

Divorced Me 501

Chapter 501

Lucas reached out and ripped the tape off her mouth.

"Ouch!" Aveline cried out in pain, gasping for breath before saying, "Lucas, I've thought it over. I agree with what you asked.

Lucas raised an eyebrow in surprise and asked, "Why did you suddenly agree?"

Aveline pursed her lips, about to say something when a voice called out from afar. "Hey!"

"Can you stop chatting there?"

"The tide is rising!"

Aveline's expression froze. "Let's leave here first."

Lucas was already striding towards the shore, carrying her. He had just placed her in the car when Selena rushed over, throwing her arms around her and crying out, "Ave, you scared me to death! I thought I'd never see you again!"

Aveline stumbled back slightly, coughing twice. "Cough... don't do that, I'm fine."

Aaron's cold voice broke in, "If you keep hugging her like this, you might actually never see her again."

After speaking, he frowned, wondering why he had spoken to her. This woman never understood when people were being kind...

Selena, however, ignored Aaron and quickly let go of Aveline, sniffing. "I'm sorry, let me untie you first. The Tudor family is full of awful people, I thought you'd be free after divorcing Lucas, but now Madam Barbara is causing trouble. What do they want? Will they only be satisfied when you're dead?"

As she finished speaking, a chill swept through the air.

Selena shivered, glanced at Lucas, and defiantly raised her chin. "What are you looking at?"

Suddenly, Lucas grabbed her by the collar and moved her aside before getting in the car and slamming the door.

Selena's eyes widened. "Hey! What are you doing? Open the door! I have more to say to Ave! You jerk, open the door!"

She banged on the door with all her might, but the people inside remained unmoved.

The engine started, and if Aaron hadn't pulled her away quickly, the car wheels would have run over her feet! +15 BONUS

"Lucas, if you've got guts, don't run away!" Selena rolled up her sleeves, ready for a showdown

with

Ucas.

Aaron coolly remarked, "He's not running; he's sitting right there."

Selena suddenly turned and glared at Aaron. "Why did you pull me? Do you really think he'd run over my feet?"

Aaron frowned. "Selena, I know you're worried about Aveline, but can you stop attacking everyone? I didn't provoke you!"

In fact, he had been on edge all night, fearing Lucas might take his anger out on Selena!

Selena sneered. "You're his friend. You're both the same!"

With that, she turned and walked ahead.

Aaron's expression darkened completely.

What an ungrateful woman!

On the other side.

Russell sat in his car, observing the scene. His hands gripped the steering wheel tightly.

After receiving Selena's message, he rushed over but was still a step too late.

Lucas had already rescued Aveline.

If...

If he had arrived first, would the outcome have been different?

Russell's face was hidden in the shadows as he pulled out his phone and made a call.

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swollen and painful from

In the car, Aveline gently rubbed her wrists, which had become being bound for so long. Her face was pale, and her clothes were soaked through.

Lucas took out a towel and began wiping her face and neck. Aveline felt a bit uncomfortable and tried to take the towel, saying, "I can do it myself." But Lucas replied, "Didn't you already decide? You should start getting used to this now."

Aveline paused, lowering her gaze.

"Will this really work?" she asked quietly.

"I can't promise that," Lucas said, "but there are people who don't want to see us happy. So, let's be even more affectionate."

Aveline pressed her lips together, not saying anything more.

Luca's gently dried her hair as the car headed directly back to the Tudor mansion.

Feeling cold and clammy, Aveline said, "I'm going to take a shower first. We can discuss everything else after."

"Alright, go ahead," Lucas replied, then instructed the kitchen to prepare some ginger tea.

Although Aveline hadn't been in the seawater, she had spent hours in the shipping container! The coastal winds were frigid, making it easy for her to catch a cold.

When Aveline came out, she saw the ginger tea on the table. Lucas had removed his outer coat and said firmly, "Drink this first."

Aveline didn't refuse. She picked up the cup and drank it all. A warm, comforting feeling spread through her body.

Her furrowed brow relaxed a bit as she sat down on the sofa.

Lucas said, "If we're going to put on an act, we need to go all out. Either you move in here, or I'll go to Maple Garden. We should visit the Tudor family home once a week. And we'll need to remarry." Though their divorce had been fake, they still needed to go through the process. Otherwise, if they simply started living together again, Aveline might become suspicious.

