

## Divorced Me 601

### Chapter 601

"You!"

A flash of anger appeared in Aveline's eyes, but it quickly faded away. After all, she was the one asking for help. Even though the biggest villain was him, what could she do? He held the power, able to act as he pleased.

Aveline softened her stance and said, "Lucas, I'm begging you, can you stop targeting everyone else?"

Her tone was gentle, like a soft stream of water flowing over the heart, warm and comforting. She used to speak to him like this all the time. But it had been a long while since she last spoke to him this way. Lucas tightened his grip on her chin and suddenly leaned in closer.

Aveline's eyelashes fluttered twice, but she didn't pull away. She thought he was about to do what he usually liked to do, but unexpectedly, he released her and said coldly, "Make me dinner." Feeling relieved, she nodded. "Alright."

He just wanted her to cook; it wasn't a challenge for her. She headed straight into the kitchen, using whatever ingredients were available, and started cooking. Lucas stood by the kitchen door, his gaze growing darker and more intense as he watched her. He didn't take his eyes off her the entire time she cooked.

When she finally placed the four dishes and soup on the table, she turned to him and asked, "Is this enough?"

Lucas walked over, seeing that all the dishes were his favorites. His expression shifted slightly. Was this intentional on her part, or was it a subconscious choice?

"Sit down and eat with me," he said coolly.

Aveline nodded and sat down, eating slowly. The dining room was quiet for a moment.

After a long while, Lucas put down his utensils. Aveline immediately looked up at him, waiting for his next words. But Lucas didn't speak. Instead, he turned and walked away, heading straight into the study.

Aveline let out a slight breath, tidied up the dining table and kitchen, then brewed some tea and quietly made her way to the study.

Lucas was in the middle of a video conference, so Aveline silently set the teacup down and left the room. He glanced at her, his eyes dark. How far was she willing to go for someone else?

The video conference lasted two hours. When Lucas finally emerged, he found her sitting in the living room watching TV. The volume was turned down low, almost inaudible as if she was afraid of disturbing

him.

"Lucas, have you made up your mind?" Aveline asked directly when she saw him.

Lucas slid his hands into his pockets, his gaze lingering on her. "Does it mean you'll do anything I ask?"

Aveline's breath hitched slightly. "If I do it, will you stop?"

Lucas replied, "Not necessarily."

Aveline's lips curled slightly. "I knew it you've always been an untrustworthy, immoral person."

Instead of getting angry at her insult, Lucas walked over and sat beside her.

"What are you watching?" he asked.

"A drama," Aveline replied.

"What kind of drama?"

Lucas continued to make small talk, and Aveline responded, though her answers were curt. Strangely enough, the two ended up sitting in the living room together, watching an entire episode.

By then, it was late. Aveline yawned, stood up, and said, "If you haven't made a decision today, I'll ask you again tomorrow. Goodbye."

With that, she turned to leave.

But suddenly, Lucas grabbed her wrist, pulling her into his arms. Holding her soft body close, his breath brushed against her neck.

Chapter 602

Aveline's body tensed, instinctively wanting to struggle, but she forced herself to remain still. She knew this was what he ultimately wanted; everything that happened before was just a prelude. She had already prepared herself mentally for this.

But just when she expected him to take the next step, he simply held her for a long time. Aveline's body remained rigid, her lips pressed into a tight line.

Lucas could sense her tension. The living room was so quiet that the subtle sound of their intertwined breathing was the only thing that broke the silence.

Suddenly, Lucas released her, his deep, magnetic voice cool as he said, "Goodbye."

Aveline froze, surprised by his words. She looked at him, confused.

Lucas frowned, "What's with that expression? Are you disappointed?"

Aveline quickly stood up. "It's late. I'll head home now."

Without waiting for a response, she hurried out. Lucas watched her retreating figure until the door closed, cutting off his view.

