

Divorced Me 521

Chapter 521

By the time Sophia realized that everything she had bought was defective, it would be too late to hold anyone accountable as those involved would have already disappeared.

The people Sasha had arranged to contact Sophia were all from shell companies, specializing in scams. Aveline's eyes brightened as she asked, "How much did she invest?" Sasha couldn't hide her amusement. "She put in all the available funds of her company."

Aveline was surprised that Sophia had gambled so recklessly. All her investment had now gone down the drain.

Sasha continued, "This failure is a significant blow to her. Not only did she fail to deliver results, but her company now needs family support to stay afloat. My father is very disappointed in her and has ordered her to secure Lucas. Aveline, the next step is up to you."

Aveline took a deep breath and said, "Got it."

After hanging up, a look of determination appeared in her eyes. She could ignore many things, but she had to settle this score. If Sophia wanted her dead, she would make her life unbearable.

She looked at Lucas' number on her phone and dialed it without hesitation. After three rings, the call went unanswered and eventually disconnected.

Aveline frowned. What was going on? Why wasn't he answering? What was he doing?

Thinking it over, she called Desmond.

"Mrs Tudor," Desmond's respectful voice came through.

"Where is Lucas?" Aveline asked.

Desmond hesitated before replying, "Mr. Tudor is not at the company. I don't know where he is. Would you like me to contact him for you?"

Aveline was even more puzzled. Desmond didn't know either?

"Yes, please ask him for me," Aveline said and hung up the phone.

It was a critical moment, so what was Lucas up to?

At Tudor family's main mansion.

In the study.

Frederick's expression grew darker as he reviewed the investigation report.

"Bang!" He slammed the documents onto the desk, glaring at Lucas. "What is the meaning of this? Why are you stopping my men from searching for Leo? Do you not want him to come back?"

Lucas' expression remained cold and indifferent. "I just don't want you wasting resources on a dead man." "Kneel!" Frederick shouted furiously, pointing at him. "Leo is your brother. He treated you so well, and you

don't want him back! Today, I will teach you a lesson, you ungrateful brat!"

He opened a cabinet, pulled out a long whip, and slammed it onto the floor, his eyes devoid of any warmth as he looked at Lucas.

Lucas stared back coolly, a faint sneer playing on his lips. "He died in front of me. I can still remember what his body looked like. Do you want me to draw it for you?"

"Kneel!" Frederick roared, lashing out with the whip.

Lucas knelt, the whip striking his body with fierce pain. Frederick's blows grew harsher and more relentless.

"Why wasn't it you who died back then?" he snarled, his face twisted with rage. All these years, he had agonized over this.

He desperately wished it had been Leo who survived.

He had never liked Lucas, never had. And now, Lucas was preventing him from finding Leo.

He couldn't help but suspect that Lucas had deliberately caused Leo's death back then.

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The whip lashed across Lucas' body, and he winced slightly. Hearing Frederick's words, he retorted sarcastically, "If you hate me that much, you might as well kill me now."

"You think I don't want to?" Frederick panted, exhausted from the beating, his eyes filled with malice. "Once I find Leo, I'll gladly kill you!"

Lucas' clothes were torn, and his arms and back were bleeding, presenting a gruesome sight. He looked at Frederick mockingly. "Well, you might never see him, even in death."

"You ungrateful son!" Frederick's chest heaved with anger, raising the whip to strike again.

Lucas stood up and said coldly, "Save your strength for next time. I have things to do." "Stop right there!" Frederick shouted, trembling with rage, pointing a shaking finger at him.

But Lucas never listened to him.

He had knelt down and taken the beating today for reasons Frederick couldn't fathom.

Despite this, Frederick felt no satisfaction, only increased fury. He couldn't help but think how much better it would have been if Lucas had died in the fire back then. The Tudor family would be a harmonious, peaceful place, not the chaotic mess it had become because of him.

Yvonne hurried in and, seeing Frederick's enraged face, quickly fetched his blood pressure medication. Frederick, don't get so worked up. You need to take care of your health."

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Frederick took his medication and drank some water, gradually calming down. "Didn't he divorce Aveline? Find a suitable girl from another family for him to marry immediately and have an heir!" Yvonne hesitated. "He won't agree to that."