Aveline replied, "Let's hold off on the remarriage for now. If anyone asks, we can explain. We can remarry after the wedding ceremony."

This would also create the illusion that they were planning to hold a wedding ceremony, potentially forcing those behind the scenes to make desperate moves.

0 +15 BONUS

The sooner they could catch the mastermind, the safer Aveline would be. Lucas studied her for a long moment before he said, "Aveline, are you leaving yourself an escape route?"

Aveline met his gaze calmly. "Shouldn't I? After all, we're just acting. Once this is over, your and I will go our separate ways."

A flash of coldness passed through Lucas' eyes, but he lowered his gaze to conceal his emotions.

He nodded. "Fine, we'll do it your way."

Aveline then asked, "How do you plan to handle today's incident?"

It had been orchestrated by Barbara, with Sophia as the main instigator. Aveline had nearly lost her life. If Lucas hadn't arrived, she might have already been drifting out to sea in that

container.

A hint of coldness appeared in Aveline's eyes.

Lucas asked, "What do you want to do?"

"How powerful is the Winter family in Cloudflare City?" Aveline inquired.

Lucas replied nonchalantly, "They're unremarkable. Sophia is an illegitimate daughter."

Over the years, Sophia had enjoyed a somewhat better life in the family, relying on the fact that she had once saved Lucas' life.

Aveline gave a soft laugh. "Can you give me some information on the Winter family?"

Lucas leaned back, studying her. "What are you planning?"

Aveline's tone was cool as she replied, "Whatever she values, I'll destroy it. All her efforts will be for nothing. Wouldn't that be painful?"

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Lucas suddenly stood up, his commanding presence enveloping Aveline as he placed his hands on either side of her, trapping her in his arms. His sudden closeness made Aveline tense up immediately, her clear eyes revealing a hint of wariness as she looked at him.

"What are you doing?"

Lucas chuckled softly, his piercing gaze fixed on her as he said in a low voice, "Aveline, when did you become so wicked?"

Aveline's lips curved into a cold smile. "I didn't want to be like this, but you all forced me to."

She could have lived a simple, carefree life. It was his forceful entry into her world, his refusal to let go, and the pressure and jealousy from others that had turned her into what she was now. She hadn't wanted this either.

Aveline lowered her eyes, a trace of sadness appearing in them.

Seeing this, Lucas felt an inexplicable discomfort. Noticing her damp hair, he suddenly stood up and left, returning moments later with a hairdryer.

"Let me dry your hair."

Aveline frowned and refused, "No need, I can do it myself."

"You can do everything yourself," Lucas replied, "but I want to dry it for you."

Aveline paused, then didn't stop him.

She vaguely sensed that Lucas had changed somewhat, but not significantly. She didn't dwell on it. Whether he changed or not held no meaning for her anymore.

The warm air from the dryer flowed through her hair as Lucas' fingers gently combed through it. His movements were slow and gentle. Aveline leaned back into the sofa, her eyes half-closed in comfort. Drowsiness overcame her, and her eyelids grew heavier. By the time her hair was dry, Aveline had fallen asleep on the sofa.

Lucas set the hairdryer aside and gazed at her sleeping face, a sigh passing through his heart. Winning her back would be no easy task.

He picked her up and placed her on the bed. She stirred slightly, her eyelashes fluttering as if she might wake at any moment.

His hand gently stroked her head, soothing her emotions. Soon, she calmed down and fell back into a deep sleep.

Lucas leaned down and kissed her forehead.

Just then, her phone began to vibrate. He frowned, quickly grabbed the phone, and swiftly left the bedroom.

Closing the bedroom door behind him, he answered the call.

"Ave, how are you? Did you go to the hospital? Are you hurt?" As soon as the call connected, Selena fired off a barrage of questions. Lucas replied coldly, "She's asleep."

"Why are you answering her phone? Where's Ave? What have you done to her?" Selena exploded upon hearing Lucas' voice.

"Mr. Tudor, please get this straight. You and Ave are divorced. You have no relationship anymore. Can't you stop harassing her? What you're doing is really tasteless!" Selena didn't mince words, speaking quite harshly.