He pulled out a cigarette, lit it, and let the smoke cloud his face, obscuring the emotions in his dark, sharp eyes.

In Aveline's mind, he was probably always after just one thing. After all, that's what he had told her before.

But today, he realized something new-just being with her, even if it was doing something as mundane as watching a ridiculous TV drama, brought him a quiet sense of contentment. It felt strangely similar to how he felt when he had lost his memory.

Taking a deep drag of the cigarette, Lucas tried to suppress the chaos in his mind. If he enjoyed being with her this much, then he would just have to find a way to keep her from leaving.

When Aveline returned home, she still felt a bit dazed. Lucas had actually let her go so easily. It was unbelievable. This had never happened before. Her emotions were a tangled mess.

Now, she found it even harder to

figure out what Lucas was thinking. What was he really trying to do? After wasting an entire evening, he still hadn't said whether he would leave Sidney alone or not.

Aveline sighed softly, then headed to the bathroom to take a shower.

The next morning, when Lucas opened his door, he found Aveline standing there, holding a lunchbox.

"Good morning, I made breakfast for you," Aveline said with a light smile, handing him the box.

Lucas suddenly walked past her and moved to the window, looking outside.

Puzzled, Aveline asked, "What are you looking at?"

"I'm just checking if pigs are flying today," Lucas replied.

Aveline was speechless. She was asking for his help, so she had to show some sincerity. They couldn't keep parting on bad terms; it wouldn't be conducive to their

discussions.

After so many rounds of clashing with him, Aveline had finally come to terms with the situation. She decided to go along with his whims, as long as she could achieve her goal. Lucas walked back over, took the lunchbox, and then stepped into the elevator.

Aveline followed him in and asked, "You've had the whole night to think about it. What do you say?"

Lucas responded, "About what?"

Seeing the indifferent look on his

Pnet

face, as if he truly hadn't given Sidney's situation any thought, Aveline felt a wave of frustration surge through her chest. Her good mood from earlier that morning vanished instantly.

"Stay calm," she reminded herself. "His terrible behavior wasn't anything new..."

"Could you please stop targeting Sidney? We're just friends," Aveline said, trying to keep her patience in check.

Chapter 603

"Friends?"

Lucas scoffed as if he'd just heard a joke. "Selena's been doing everything she can to push you two together. She's practically ready to throw you an engagement party, and you're telling me it's just friendship?"

Aveline's lips curled slightly. "She just loves playing matchmaker, but I decide who I want to date or make friends with."

Lucas replied, "Then tell her that playing matchmaker will only cause trouble."

Aveline's lips twitched again. Selena would matchmake with any man except Lucas. Her disdain for him ran deep.

Aveline tried again, saying, "So, can you stop targeting Sidney, please?"

Lucas' expression turned colder. "We'll see."

Just then, the elevator doors opened, and he walked out without another word, leaving her with yet another ambiguous answer. Aveline sighed helplessly. Why was it so hard to reach an agreement with him?

...

When she arrived at the studio, she noticed Sidney looking exhausted. It was clear he hadn't rested well the previous night. However, the bruises on his face seemed to have healed a bit, a sign that the ointment was working.

She approached him and asked, "Is your mom's condition stable?"

Sidney nodded. "Yes, she's stable now, but the sudden discharge and transfer caused her old illness to flare up again." Aveline frowned slightly. "Is it serious?"

Sidney gave a bitter smile. "It's all old issues. Even minor ailments can be really tormenting when they flare up." Aveline felt guilty and responsible for causing his mother so much stress.

"I'll visit her at the hospital later," Aveline said thoughtfully.

Sidney was surprised by her offer, his eyes lighting up with a hint of joy. "Wouldn't that be too much trouble for you?"

Aveline smiled. "What are you talking about? We're friends. It's only natural for me to visit your mom."

Sidney nodded. "Actually, my mom's been wanting to meet you, to thank you in person."