Frederick sneered. "He has no choice! If he chooses to stay in the Tudor family, he must contribute."

Yvonne looked troubled. "You know his temperament. He won't go along with it."

Frederick's eyes were cold. "Then find a way to make him."

Yvonne thought for a moment and said, "Even though he divorced Aveline, he still seems to care about her. Maybe we could have Aveline get pregnant?" Frederick scoffed, "Someone like Aveline doesn't deserve to bear a Tudor child!"

Yvonne sighed softly.

Frederick continued, "Go find a suitable match. I think the girl from the Thompson family would be a good choice. Spend more time with Mrs. Thompson." Yvonne nodded, "Alright, I understand."

Lucas sat in his car, lighting a cigarette and taking a deep drag. He then noticed his phone on the seat. Picking it up, he saw that Aveline had called him numerous times.

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A faint, mocking smile played on his lips. After the incident, she hadn't reached out to him, and he had been too busy to think about her. Now, she was calling him?

He thought she might never want to speak to him again.

He dialed her number back, put the phone on speaker, and tossed it onto the dashboard.

After three rings, the call connected, and Aveline's gentle voice came through, "Lucas, where are you?"

Her tone was calm, betraying no emotion. If they were any other couple, the girl would probably be upset and want reassurance from the guy.

A look of derision crossed Lucas' face. They weren't a couple at all.

"What do you want?" he asked coldly.

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Aveline paused, wondering if he had forgotten about what happened before. "Let's meet and talk," she said.

Lucas, feeling the stinging pain on his body, replied with the same cold tone, "Fine."

He hung up and sent her a message, instructing her to come to the Tudor residence.

Aveline saw the message and frowned. The events of that night had left her with a strong aversion to the Tudor residence, but at this point, she had no choice. Lucas's tone seemed cold and impatient, which made her feel even more frustrated. How could he be the one lacking patience? It was his idea to pretend. Aveline gathered her composure and set off for the Tudor residence.

The butler greeted her with a smile. "Mrs. Tudor, would you like something to drink?"

"Just water," Aveline replied.

The butler nodded and instructed someone to bring it.

Aveline waited patiently.

About half an hour later, Lucas' tall figure appeared in the room. Aveline looked at him and stood up. "I'm here to talk about what happened last time." Lucas' eyes darkened as he stared at Aveline. A sly smile curved on his lips. "What? Want to go for another round? You wish to get torn apart again?" Aveline's face instantly turned cold.

"Lucas, can you not be so vile?" she snapped.

But before she could react, Lucas suddenly grabbed her chin and leaned in to kiss her.

"Smack!"

A sharp slap resounded through the room in the next second

Lucas felt the sting on his cheek, his tongue pressing against the inside of his mouth. He let out a low laugh.

"You slapped me. If I don't do something about it, wouldn't that slap be for nothing?" he said.

With a sudden move, he pushed Aveline onto the sofa, his tall frame pressing down on her as he captured her lips in a kiss.

Aveline hadn't expected him to act so wildly. Her entire body resisted, struggling fiercely. "Lucas, you bastard!"

Her pent-up emotions burst forth like a flood, and she hit him hard, venting all the anger she'd been suppressing for days.

Lucas didn't stop her. He let her hit him until she was exhausted, her blows losing strength. Only then did

he coldly smirk. "You know I'm a bastard, so why did you come looking for me? Hmm?"

His hand caressed her face gently. Their proximity created a strange, charged atmosphere.

Aveline, now tired, breathed unevenly, her eyes slightly reddened as she looked at his handsome face." Lucas, weren't we supposed to be pretending? What, have you changed your mind?"

Lucas replied coolly, "Yes, I have."

"You!" Aveline was shocked by his response.

She glared at him angrily. "How can you change your mind like that?"

Lucas chuckled. "Why can't I? I'm not the one being threatened or hurt."

Aveline was at a loss for words, her anger growing but with no outlet.

She felt utterly miserable.

She shoved him away and stood up.

"If you're not interested anymore, then let's just forget about it," she said, heading towards the door.

Lucas remained seated on the sofa, cold sweat dotting his forehead, his gaze fixed on her retreating back.

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"If you beg me, I might agree to keep up the act," the man's clear voice rang out behind her.