Lucas' expression remained cold, his tone completely devoid of warmth. "I'm able to access her phone. Where do you think she is?"

Selena felt the blatant provocation in his words.

How infuriating! Absolutely infuriating!

"If you've got the guts, tell me where you are. I'll come over right now and teach you a lesson!" Selena snarled through gritted teeth.

But Lucas had no patience for this game. He said coldly, "She's very tired and is resting now. Don't call again."

With that, he hung up the phone.

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"Damn it! He hung up on me again!" Selena stared angrily at the disconnected call. She wanted to call back, but remembering Lucas' words about Aveline being tired, she held back. Once Aveline had enough rest, Selena swore she'd complain to Aveline about Lucas and let Aveline know how Lucas had bullied her!

Nearby, Aaron couldn't help but laugh at Selena's angry expression.

Hearing him, Selena glanced his way without a word, then turned and walked away.

A taxi happened to be passing by. She got in, told the driver her destination, and looked away, not sparing Aaron even a glance.

Aaron gritted his teeth. This woman was getting bolder. Did she really think he wouldn't do anything to her?

He took out his phone and made a call.

Just as Selena's taxi entered the city, she received a call from her studio boss, who berated her harshly.

"Selena, if you mess up Mr. Fletcher's deal, you're fired!" the boss finally roared before hanging up.

Selena wanted to say something, but the call had already ended. She was so angry she nearly smashed her phone.

How infuriating!

Did everyone think they could just hang up on her?

Did they think she had no temper?

Back home, standing on the sidewalk, Selena took several deep breaths to calm herself. She was just an ordinary worker, no match for those wealthy young men.

She'd admit defeat, okay?

Selena tried calling Aaron, but he hung up immediately. She tried again, and he hung up again. Selena realized she had been blocked!

She would endure it!

Selena messaged Aaron on WhatsApp, "Mr. Fletcher, I apologize for my earlier outburst. I didn't mean to say those unpleasant things. Attached is my latest revised design draft. Please let me know if any adjustments are needed, and we can discuss further."

The message was sent successfully.

Selena felt oddly relieved. At least he hadn't blocked her completely, or she wouldn't have known how to reach him.

However, though the message went through, he didn't reply immediately.

After her nap, Aveline felt much better.

Upon waking, she responded to a round of messages. When she saw Selena's missed calls, she hesitated, wondering whether to tell her about the act she was putting on with Lucas. Just then, Lucas walked in.

Glancing at her, he said, "I advise you not to say anything. The fewer people who know about this, the less risk we face."

Aveline pressed her lips together, then answered Selena's call.

"Ave?" Selena's tentative voice came through as if fearing someone else might answer.

"It's me," Aveline responded. "I'm fine, don't worry."

Selena sighed in relief. "I'm glad you're okay. I was so worried you might be hurt. But how did you end up locked in there? Was it Madam Barbara who had this done to you?" "More or less, Aveline replied.

Selena spat, "The Tudor family really is rotten to the core. Ave, let's leave Cloudflare City. We can go anywhere, and I'll be with you. Let's get away from all this trouble. You have plenty of money - we could find a place where no one knows us. You could open a small restaurant. You'd surely be happier than you are now!"

Aveline suddenly lost the courage to continue. Her fingers tightened on the phone.

"Ave?" Noticing Aveline's lack of response, Selena's tone grew anxious. "Has something else happened?"

Aveline closed her eyes briefly, then said, "Selena, I can't leave right now."

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"Why not?" Selena asked.

Aveline replied, "Lucas and I have reconciled."

"What?"

Selena raised her voice suddenly as if she had jumped up on the other end. A jumble of noises came through.

"Ave, you're not joking, are you? This isn't funny at all," Selena said, completely flustered. She had been the harshest critic of Lucas, constantly urging them to divorce. Now Aveline was telling her they had reconciled? Their reconciliation made her feel like a fool!

Selena's voice grew more urgent. "Ave, have you forgotten all the hurt you've suffered? Hasn't he hurt you deeply enough? How can you reconcile with him?"

Aveline felt terribly sad. She wanted to blurt out the truth, but Lucas was right - the fewer people who knew the truth, the less risk they faced. If someone were to learn something from Selena, wouldn't all her efforts be in vain?

