Could someone know we're looking for her?"

Russell said, "This room was previously occupied by Barbara. Aveline came here on her own, so Barbara must have summoned her."

"What does Barbara want with her now? Can't the Tudors just leave her be? Aveline's already divorced Lucas. Why are they still dragging her into their mess?" Selena fumed at the mention of the Tudor name, her eyes flashing with contempt for Lucas.

She turned to leave. "I have to find Lucas. This is his family's doing. If he can't find Aveline, I'll fight him to the end!"

Russell didn't stop her. Instead, he instructed his men, "Check the hospital's surveillance and continue searching for Aveline."

"Yes, sir!"

Selena rushed to the DK Group building but was stopped at the reception. She slammed her palm on the counter and snapped, 'I need to see Lucas. If I don't get to him today, I'll make sure every single one of you has hell to pay!'

The receptionist responded, "Miss, if you continue to cause trouble, I'll have to call the police."

Selena gritted her teeth in frustration.

At that moment, the elevator doors opened, and Lucas and Aaron stepped out.

Selena instinctively turned and, seeing Lucas, immediately rushed over.

Aaron, seeing her, thought she was there to see him. A smile appeared on his face as he stepped forward. "You're that eager..."

But before he could finish, Selena pushed him aside and charged towards Lucas, glaring at him angrily. "Where have you taken Ave this time? You're divorced! Can you let her have some peace for a few days?"

Lucas narrowed his eyes dangerously. "Aveline is missing?"

Selena sneered. "Stop pretending. Your grandmother called her to the hospital, but after she went, she disappeared. I just came from the hospital, and she's gone!"

Lucas' face darkened immediately. He pulled out his phone and made a call.

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The hospital surveillance footage quickly reached Lucas' phone. He sat in the car, scrutinizing it carefully. From the moment Aveline entered the room to when Barbara and Sophia left together, he didn't miss a single detail.

However, there was a missing segment in the footage.

Lucas pressed a button on his Bluetooth earpiece, his voice icy. "Maria, where's the rest of the footage?"

Maria responded hastily, "I'm looking, I'm looking! Don't rush me."

She was sweating profusely, nervous and worried. If she had known that Aveline would get into trouble after leaving in the afternoon, she wouldn't have let her go.

"Hurry up," Lucas' voice came through the earpiece, extremely cold.

Maria felt a chill run up her spine. She swallowed hard and quickly tapped on the keyboard, hacking into one surveillance system after another around the hospital, searching for Aveline's figure.

"I found it!" Two minutes later, she exclaimed and immediately sent the video to Lucas' phone. The footage, captured by a camera diagonally across from the hospital's back door, showed Aveline being carried into a car by two men.

The car then sped away.

Maria added, "That car had fake plates. They removed the plates on a road without surveillance. I can't track it now."

Lucas didn't respond and instead dialed the nurse who was with Barbara.

Selena, sitting beside him, watched as Lucas issued one command after another in an orderly manner, his expression very serious.

Only then did she start to believe that Aveline's trouble this time had nothing to do with him. But it still wasn't completely unrelated! It was the Tudor family that did this! By extension, it was his doing! Thinking this way, Selena glared at Lucas angrily

Aaron stepped in front of her, blocking her view, Selena glared at him, "What are you doing?" Aaron lazily replied, "Even if you glare your eyes out, Aveline won't magically appear in front of you. I suggest you save your energy and not provoke Lucas. Otherwise, he might just throw you out of the car!"

Selena retorted, "He wouldn't dare!"

If Lucas ever treated her that way, she would take Aveline and vanish, ensuring he could never find them. She wasn't bluffing-if pushed, she'd do whatever it took! +15 BONUS

The call connected, and the nurse's respectful voice came through, "Mr. Lucas, are you looking for Madam Babara? She just went to sleep."

Lucas' tone was icy, "It seems grandma is sleeping well lately. I have some matters to discuss with her. Wake her up.

The nurse hesitated, "Mr. Lucas, Madam Babara just fell asleep. Isn't it unwise to disturb her?" Lucas' voice grew colder. "Do I need your permission to do anything?"

The nurse became flustered, quickly responding, "No, I didn't mean that. I'm just worried about Madam Babara's health."

Lucas snapped, "I'm her grandson, and I'm not worried. What are you, a servant, worrying about?"