Aveline paused, her tone cold. "I'd rather die."

He wanted her to beg him? In his dreams!

Lucas chuckled softly. "So full of pride. Think about everything you've been through: a man like Darren constantly trying to kill you, Sophia scheming against you at every turn. Who else might come after you? How much longer can you endure? Dying sounds easy, but do you really have the courage to go through with it?"

His words struck her heart like a hammer, breaking down her resolve

Her steps slowed, and she clenched her bag tightly.

She was unwilling to give up.

Otherwise, she wouldn't have contacted Lucas today.

Did she really dare to die? How could she, with so many things left undone?

Aveline closed her eyes, knowing that stepping back meant endless entanglement with him. He could easily walk away, but what about her? In the end, wouldn't she still be left battered and bruised? Fighting alone or relying on him seemed to lead to the same outcome.

Lucas watched her hesitation, his gaze unwavering. "Aveline, this is a one-time offer. If you walk out that door today, I promise you'll never see me again."

He meant every word.

Aveline bit her lip hard, closing her eyes once more. When she opened them, they were clear and determined.

She turned to face him. "Lucas, do you think you can control me like this? If before, I considered keeping up the agreement because it had its benefits, now I realize I don't need it. Standing by your side isn't any different from being hurt by those people."

Lucas raised an eyebrow, his interest piqued by her defiance.

"Perhaps," he said, "but at least with me, you know what to expect. With them, who knows how much worse it could get?"

Aveline's eyes flashed with determination. "I'd rather face the unknown than stay in a place where I'm constantly reminded of how powerless I am."

Lucas' expression softened just a fraction. "Fine. But remember, the door is always open for you to come back, if you change your mind."

Aveline turned once more and walked out, not looking back.

Her gaze was icy as she spoke, "You're just as vile as they are. I will only hate you."

With that, she turned and walked away.

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Lucas watched her leave, not moving from his spot. The pain in his body intensified, causing his brow to furrow. Why did it hurt so much? He closed his eyes, and the next moment, he collapsed.

As Aveline exited the Tudor residence, she felt a weight lifted from her chest. She took out her phone and called Selena.

"Hello, what's up?" Selena's voice was somewhat cold when she answered.

Aveline sniffled and asked, "How about I cook dinner, and you come over? I'll make your favorite chicken wings."

There was a long silence on the other end of the line.

Aveline's grip on her phone tightened. "And I'll also make some grilled fish?"

Selena's stiff voice finally responded, "I want crispy pork too."

"Okay." Aveline smiled. "I'll be waiting for you at home"

"Alright," Selena replied.

After hanging up, Aveline walked away with a lighter step.

Behind her, a servant hurried out, catching up with her, looking anxious. "Mrs. Tudor, please go back and check on Mr. Tudor!"

Aveline's expression remained indifferent. "What's wrong with him?"

"He's fainted and has a fever!" the servant exclaimed, panicked.

Aveline's eyelashes fluttered slightly. "Then you should call the ambulance, not ask me to go back. I'm not a doctor."

With that, she walked past the servant just as a taxi pulled up.

She got in and left.

The servant stood there, momentarily unsure, before steeling himself and heading back inside.

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The butler noticed the servant returning alone and immediately asked, "Where is Mrs. Tudor?"

The servant hesitated but eventually repeated what Aveline had said.

The butler sighed heavily and glanced at the unconscious man on the sofa. Lucas' brow was furrowed, and even in his unconscious state, he kept murmuring Aveline's name. "Aveline, don't go. Aveline..."

But Aveline couldn't hear him.

Aveline went to the supermarket, bought groceries, and started cooking at home. While preparing the fish, Russell called her.

She answered, "Russ, I'm cooking. Have you had dinner? Do you want to come over and join us?"

Russell smiled. "Sure, I haven't had your cooking in a while. I'd love to."

Aveline said, "Then come over."

"Alright," Russell replied before hanging up.

About half an hour later, Russell arrived with Selena.

Aveline stood at the door, smiling at Selena.

Selena pouted, then suddenly ran over and hugged her. "You didn't contact me for so long. I thought you didn't want me anymore!"

Her voice was choked with emotion.