She just wanted to return to a normal life. Running away couldn't solve the problem.

Aveline closed her eyes for a moment and then said, "This incident made me realize I still can't let him go. I want to try reconnecting with him."

Selena gritted her teeth. "You've really forgotten the pain once the wound has healed!"

She was too angry to say anything else!

When it came to others, she could chatter endlessly like a machine gun, but faced with Aveline, she couldn't find the words.

What could she do?

Selena sighed and sank into her chair. After calming down, she said, "Ave, since you've made your decision, I hope you don't regret it. I'll be really busy for a while, so don't try to contact me. Even if you do, I won't have time for you."

With that, she hung up the phone.

Selena..." Aveline called out her name in surprise.

But the call had already ended. She stared at the dark screen of her phone, feeling very upset.

Selena was angry.

If it were someone else, they would probably be even angrier.

Lucas said calmly, "Once this is resolved, I'll treat her to dinner and apologize."

Aveline pressed her lips together, staying silent. Seeing her demeanor, Lucas didn't press her further and turned to leave. As he turned, a faint smile curved his lips.

Aveline remained in her room, refusing to eat or drink. Lucas hoped that giving her some time to calm down would help, but after a day had passed with no change, his patience wore thin. He decided to go to the bedroom.

Aveline was still lying on the bed, her eyes vacant. Lucas stood by the bed and said softly, "Aveline, get up and eat."

Her voice was hoarse as she replied, "I'm not hungry."

Lucas insisted, "Even if you're not hungry, you need to eat. Why are you acting this way? Are you having second thoughts?"

He leaned down, gently turning her to face him, his eyes dark and intense. "If you've changed your mind, you can leave now. I won't stop you."

Aveline's eyelashes fluttered slightly. After a brief silence, she said, "Okay, I'll go eat."

Feeling relieved, Lucas helped her up and watched as she went into the bathroom.

In the dining room, Lucas handed her a document. "This is all the information on the Winter family."

Aveline didn't look at it; instead, she took small bites of her food. She was weak and needed to regain her strength.

At that moment, her phone rang. Seeing Russell's name on the screen, she hesitated but answered the call. "Hello, Russ."

As soon as she spoke, a cold gaze fell upon her.

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Lucas' cold gaze fell on her as if trying to see through her phone to Russell.

His stare carried a sense of pressure that made Aveline uncomfortable. She shot him an annoyed look. Was she not allowed to take a call?

Lucas kept quiet.

He gripped his fork as if he were gripping Aveline's neck.

Russell's voice came through. "Aveline, what's wrong with Selena? I just contacted her, and she seemed very upset."

Aveline's breath caught in her throat. She then said, "I made her angry. I'll make it up to her."

Russell acknowledged this, then asked, "And you? How are you?"

Aveline paused. "What do you mean?"

Russell said, "Are you hurt? Actually, I rushed over there yesterday too, but I was a step too late."

He finished with a self-deprecating laugh.

Aveline hadn't realized he had gone too. Gratitude flickered in her eyes. "Thank you. I'm fine, not hurt."

Russell replied, "Good, that's good."

A brief silence fell.

As Aveline was considering ending the call, Russell suddenly asked, "Aveline, you and Lucas..."

Aveline's long eyelashes fluttered. She said, "Russ, thank you for all your help. I'll handle my own affairs."

The implication was clear - she hoped he wouldn't interfere further.

Russell understood.

Thinking of Selena's attitude, his expression grew colder.

Aveline had reconciled with Lucas.

All because he had been one step too late yesterday.

www

"Alright, I respect your choice," Russell said quietly, then hung up.

Aveline looked at her phone, thinking about Selena.

She must be very disappointed in her, right?

They had already divorced, but now everything seemed to be back to square one.

Suddenly, a hand appeared and took her phone away. Lucas said in a deep, cold voice, "Can't bear to part with him? Should we invite him over for dinner?" Aveline frowned, looking at Lucas.

"Can you stop being unreasonable?"

Lucas laughed coldly. "I'm being unreasonable? You're pining over another man, and I can't even ask

about it? Aveline, have you fallen for Russell?"