Aveline replied, "Please don't let her

worry about that. Right now, the most important thing is for her to rest and get better. We can worry about everything else once she's healthy again."

Sidney agreed, "Alright, I'll make sure to tell her that."

...

After work, Aveline stopped by a store to pick up some fruit, snacks, and health supplements before heading to the hospital with Sidney.

The VIP ward was very quiet, with hardly any sound as they walked through. When they opened the door to the room, they saw a caregiver assisting a frail middle-aged woman with her meal.

"Mom, my colleague is here to see you," Sidney said as he walked in, naturally taking over the caregiver's task with a smile.

Aveline approached and said, "Hello, ma'am. I'm Aveline. I wasn't sure what you might like, so I brought a few things. These are all good for your recovery."

Sidney's mother, Ruth Fall, smiled warmly. "I'm just happy you came. You didn't have to bring anything. Please, have a seat."

Aveline nodded and asked, "Are you comfortable staying here, ma'am?"

Ruth nodded. "Yes, very comfortable. The environment here is so much better than the previous hospital. I can finally get a good night's sleep."

Aveline smiled. "I'm glad to hear that."

Ruth then asked, "Are you also an architectural designer, Miss Young?"

Aveline nodded. "Yes, I am."

Sidney added, "Mom, do you remember I got into the studio thanks to her recommendation?"

Ruth paused, then said, "Oh, my

memory! had completely forgotten. We really owe Miss Young a big thank you. Sidney, you should take her out to dinner to show our appreciation."

Chapter 604

Aveline quickly waved her hands and said, "No need, Ma'am. I came to visit you, so let me stay here and chat with you for a while."

Sidney chimed in, "Perfect timing-I have something to take care of, so you two can talk."

Ruth paused, then smiled helplessly. "This rascal."

Aveline sat down by the bedside and began chatting with Ruth, learning a lot about Sidney's past. It seemed Ruth hadn't had a chance to chat like this in a long time, and once she started, she couldn't stop.

By the time Sidney returned, Ruth was in the middle of sharing some of his childhood embarrassments.

"Mom," Sidney quickly interjected, "I was only gone for a short while, and you're already spilling all my secrets?"

Ruth chuckled warmly. "Every kid has their share of embarrassing moments. It's nothing to stress over."

Sidney sighed.

Aveline looked at him with a smile. "Did you get everything sorted?"



Sidney nodded. "Yeah, all done."

Aveline stood up and turned to Ruth. "It's getting late, so I'll head out now. Please take care, and I'll visit you again soon."

Ruth, though reluctant to see her go, said, "Alright. Sidney, see Aveline out and be careful on your way."

Aveline nodded. "Thank you, Ma'am. Goodbye."

"Goodbye, dear."

Once outside the hospital, Sidney looked at Aveline with gratitude. "Aveline, thank you so much. I haven't seen my mom smile like that in a long time." Aveline replied, "No need to thank me. I just had a chat with her. Make sure you spend more time with her whenever you can."

Sidney nodded. "I will."

Aveline got into her car. "Alright, take care. I'll head out now."

Sidney nodded and watched as her car drove away.

When he returned to the hospital room, Ruth immediately grabbed his hand and asked, "Sidney, be honest with me. Do you have feelings for her?" Sidney sat down and asked, "Mom, how did you figure it out?"

With a knowing expression, Ruth

replied, "Do you think I don't

what's going on in that head of

yours? But I have to say, she's a great girl, and I like her too.

"Just focus on your work, and when you've made a name for yourself, then you can think about pursuing her. Right now isn't the time—you don't have a stable job yet, and with my health, I don't want to

Swurden

her.

Sidney nodded. "I was thinking the same thing."

Ruth smiled gently. "Son, if you like someone, you have to treat her with genuine care. Never let her feel hurt or disappointed, okay?" Sidney nodded seriously. "I understand. I will."