Aveline quickly patted her back. "How could that be? I just had some things to figure out."

Selena hugged her tightly and said, "You've lost weight."

Aveline laughed. "Doesn't that mean my figure looks even better?"

Selena bit her lip. "I won't allow you to have a better figure than me. From today on, you have to eat properly!"

Aveline nodded. "Alright, I'll try to gain a bit more weight than you."

"Hmph, that's better!" Selena huffed, then wrinkled her nose. "What's that smell?"

Aveline's eyes widened. "Oh no, my soup!"

She quickly turned and rushed into the kitchen.

Russell, watching from the side, said, "Looks like what brought will come in handy today."

Selena looked over and saw him carrying beer.

Her eyes lit up. "We're not stopping until we're drunk tonight!"

Russell's charming smile, both soft and wicked, made him look even more captivating. "Sure, you two can drink to your heart's content. I'll take care of the aftermath." Selena patted his shoulder. "Russ, you're the best!"

Aveline finished preparing the dishes and brought them to the table. Selena immediately placed a can of beer in front of her.

"Drinking tonight?" Aveline asked, surprised.

Selena raised her chin. "Will you be drinking with us?"

"Yes!" Aveline nodded, her eyes sparkling.

Russell quietly ate, his eyes lighting up with each bite.

It was delicious!

Aveline looked at him and asked, "Russ, aren't you going to join us?"

"I'll have a little, but tonight is your night," he replied, opening a can of beer and taking a small sip

Aveline didn't press him further.

Selena clinked her glass against Aveline's and took a big gulp, finishing half the can in one go. She closed her eyes and sighed. "Ah, that's refreshing!"

Aveline frowned. "Slow down, no one's going to take it from you."

Selena opened her eyes, which were now red. "Aveline, you have no idea how hard these past few days have been for me. Just thinking about you being with that jerk Lucas makes me want to cry.

"He's hurt you so much, and yet, just because he saved you once, you're back with him? It makes me feel like you're so caught up in love that you've lost your mind. I want to crack open your skull and see what's inside!"

She clutched the beer bottle, tears streaming down her face as she looked at Aveline.

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Selena cried, tears and snot streaming down her face. Her eyes, though angry, were filled with concern

for Aveline.

Aveline's eyes welled up as she sniffled. "I'm sorry for making you worry."

Selena grabbed a tissue, blew her nose loudly, and tossed it in the trash. "Alright, I accept your apology. Now, can you tell me what's going on?"

After a pause, she forced a smile. "No matter what happens, I'm by your side this time. Even if you and Lucas have ten or eight kids, I won't say a word." Aveline's lips twitched. The serious mood was broken by her comment. Ten or eight kids? Did she think Aveline was some kind of breeding machine?

Aveline took a sip of beer and briefly explained the situation.

"Someone's trying to harm you?" Selena's face grew tense. "Who?"

Aveline shook her head. "I don't know. That's why when he proposed this plan, I hesitated. It seemed like a good idea, but now... I don't want to know anymore."

"Why not?" Selena argued. "You need to find out. If playing along is the way to catch the mastermind, then do it! And when it's over, ditch that jerk and we'll run away together!" Aveline sighed. "You were so angry about this before."

Selena looked serious. "That was different. If I had known the full story, I wouldn't have said those things, I would have supported you. After all, you only have one life. If you die, that's it. Everything's over." Aveline was taken aback. "Really?"

"Yes!" Selena squeezed her hand. "Aveline, you can't die. You haven't even opened your little restaurant yet, and I haven't become your second-in-command!" Aveline laughed, pinching Selena's cheek. "I won't die."

Selena nodded. "Good. So go along with Lucas for now. Play the game, find the real mastermind, and then kick him to the curb. That would make my day." Aveline sighed, knowing the real focus was on that last part.

"Excuse me," Russell interjected.

At that moment, Russell, who had been silent, suddenly spoke up. "You mentioned someone in the Tudor family is targeting you. Do you have any suspects?" Aveline replied calmly, "I believe everyone in the Tudor family is a suspect."

Frederick despised her, Yvonne's attitude was quite complicated, and Barbara had started to distance herself after regaining her memories. Barbara even went so far as to help Sophia by deceiving her into going to the hospital,

So far, Lucas was the only one who hadn't directly threatened her life, though he had hurt her in other ways.