Aveline's expression turned cold, feeling Lucas was being completely irrational.

She stood up to leave.

"Stop!" Lucas said sharply. "Finish your meal before you go!"

Aveline was speechless.

She knew she shouldn't neglect her health, so she sat back down to continue eating but didn't spare him a single glance throughout the meal.

Lucas' expression grew increasingly cold, the chill around him intensifying. Had she really fallen for Russell?

When did this happen?

He had people watching her constantly - she shouldn't have had any opportunity to get close to Russell!

Lucas felt incredibly frustrated, wishing he could just get rid of Russell right then and there.

After finishing her meal, Aveline took the Winter family files and went straight to work.

Arriving at the studio, she saw Maria walking out of the office yawning, looking as if she had been there all night.

"Boss, didn't sleep well?" Aveline greeted her.

Maria nodded. "Yeah, I pulled another all-nighter. My skin looks so dull now. I'm heading to the beauty salon this afternoon. Want to come with me?"

Aveline shook her head, "I can't. I need to focus on work."

But Maria came over and leaned on her. "Work never ends, but beauty fades. Come with me, please?"

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Who could resist a beautiful woman's charm?

Certainly not Aveline.

Faced with Maria's persuasive beauty, Aveline gave in. "Alright, I'll go. But I really need to get back to work now. You might not worry about money as the boss, but I still need to earn a living!" Maria smiled. "Great! You go ahead and work then. I won't disturb you anymore."

"Alright!"

As Maria turned to leave, she glanced back at Aveline one last time. Seeing her in good spirits, she felt relieved.

Maria praised herself for doing well and thought about asking Lucas for a bonus!

Aveline pored over the Winter family files. In Cloudflare City, a city full of wealthy families, the Winter family wasn't considered upper class, but rather hovered in the middle tier.

Their main business was real estate. The Winter family had two sons and two daughters, with Sophia being one of them.

Due to her relationship with Lucas in recent years, Sophia's status in the Winter family had risen dramatically, making life difficult for the family's legitimate daughter, Sasha Winter. Sophia threw her weight around in the Winter family, often bullying Sasha. She acted as if she were the true heiress.

Previously, when Sophia's relationship with Lucas soured, she was neglected at home. She then started working at the family company, hoping to make a name for herself. Now, she managed a subsidiary company and had recently won a bid for a plot of land, planning to develop it into a residential area.

A glint appeared in Aveline's eyes as an idea formed in her mind.

She took out her phone and dialed Sasha's number.

"Hello, who is this?" A cool female voice answered quickly.

Aveline got straight to the point, "Hello, Miss Winter. This is Aveline, Lucas Tudor's wife. I have a business proposition I'd like to discuss with you. Are you interested?"

In Cloudflare City's elite circles, everyone knew about Aveline and the entanglement between Lucas, Aveline, and Sophia.

Sasha was particularly familiar with the situation. Sophia had been using Lucas' influence to suppress her to the point where she could barely breathe!

Sasha was surprised by Aveline's sudden contact, but quickly asked, "What kind of proposition?"

Aveline said, "It's not convenient to discuss over the phone. How about we meet in person to talk details?"

"Alright, just let me know the time and place," Sasha replied.

She was straightforward, and most importantly, their goals aligned.

Aveline hung up, her expression growing colder.

She put away the files and sent a message to Lucas, "Let's not announce our reconciliation yet."

Lucas replied, "Why? Are you having second thoughts?"

Before she could reply, Lucas called her. She frowned but answered.

"Aveline, what do you mean?" Lucas' voice had a cold edge.

Aveline said, "I'll explain when I get back tonight."

Lucas paused and thought, "Get back tonight? Where? To the Tudor mansion?"

He leaned back, asking casually, "Where are you heading back to?"

Aveline wanted to roll her eyes. "Your place."

A pleased smile immediately appeared on Lucas' lips. "Alright, I'll be waiting for you."

Aaron, sitting across from him, noticed his quick change of expression and couldn't help but click his tongue.

"Lucas, Aveline's got you wrapped around her finger."

Lucas scoffed, "She's got me wrapped around her finger? Are you joking?"

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Aaron looked at him. "Don't be so sure. You just haven't realized it yet. By the time you do, you probably won't be able to leave her. You'll be afraid to defy her wishes."