When Aveline returned to Maple Garden and stepped into the elevator, a tall, imposing figure appeared as the doors opened. She was surprised. "You just got back?"

Lucas looked cold, the chill in his expression almost palpable, like a layer of frost across his brow. He didn't answer her question. Aveline was puzzled and wondered, "What's wrong with him?"

As the elevator ascended slowly, neither of them spoke, and the atmosphere grew increasingly tense and stifling.

When the elevator doors finally opened, Lucas walked out without a word. Aveline followed, calling after him, "Lucas, what's going on?"

Lucas unlocked the door and walked

in, moving to close it behind him. Aveline quickly grabbed the door, stopping it from shutting. "Lucas, what's the matter with you? Have you lost your voice? You haven't said a single word."

Lucas stared at her coldly. "Can't you tell I don't want to talk to you?"

Chapter 605

Aveline felt a surge of frustration building up inside her.

Lucas was so unpredictable!

However, she couldn't afford to give up now-not when things were still unresolved. Especially after her conversation with Ruth today, the guilt and responsibility weighed even heavier on her. If it weren't for her, Ruth wouldn't have suffered so much.

Exhaling slowly, Aveline asked, "Lucas, why don't you want to talk to me? Is it something I said? Should I change the way I speak?"

Lucas raised an eyebrow, clearly annoyed. He was starting to think he should limit her time with Selena-she was definitely picking up some bad habits.

Without warning, he grabbed her and yanked her inside, slamming the door shut before pinning her against it.

"Uh..." Aveline let out a soft gasp, caught off guard by his sudden move.

Lucas stared at her intensely. "Go ahead, change it. Let's see."

"I..." Aveline started to speak but stopped short when she met his gaze. The words seemed to stick in her throat as if she couldn't figure out what to say next. His gaze looked too dangerous.

"What's the matter? Where's that confidence you had just now?" Lucas sneered, his voice dripping with mockery.

Aveline sighed. "Lucas, what's your problem? You're the one causing trouble, so why are you acting so unreasonable?"

She wondered if he ever would get tired of this.

Lucas tightened his grip on her chin, his handsome face darkening with a dangerous edge. "Aveline, you know exactly what you were up to today."

At his words, Aveline frowned. "You were following me?"

Lucas' expression grew even colder.

Aveline pushed his hand away. "His family shouldn't be dragged into this. Even if you have an issue with Sidney, his mother is innocent. She's suffering because of what happened to me. Shouldn't I go and check on her? Lucas, I'm not like you-I'm not that heartless."

Lucas let out a cold laugh as he looked into her clear eyes. "If that's the case, why don't you ever learn?"

"What?" Aveline's frown deepened. "What are you trying to say?"

Lucas spoke coldly, "The reason I'm doing this is because I can't stand seeing you get close to him. If you're smart, you'll keep your distance, and I won't target him anymore. Aveline, the things he's going through are because of you."

Aveline felt a surge of anger bubbling up inside her, but she held it back. "So, I can't even have a friend anymore, is that it?" "Exactly!"

Lucas' eyes bore into hers. "You should have understood this from the beginning."

Aveline let out a bitter laugh, curling her lips in self-mockery. "Then why don't you just lock me up? That way, I won't have contact with anyone and might as well not even be a person."

With that, she turned, opened the door, and walked out, leaving the conversation once again on a sour note.

Lucas' expression darkened as he yanked at his tie, but the frustration in his chest wouldn't ease.

Lock her up? Ha! That would probably be a good idea!

When Aveline returned home, her face was still clouded with frustration. Seeing this, Selena asked, "What's wrong?"

Aveline replied, "Nothing, just ran into an infuriating man."

Selena blinked. "That infuriating man wouldn't happen to be called Lucas, would he?"

Aveline sighed. "Wow, you're so smart."

Selena's lips twitched.

She sighed. "He's the only one who can get under your skin like this. But honestly, this push and pull between you two is going nowhere. How about you just kill him, and we all down together? Problem solved. What do you think?"