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Aveline let out a bitter laugh. What kind of person was she to warrant such hostility from a prominent family like the Tudors? Was she unlucky, or perhaps just lucky in a twisted way?

Russell frowned. "According to Lucas' plan, someone in the family doesn't want to see you two happy. By pretending to be a loving couple, you're supposed to force that person to act, revealing their identity." Aveline nodded. "That's right. That was the original plan."

But now, everything had changed.

Russell rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "But what if that person doesn't make a move? Are you supposed to keep up this act forever?"

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Aveline paused, realizing she hadn't considered that possibility before. What if the person never made a move and just continued lurking in the shadows, watching them?

Russell smiled and said, "That's why this plan is flawed. The stronger your relationship with Lucas appears, and the more protection you receive, the harder it will be for the person to strike." Aveline pressed her lips together. Had Lucas deceived her again?

Russell continued, "Instead of trying to provoke the person this way, it's better to observe and see if they are bothered by your relationship or targeting you specifically."

Selena nodded. "I agree with Russ."

Aveline asked, "But what if they're targeting me?"

Russell replied, "That's easy. I'll assign someone to protect you and ensure you aren't harmed."

Selena gave him a thumbs up. "Russ, you're a true hero!"

Russell's lips twitched slightly, and then he added, "Since you've decided not to cooperate with Lucas, you need to be prepared to expose yourself to the person. That's why you need protection." He pointed to himself. "And I have the means to provide it."

Aveline's long eyelashes fluttered as she met Russell's intense gaze, which made her feel uneasy and

somewhat reluctant.

In truth, she didn't want to involve others. If someone had to die, she preferred it be her alone. She didn't want to drag anyone else into her downfall.

Feeling a warm hand on hers, she looked up to see Selena holding her hand. "Aveline, I know what you're thinking, but don't go there. Your life isn't just yours; it's mine too! We're friends, and you're like my family. Even if you don't want to stay alive for yourself, you have to live on for me!"

Selena, always her closest confidant, had understood her thoughts just by looking at her.

Aveline managed a small smile. "But..."

Selena's tone was firm. "No buts. We're not at the end yet. You're safe now, and you'll continue to be safe

in the future."

Russell said, "Aveline, you don't need to feel guilty. If it makes you feel better, you can pay my bodyguards. They wouldn't mind earning double."

Hearing this, Aveline's complicated feelings eased a bit. By paying for the protection, she wouldn't feel too indebted to Russell.

"Thank you, Russ!" Aveline said gratefully.

Russell smiled. "No need for formalities between us. Now that this is settled, let's discuss something else.

Aveline paused before saying, "Sophia wants to kill me, so I teamed up with Sasha to set a trap for her. She's already fallen into it. Her only way out now is to cling to Lucas as her lifeline. If she marries Lucas,

she can secure her position in the Winter family and elevate her status."

Selena frowned in disgust. "That woman is so vile. Why can't she just disappear?"

Russell said, "So, your plan is to first strip her of her support in the Winter family, then appear with Lucas to shatter her delusions?"

Aveline nodded bitterly. "Yes."

Russell sighed softly. "Even then, she won't suffer much."

Selena added, "I understand you want to take away everything she values and make her suffer, but that's still letting her off too easily."

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Aveline stayed silent, realizing her initial thinking had been overly simplistic.

Selena continued, "It's not enough to just take away everything she values; she needs to experience the despair you felt. After all, true empathy doesn't exist. Once she's faced the brink of death, she'll understand how precious life is."

Aveline blinked. "You make a good point."

Selena smiled confidently. "Sometimes my brain works pretty fast."

Aveline pondered for a moment. "But doing that would be illegal."

Selena sighed. "Did Sophia consider the law when she did those things to you?"

Aveline fell into deep silence.

Russell said, "That woman really deserves a lesson."

Selena's eyes lit up as she looked at Russell. "Russ, you're so handsome! Do you have a girlfriend? Being with you must feel incredibly safe!"

She glanced meaningfully at Aveline.

Aveline took a sip of her beer, pretending not to notice.

Russell, with his gentle and handsome face, smiled faintly and gazed at Aveline. "I don't have a girlfriend."