Lucas looked disdainful.

Aaron changed the subject, "What do you think about this recent incident?"

Lucas said calmly, "She wants to handle it herself."

Aaron was surprised, "Can she manage it?"

"We'll see if she can or not. If she really can't, I'll be there to back her up," Lucas replied.

Aaron nodded. "Alright. You two are becoming more and more alike."

Lucas glanced at him. "Anything else?"

Aaron took out an envelope and pushed it across to Lucas. "Some recent findings. Take a look."

Lucas opened the envelope to find several photos of Yvonne with a man. The man wore a hat and mask, obscuring his face. The photos were somewhat blurry but clearly recent. Yvonne had been meeting this man frequently.

Who was he?

Lucas looked at Aaron. "Have you identified this man?"

Aaron said, "He's excellent at evading surveillance. Every time I send someone to follow him, he manages

to slip away."

Lucas' face showed deep thought.

Aaron asked, "Do you recognize him?"

"I don't, but he seems familiar. Look into a man named Darren Jones. See if it's the same person," Lucas

said.

"Alright." Aaron nodded and left.

That afternoon, just before 3 PM, Maria dragged Aveline to the beauty salon.

At the spa, the staff respectfully led them to a private room. Unexpectedly, they ran into Sophia at the

entrance.

Sophia looked surprised to see Aveline unharmed.

"You're okay?" she asked.

Aveline gave her a cold look. "I'm fine. Are you disappointed?"

The facade of civility between the two women had completely crumbled.

Sophia had tried to kill her!

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Aveline didn't even want to look at her anymore and went straight into the private room with Maria.

Sophia stood nearby, her face darkening as she saw Aveline seemingly unaffected.

She was indeed angry!

That bitch had such incredible luck!

Who could have saved her?

She wouldn't let Aveline off so easily!

In the private room, Maria asked, "You know her?"

Aveline replied, "Yes, my husband's fiancée."

Maria was shocked. "What?"

Was the relationship that complicated?

Aveline smiled slightly. "His former fiancée."

Maria laughed. "You scared me! I thought it was something serious. She's not as pretty as you. Mr. Tudor made the right choice in leaving her."

Aveline closed her eyes, her expression indifferent.

She no longer cared who Lucas liked or loved!

Her focus now was on revenge!

Since she hadn't died, others would have to suffer!

Seeing Aveline's demeanor, Maria couldn't help but think that the boss had a long road ahead to win back his wife.

Aveline seemed to have absolutely no feelings for Lucas now!

By the time they left the spa, night had fallen.

Maria insisted on having dinner with Aveline, so it was already 8 PM when Aveline returned to the Tudor mansion.

Lucas sat on the sofa in dark atmosphere.

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Aveline changed her shoes and walked in. The man's cold gaze immediately fell on her.

She said nothing and went to drink a glass of water.

Footsteps approached from behind her.

Just as Aveline set down her glass, she felt a grip on her shoulder as Lucas turned her around.

His tall figure loomed over her, his eyes studying her intently. He asked in a low voice, "What did you mean by what you said earlier?" Aveline pushed his hand away, moving to a safe distance. She didn't think their current relationship warranted such intimacy.

She said coolly, "Going public now doesn't suit my plans."

Lucas was displeased by her avoidance, but hearing her words, he raised an eyebrow. "What plans?" "That's confidential," Aveline replied.

Lucas retorted, "Why should I agree to your terms if you won't give me a reason?"

Standing on the stairs, Aveline turned to look at him, her tone calm. "You don't have to agree. But then I don't have to agree to yours either."

Her attitude was cold as she headed upstairs.

Lucas was speechless.

His expression turned completely frigid.

This woman had some nerve!

She dared to threaten him!

He quickly stepped forward, stopping her before she entered the room. "Aveline, you don't seem to grasp the situation. The mastermind behind your recent ordeal is targeting you specifically. I could easily choose to stay out of it."

Aveline's heart grew cold. "So, what are you saying? Because you helped, I should be grateful and follow your every command?"

Lucas' face darkened. "Woman, can't you tell right from wrong?"

Aveline shook off his hand. "Lucas, the mastermind is targeting me, but before I met you, my life was peaceful!"