Aveline was left speechless.

Chapter 606

Aveline looked at Selena helplessly and said, "I still want to live a long life."

Selena slumped on the couch and said, "So what now? You can't get rid of him, but you can't accept him either."

It was a frustrating situation.

Aveline's mood lightened a bit as she walked toward her bedroom, saying over her shoulder, "One step at a time. No matter what, I won't let anyone around me get hurt by him."

Whatever Sidney's feelings for her might be, that was his business. She couldn't control that, but she could control herself and keep her distance from him.

After her shower, Aveline felt much calmer. If today didn't go as planned, she'd try again tomorrow-or the day after, or even the next month. No matter how cold-hearted Lucas was, she was determined to make him stop targeting Sidney.

In the days that followed, Aveline began making breakfast for Lucas every morning.

However, despite waiting at his door until she was almost late for work, he never came out.

Three days later, she finally found out that Lucas hadn't stayed at his place during that time.

Holding the lunchbox, Aveline's expression grew more complicated. This was his way-if he wanted to, he could easily avoid her. It took no effort at all; he just had to stay somewhere she didn't know about. Aveline turned around and stepped into the elevator.

Meanwhile, a small security camera at the corner of Lucas' front door blinked with a faint red light.

In the CEO's office of DK Group, Lucas watched on his phone as Aveline walked away, her disappointment clear. His dark eyes reflected a mix of emotions.

For the past few days, she'd shown up every morning, and he'd watched her every time. The feeling was strange, almost novel.

In the past, he was the one chasing after her. Now, the roles were reversed-even if it was under his pressure. But the outcome was what he wanted, and that was enough.

At that moment, Desmond walked in

and said, "Mr. Tudor, we've identified the bodyguards around Miss Young. They were sent by Russell to ensure her safety." én.swnovels.net

A flicker of disdain crossed Lucas' eyes. "Just a couple of useless fools."

Desmond asked, "Should we get rid of them?"

Lucas replied, "No, let her see how worthless they are."

Desmond didn't say anything further. When it came to Aveline, Lucas was always ten steps ahead. Aveline was no match for him.

Suddenly, Desmond's phone rang. He answered it and then looked at Lucas. "Mr. Tudor, Miss Thompson wants to see you." Lucas responded, "Let her come up."

Desmond relayed the instructions over the phone. About five minutes later, there was a knock on the door of the CEO's office. Desmond

line

walked over to open it, revealing Judy in a tailored trench coat and the latest season's designer dress, looking impeccably elegant.

"Good morning, Mr. Blake," Judy greeted with a bright smile.

Desmond nodded slightly and returned her smile politely. "Good morning, Miss Thompson. Mr. Tudor is expecting you."

With that, he excused himself and left the office.

Judy's smile deepened as she walked in and said, "Mr. Tudor, I've reworked the proposal. What do you think?"

Lucas replied coolly, "Submit it to the project department. They need to review it first."

Judy blinked, her eyes wide with surprise. "I thought, given our relationship, we could skip those formalities."

Lucas lifted his gaze, his expression indifferent. "What relationship?"

Judy hesitated for a moment, then smiled sweetly. "We're friends, of course."

Her tone was perfectly balanced,

set

sweet yet professional, with just the right amount of warmth and distance-leaving no room for criticism.

Lucas' gaze was cold and deep as he responded, "Even as friends, you should approach business with seriousness. If your proposal can't convince others, handing it directly to me is just a waste of my time." Judy bit her lip slightly, her eyes filled with a hint of disappointment as she looked at him. "Mr. Tudor, must you always be so harsh? I'm really curious-how did your ex-wife manage to live with you?" Lucas replied, "So, you're curious about other people's married lives now? That's a bit inappropriate, don't you think?"

Judy pouted playfully. "You know that's not what I meant."

Lucas remained indifferent. "Actually, I don't."