"Wow!" Selena exaggeratedly swooned.

Aveline, afraid Selena might say something inappropriate, quickly pulled her away. "Come on, let's drink."

Selena turned to Aveline, smiled, and raised her bottle. "Aveline, I'm on your side. Whatever choice you make, I'll support you."

Aveline felt deeply moved.

The two of them drank until they were thoroughly intoxicated.

As promised, Russell took care of the cleanup. Meanwhile, Aveline and Selena sat on the sofa, wrapped in each other's arms and chatting away, creating a scene that was almost comical. After tidying the dining table and kitchen, Russell said, "You two should get some rest. I'm heading out."

Selena, holding onto Aveline with one arm, raised her other hand high. "Goodbye, Russ!"

"Goodbye."

Russell glanced at Aveline. Her face was flushed, and her eyes were dreamy and unfocused. She looked less aloof and more adorably vulnerable.

His gaze deepened for a moment before he forced himself to look away and leave.

The door closed.

Selena cupped Aveline's face, her words slurred from the alcohol. "Aveline, have you really not considered Russ? He's really great..."

Aveline pushed her gently. "Stop it. He's too good for me. I'm just an ordinary person."

"What's wrong with being ordinary? Can't ordinary people find love?" Selena protested, clearly unhappy with the notion.

Aveline half-closed her eyes, memories of recent events flashing through her mind like a fast-forward reel.

"Maybe," she said softly after a long pause.

When there was no response, she turned to see that Selena had already fallen asleep.

Aveline smiled, helping Selena to her feet and guiding her to the bedroom. She struggled to get Selena onto the bed, wiped her face, and tucked her in before stepping out of the room.

She opened the fridge and took out a bottle of ice water, gulping down a large mouthful to quell the heat and agitation inside her. Perhaps it was the alcohol, but she felt particularly restless. Holding the bottle, she walked to the balcony and gazed at the beautifully lit night scene of the neighborhood. The self-mockery in her eyes grew stronger.

Just then, her phone rang. She glanced at the screen and saw that it was Lucas calling.

Aveline hesitated for a moment before rejecting the call.

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Aveline put her phone aside and took another sip of water before returning to the bedroom to shower and sleep.

At the hospital, the lights were still on in Lucas' room.

Lucas stared at the ended call on his phone, his handsome face tightening with a grim expression. A heavy, oppressive silence slowly filled the room.

Suddenly, the door opened.

Lucas instinctively looked over, but when he saw it was Aaron entering, he frowned and looked away.

"Well, you seem disappointed to see me," Aaron remarked as he walked in and sat down in a chair. He still smelled faintly of alcohol, clearly having just come from a bar.

Lucas closed his eyes briefly, his face still rather pale. The whip wounds on his body had been treated, but he had lost consciousness earlier due to infection and high fever from the injuries. Aaron said, "You're already divorced Aveline, so why are you still hoping she'll come see you? From what I can tell, she'd rather stay far away from you."

Lucas replied in a cold, hoarse voice, "If you have nothing useful to say, you might as well keep your mouth shut."

Aaron laughed. "Did I hit a nerve? Is that why you're lashing out?"

Lucas gave him an icy stare. Even with his pale complexion, he still exuded an intimidating aura.

But Aaron wasn't afraid.

He said casually, "Let me tell you something interesting - Sophia's recently acquired land is having some issues."

"I'm not interested," Lucas stated.

But Aaron went on to explain the whole situation anyway. "It's obvious someone set a trap for her, and she was foolish enough to fall right into it. That woman is beyond help."

He rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "Although, Sasha isn't smart enough to come up with a scheme like this on her own. I suspect someone must be helping her behind the scenes." Lucas' expression changed. "Someone's helping Sasha?"

Aaron nodded. "Exactly. How else could Sasha have tolerated Sophia lording over her for so many years?"

Lucas pondered this for a moment. Then, a faint smile curved his thin lips.

"Why are you suddenly smiling like this?" Aaron asked, puzzled.

"Interesting," Lucas remarked.

Aaron looked even more confused. "What are you talking about? What's interesting?"

Lucas said, "I know who's been advising Sasha."

"Who is it?" Aaron immediately asked.