Anger flared in her eyes, disrupting her calm demeanor like a stone thrown into a still lake.

She took several deep breaths, struggling to control her emotions. "Lucas, this is a collaboration between

1. us. I don't owe you anything. If you can't accept my conditions, then let's end this cooperation!"

After all, she didn't want to be entangled with him any further!

With those words, she turned to leave!

Lucas suddenly grabbed her, pulling her tightly against him.

"Aveline, I could just strangle you!" he said in a low voice, but despite his words, he didn't act on them.

He couldn't bring himself to hurt her.

Just as before, he couldn't do it then, and he couldn't do it now.

Aveline struggled. "Let me go."

But Lucas replied shamelessly, "We're supposed to be acting. Daily intimacy is essential. You need to get used to it early!"

Aveline frowned, thinking he must be crazy.

Unable to break free, she gave up struggling. Her emotions also calmed down.

After a long moment, she asked coldly, "Are you done hugging me?"

Lucas replied, "No, I don't just want to hug you. I want to kiss you, to do more interesting things with you."

Aveline looked even more-expressionless.

Finally, Lucas began to release her, but not before stealing a kiss on her forehead. Seeing the cold light in her eyes, a faint smile appeared on his lips. "Go take a shower." With that, he turned and went straight into his study.

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Returning to the bedroom, Aveline closed the door and sighed in relief, feeling that Lucas was becoming increasingly strange.

However, she didn't dwell on his behavior. She didn't care. Her focus was on planning her next steps.

After taking a shower, she lay on the bed with her phone, noting down all the things she needed to do. A while later, she turned off the lights and went to sleep.

But in the middle of the night, the bedroom door opened, and Lucas walked into the darkness.

Seeing this, Aveline frowned slightly and said, "What are you doing here?"

Lucas replied, "This is my bedroom. If I don't come here, where else would I go?"

Upon hearing this, Aveline immediately got up. "If you're in this room, I'll go to another."

However, he grabbed her wrist. "Aveline, do you know what it means to put on an act? I can't be sure if there are people planted here by that person or if there are hidden cameras. If you just walk out, what if someone sees through us?"

In the darkness, Aveline looked at his handsome face, unable to discern the expression in his eyes. Her tone remained cold. "This is your house, your territory. If you can't even guarantee that, I really doubt your capabilities."

She pulled her hand free and turned to leave.

She clearly wasn't falling for his trick.

Lucas stared at her intently and said, "It's best if we stay in the same room. We don't have to share the same bed. I'll sleep on the sofa."

He walked over to the sofa and lay down.

Aveline glanced back at him. In the darkness, she could only make out a vague outline of his figure. Without dwelling on it, she returned to bed. With a comfortable bed right there, who would choose to sleep elsewhere?

In the darkness, their breaths gradually synchronized, with no words exchanged. Yet, there was an inexplicable tension lingering in the air.

After a long while, listening to her steady breathing, Lucas opened his eyes. He got up from the sofa and, moving quietly, lay down beside her, maintaining a delicate distance between them.

Aveline had no idea how much time had passed, but in her sleep, she turned over and seemed to embrace a large stuffed toy. She had always liked hugging stuffed toys while sleeping, but after marrying Lucas, she had replaced the toy with him. Over time, she had forgotten about the toy entirely.

Now, having something to hug again, she wrapped her arms and legs around it.

Lucas felt her soft body clinging tightly to him, pressing against him. His Adam's apple bobbed up and

down. This was the result he wanted.

But... it made it even harder for him to sleep.

He wrapped his arms around her waist, closed his eyes, and tried to ignore his body's reaction. Just being able to hold her while sleeping was more than enough.

That night, Aveline slept very well.

The next morning, when she opened her eyes, she could still feel the firmness of the "stuffed toy" she had hugged. She stared at her arms in confusion.

Huh?

Was she dreaming?

Then why did it feel so real?

She sat up, looked at herself in bewilderment, then glanced at the spot beside her. Her gaze shifted to the sofa, where Lucas was no longer present.

It was 6:30 in the morning. He was up this early?

After washing up, Aveline left the bedroom. Breakfast was already prepared in the kitchen. As she went downstairs, Lucas returned from outside.