A strange feeling crossed Judy's mind. Lucas' attitude toward her seemed different now. She remembered how he used to treat her well, even to the point of neglecting Aveline for her.

That special attention had caused Sophia to constantly target her. But it didn't matter-Sophia was never really her competition.

Now that Sophia had been kicked out of the Summer family, she was out of the picture for good. The only woman left by Lucas' side was her. Suppressing her doubts, Judy calmed herself and said, "Mr. Tudor, I've booked a table at a great restaurant for lunch. Why don't we try it together?" Lucas paused while flipping through his files. "Alright."

A flash of joy crossed Judy's eyes as she said, "Great, I'll see you at lunch."

She turned and left, but Lucas' expression remained composed, unaffected by her excitement. He picked up his phone and contacted Maria.

Maria, upon receiving his instructions, couldn't help but feel exasperated.

"Boss, you're going to lunch with another woman, but you want me to bring Aveline to the same place? Aren't you worried that your plan might backfire, and Aveline will just ignore you?" Maria couldn't even begin to express how absurd this situation was. How could someone be so bold in their approach? Wasn't there a simpler way to pursue someone?

But Lucas remained cold. "Just do as I said."



Maria rolled her eyes. "Fine, I got it."

...

At the studio, Aveline had just turned on her computer when Maria walked over and said, "Sidney has a family emergency. You'll need to join me for lunch instead." Aveline nodded. "No problem."

Maria observed Aveline's expression for a moment before leaning in closer and asking quietly, "Aveline, can I ask you a personal question?" Aveline blinked, a bit puzzled. "Like what?"

Maria grinned. "Your relationship status-do you have a boyfriend?"

Everyone knew about Aveline's divorce by now, so Maria wasn't about to ask how things were with Lucas.

Aveline smiled. "No, are you planning to set me up?"

Maria smirked. "I'd love to, but I'm afraid you might not agree."

Aveline replied, "You can tell me about it. If the match seems right, I'll consider it."

Maria nodded with a playful grin. "Remember, you said it. If I find someone suitable, you can't back out."

Aveline nodded. "Don't worry, I won't."

Maria gave her a pat on the shoulder before turning to leave. Aveline found it amusing that her boss was trying to set her up with someone.

At noon, Aveline and Maria left

together. When they arrived at the restaurant and had just sat down, Maria cursed under her breath. "This is so frustrating. We were supposed to discuss the collaboration today, and now they say they can't make it

Aveline paused, then asked, "What about all this food...?"

Maria replied, "We'll have to eat it, of course! Otherwise, it'd be such a waste-it costs a lot!"

Aveline agreed.

After all, they had to eat lunch anyway, and she hadn't been to this restaurant before. The food looked pretty good. Maria pulled out her phone and sent a message before casually chatting and eating with Aveline.

About ten minutes later, Maria suddenly winked at Aveline.

"Hmm?" Aveline looked confused. "What's up?"

Maria subtly gestured behind Aveline, prompting her to turn around. Curious, Aveline looked over her shoulder and saw Lucas and Judy walking in, making their way toward them.

Aveline's expression froze for a moment before she casually grabbed a napkin and wiped the corner of her mouth. Maria leaned in and whispered, "What's going on? Running into them here of all places-is she his new fling?"

Aveline's face remained calm. "I wouldn't know."

Maria studied her expression, noticing that Aveline didn't seem jealous or upset. She couldn't help but sigh inwardly.

"It looks like the boss's tactic isn't working as planned," Maria thought.

"Miss Young."

Judy had also noticed Aveline and approached with a smile. "What a coincidence, running into you here."

Aveline's expression was indifferent. "Is there something you need?"

Judy smiled, standing close to

Lucas, their posture intimate. "Nothing much, just wanted to say

hi. I see you're about to finish. How

were the dishes? Any

recommendations?"

Aveline replied coolly, "These dishes weren't that great. You might want to pick something else."