Lucas gave him a bland look. "What's the point of having a brain if you don't use it?"

"Damn it!" Aaron swore. "What's your problem? I tell you about this, and you play coy with me?"

Lucas retorted, "Don't like it? Why don't you hit me then?"

Aaron's fist tightened, but he restrained himself. "You know what, I'll let it go since you're sick. Actually, you're a sick man without a wife," he added, leaning back with his arms crossed.

If there was ever an example of a verbal low blow, that was it.

Lucas' expression instantly darkened. "Get out."

Aaron let out a cold laugh. "I don't think I will. I'm going to stay right here and watch you wallow in self-pity. Oh, by the way, I heard Russell went to see Aveline. Tsk tsk, a man and woman alone together late at night..."

Suddenly, Lucas threw off his blanket and got out of bed.

Startled, Aaron quickly moved to block him. "What do you think you're doing?"

Lucas' face was grim. "I'm going to find her."

Aaron was exasperated. "You're divorced now. Why are you still chasing after her? Aren't you afraid she'll hate you even more?"

Lucas' eyes flashed with icy determination. "Even if she hates me, she can only be mine!"

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Aaron held Lucas back firmly. "Lucas, don't be crazy. You're still injured, and besides, you and Aveline are already divorced. Since you've decided to let her go, you need to move on!" Aaron truly couldn't understand why Lucas was so fixated on Aveline.

In the beginning, Lucas despised her because she had witnessed his most vulnerable state - when he had lost his memory, couldn't speak, and even appeared mentally impaired. Those were the memories Lucas least wanted to revisit after regaining his senses, which led him to insist on divorcing Aveline in the first place. But now, he wanted to win her back?

It was insane!

The veins on Lucas' forehead bulged as he glared at Aaron furiously. "Aveline and I are not divorced. She is still my wife!"

Aaron was stunned. "What... did you say?"

The struggle had reopened some of Lucas' wounds, and the faint scent of blood lingered in the air. He curled his lips into a cold smile. "If I hadn't handed her the divorce certificate, she would've

kept pestering me for it. So, I gave her what she wanted. Whether it's real or not-that's for her to figure out."

If she had immediately recognized the divorce certificate as fake, they might truly be divorced by now.

But she didn't.

And whose fault was that?

It was fated that she could only be his wife!

Even if he died, her marital status would be "widowed," not "divorced."

"You've truly lost your mind," Aaron stared at him in disbelief, never imagining Lucas would give Aveline a fake divorce certificate. "Aren't you afraid that one day she'll discover this lie and all hell will break loose?"

Aaron helped Lucas sit on the hospital bed, frowning as he asked. He felt Lucas was heading down a path of no return. Given Aveline's stubborn personality, once she discovered this deception, not only would there be chaos, but Lucas might regret it bitterly...

"It doesn't matter." Lucas closed his eyes, his tone eerily calm. "It doesn't matter how she confronts me. She will always be my wife."

Aaron was speechless for a long moment, unable to comprehend Lucas' madness.

After resting briefly, Lucas seemed to regain some strength, though his eyes remained cold as he tried to

get up again.

Aaron pushed him back down by the shoulders. "You should stay here and recover. I'll go check on her for you."

Lucas pressed his lips together without responding.

Aaron raised an eyebrow. "What? Don't you trust me anymore?"

Lucas said, "Have Brian continue to protect her discreetly."

Aaron nodded. "No problem."

He then turned and left.

Lucas leaned back against the headboard, his body burning with pain.

He tilted his head back and closed his eyes, feeling the searing agony, yet his face remained expressionless.

It didn't matter.

No matter how much trouble this caused, it didn't matter to him.

As long as she was his, that was enough.

Aaron drove to Maple Garden, where he also owned property.

Looking up at Aveline's floor, he saw the lights were already off.

His expression darkened. What was happening? Were they sleeping together? That was unacceptable. If Lucas found out, he'd probably lose it entirely. He was already on the edge as it was! Aaron quickly got out of the car and headed upstairs.

Selena was in a drowsy state when she heard knocking at the door. She frowned and groaned, opening her eyes and getting up.

"What a nuisance!" she cursed under her breath.

She saw Aveline sleeping soundly beside her, completely undisturbed by the noise.