The nurse fell silent in fear, quickly saying, "I'll wake her up right away."

Lucas hung up and instructed the driver to return to the Tudor family estate.

Selena frowned and asked, "Aren't you tracking where Aveline went? Why are you going to the estate?"

Lucas replied, "Shut up!"

Selena bristled with anger and was about to retort, but Aaron intervened, stopping her.

Selena glared at her arm where Aaron had grabbed it and coldly said, "Let go!"

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Aaron narrowed his eyes, sensing that something was off in Selena's attitude toward him.

Instead of letting go, he looked at her and asked, "Why are you acting like this towards me?"

Selena retorted, "Are we that close?"

"Heh!" Aaron laughed in exasperation.

They weren't close? After all they had been through together? They had even slept together, and she said they weren't close?

His grip on her arm tightened momentarily, but seeing her cold expression, he let go with a cold laugh, saying nothing more. If she wanted to pretend they weren't close, so be it. Let her be. Selena moved her arm and then turned to Lucas. "Hey, say something!"

One moment he was focused on finding Aveline, and the next he was heading to the Tudor family estate?

Lucas gave her a cold glance. "Either wait patiently or get out!"

With Aveline missing, no one could protect her!

"You!" Selena's face flushed with anger. How could he be so arrogant when Aveline's disappearance was the Tudor family's fault?

She took out her phone and sent a message to Russell.

"Russ, have you found Ave yet?"

Russell replied, "I have a rough location. I'll check it out first. If it's her, I'll let

you

know."

Selena texted back, "Okay, looking forward to the good news!"

She shot Lucas a disdainful look, fervently hoping that Russell would find Aveline first.

This way, Aveline would surely be grateful to Russell, and it wouldn't be surprising if something developed between them. It would be the perfect opportunity to finally get rid of Lucas, that scumbag!

The car quickly arrived at the Tudor family estate. Lucas got out of the car, his tall figure striding swiftly towards the villa. The servants saw him and were about to greet him, but sensing the cold aura around him, they dared not approach.

Yvonne saw him and was surprised. "Lucas, why are you back so suddenly?"

Lucas' expression was cold. "To see grandma. Why didn't anyone tell me she was discharged?"

Yvonne explained, "Your grandma suddenly wanted some home-cooked food, so she came back. After eating, she decided to stay the night and will return to the hospital tomorrow."

Lucas sneered, "Oh, really? Then I'll have to ask her what kind of home-cooked meal is so good. I should come back and try it sometime."

Sensing something was wrong, Yvonne frowned and asked, "Lucas, has something happened?"

Lucas had already reached Barbara's room. He knocked on the door patiently. "Yvonne, today's matter has nothing to do with you. You'd better not get involved, or I'll suspect you as an accomplice." Yvonne was taken aback and then said, "I don't know what happened, but your grandma just had surgery. Her body can't handle any stress. Don't upset her."

She hurriedly left after saying that.

There was no sound from the room for a long time. Lucas' patience wore thin, and he opened the door and walked in.

Barbara was sitting up in bed, clearly not resting.

"Lucas, you have quite the nerve!" Barbara said, her face looking displeased as she saw him barging in.

Lucas stood at the foot of the bed, looking down at the elderly woman with a cold expression. "Grandma, where is Aveline?"

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Barbara replied coldly, "Haven't you already divorced her? Where she is and what she's doing should have nothing to do with you."

Lucas leaned forward slightly, his hands resting on the foot of the bed, eyes filled with icy coldness as he looked at her.

"Grandma, you used the same tactics to force me into a divorce, and I obliged. But if you try it again, my patience will run out. After all, when Leo died in front of me, I didn't shed a single tear. How long do you think I'd care about your life?"

"You!" Barbara's face grew increasingly grim, her hand trembling as she pointed at him. "Lucas, you unfilial grandson!"

Lucas smirked. "I've always been. Did you forget?"

His presence exuded a chilling aura, his eyes showing a mix of ruthlessness and madness, a determination that would stop at nothing to achieve his goals.

Barbara suddenly recalled that Lucas had always been this way as a child-a little wolf cub. Anyone who got close to him ended up hurt. He wasn't a likable child. It was Leo who always stayed by his side, never minding the injuries he received.

Somewhere along the way, Lucas changed, gradually becoming kinder. He had been kind for so long that everyone forgot he was actually a madman who didn't value his own life.

Lucas asked again, "Grandma, where is Aveline?"

Barbara, looking defeated, said, "I'll give you a phone number. Ask him where Aveline has been taken. I don't know."

Lucas pressed a button on his Bluetooth earpiece. "Did you get that?"

Maria's voice came through, "Tracking it now."

Lucas' frosty gaze remained fixed on the elderly woman in the bed. "I've always respected you, but that respect can fade."

With that, he turned and left. Barbara's face paled as she stared blankly at his retreating figure, unable to react for a long time.

Lucas...

His personality was exactly like his mother's. After that incident, his mother stubbornly took her own life. But Lucas? He wouldn't do that. He would only harm others. Selena was growing impatient. Just as she was about to get out of the car, Lucas returned.

He was cloaked in a chilling aura, his handsome face even more frosty. He ordered the driver to head straight to the abandoned dock in the southern part of the city.

Hearing this location, Selena immediately sent a message to Russell, praying he could find Aveline first.

The sound of waves penetrated the container, reaching Aveline's ears. She slowly regained consciousness and realized her hands and feet were bound, and there was tape over her

mouth.

The surroundings were pitch black, with only the faint sound of waves crashing against the shore.

Was she by the sea?

Aveline's head was still spinning, and she struggled to catch her breath. She kicked the container with all her might, creating a loud banging noise, but there was no other response. Her face grew pale. What was Barbara planning? Did she intend for her to drown at sea?

As if to confirm her fears, water began to slowly seep through the container's gaps. It was just a trickle, but Aveline noticed it. Her eyes widened in terror, and she kicked the container even harder.

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Bang!

Bang bang!

Her desperate kicks echoed inside the container, but this part of the abandoned dock, deep within the deserted beach, was empty and isolated. The beach was strewn with trash, and several containers stood amid the rising tide, slowly being swallowed by the seawater.

In the distance, car headlights illuminated the road. Inside the car, Sophia held binoculars, watching the container in the darkness. A malicious smile appeared on her face.

Aveline would drown in two hours!

That wretched woman should have died long ago!

She had always clung to Lucas, distracting him and preventing their divorce from going through! If it hadn't been for her interference, Sophia and Lucas would have been married by now, and she would have become part of the Tudor family.

Satisfied with the rising tide, Sophia smirked, set down the binoculars, and told the driver, Let's go."

"Yes, Miss."

The water beneath her was rising steadily.

Terror filled Aveline's eyes.

She struggled frantically, trying to free herself from the ropes binding her hands and feet, but her skin was chafed and bleeding, and the ropes held fast.

Water pooled beneath her, and she panted heavily, surrounded by suffocating darkness. She strained her eyes, trying to see anything, but there was nothing but blackness, Was she really going to drown? Desperation and reluctance filled her eyes.

Why?

She had divorced Lucas and left that life behind. Why wouldn't they let her go? What hurt the most was that Barbara, who once cared for her, was now targeting her.

She couldn't understand. Barbara had just forgotten about recent events. Why had she changed so drastically? If Barbara's true nature was this cold, why had she shown such warmth when she was ill? Aveline's heart ached with the pain of being betrayed by someone she had considered close.

The seawater continued to rise, spreading relentlessly. Aveline found herself lying in the icy water, unable to break free. She closed her eyes in despair, her mind flashing through recent events

It seemed like her tragedies began the moment she met Lucas. If only she had never encountered him. Would her life have been smooth and trouble-free?

If only she had never met him.

The water covered her ears, the cold piercing her bones.

"Bang!"

Suddenly, there was a loud noise outside the container. Aveline's body jolted, and she kicked the container with all her strength, trying to respond. "Over here!"

Through the fog of her mind, she heard voices outside. Tears of relief welled up and fell from her eyes.

In no time, there was a flurry of activity, and light suddenly flooded her vision. Aveline instinctively closed her eyes against the brightness.

She heard the sound of footsteps splashing through the water, and then she was lifted up.

"Aveline,"

The deep, slightly hoarse voice reached her ears,

Aveline's body trembled. She opened her eyes to see Lucas' face clearly illuminated by the flashlight.

She stared at him, dazed and disoriented.

Lucas frowned deeply. "Aveline, do you know who I am?"

"Mm..."

Aveline tried to speak, but the tape over her mouth muffled her words.