"Oh, really?" Judy turned to Lucas. "What do you feel like having?"

Aveline interjected, "I can help you order. I know his preferences well."

With that, she grabbed the menu and started picking dishes.

Judy was taken aback, not expecting Aveline to react this way.

"What's she trying to do?" Judy thought.

Lucas, on the other hand, watched Aveline closely, his gaze deep and unreadable, as if he were trying to figure out her thoughts.

Chapter 608

Aveline ordered all of Lucas' favorite dishes, then handed the menu back to the server and looked at Judy. "Did you get all that, Miss Thompson?"

"I...," Judy hesitated, surprised that Aveline would take the initiative to tell her all this-as if she were trying to teach her. What kind of thought process was this? What exactly was Aveline

thinking? Hearing Aveline's words, Lucas' expression immediately turned colder, and the tension around him seemed to thicken.

But Aveline appeared unfazed and calmly continued, "This way, you won't have to ask him next time. I'm sure you've noticed by now that he's not much of a talker."

Judy felt a pang of irritation. "You don't need to worry about that. After spending more time together, I'll naturally pick up on these things."

"Alright then," Aveline nodded, as if satisfied with the response.

She then turned to Lucas and asked, "Have you thought about what I mentioned earlier?"

Lucas' sharp, handsome features hardened, and he didn't even bother to glance at her.

Aveline blinked, then turned to Judy and remarked, "See? He's quite rude, isn't he?"

A stifled laugh broke the tension as Maria quickly turned her head away, pressing her lips together in an effort to keep from laughing, hoping to avoid drawing attention to herself. Aveline calmly took a seat beside them and resumed eating when the food was served.

Judy, unable to hold back any longer, asked, "Miss Young, didn't you just eat?"

Aveline replied, "Yes, but I wasn't full, and those dishes weren't that great, so I'm trying these instead."

Judy was speechless, gripping her fork tighter as she glanced at Lucas, hoping to gauge his reaction.

But Lucas simply kept his eyes lowered, his expression unreadable.

Weren't they already divorced? Why hadn't he told this annoying woman to leave? Her presence was ruining Judy's appetite!

"I'm done. You two take your time," Aveline said with a slight smile after finishing her meal. She stood up and turned to Maria, saying, "I'm going to the restroom for a moment. We can leave together afterward."

Maria nodded. "Alright."

After leaving the cubicle, Aveline stood in front of the mirror, washing her hands. In the reflection, she noticed Judy approaching, her expression dark and her gaze filled with disdain. "Miss Young, don't you think what you're doing is a bit pathetic?" Judy remarked, her tone dripping with contempt.

Aveline calmly washed her hands and then grabbed a paper towel to dry them. "Do you? I think it's fine."

Judy's voice sharpened. "You're divorced. Clinging to him like this-isn't it a bit shameless?"

Aveline tossed the paper towel into

the trash and turned to face her.

707

"Yes, we're divorced, but that's hardly some terrible sin. Besides, we're both single. Having a conversation and sharing a meal doesn't make me shameless. But coming in here to insult me-what does that make you? A disgrace?"

"You-!" Judy's face darkened. She remembered that Aveline wasn't always this, sharp-tongued. How had she changed so much? Could she be trying to get back together with Lucas? That was absolutely impossible!

Judy stepped closer, her eyes narrowing with a hint of challenge. "Aveline, Lucas doesn't want you anymore, yet you're still clinging to him. It's pathetic."

Aveline's eyes grew cold, and suddenly she raised her hand and slapped Judy across the face.

The slap echoed loudly through the restroom.

Judy clutched her cheek, staring at Aveline in disbelief. "You actually dared to hit me?"

Aveline's gaze was icy as she looked at her. "Yes, I did. Miss Thompson, you're truly ungrateful. I tried to help you, and you turned around and insulted me. Don't you think you deserved it?" Judy's eyes filled with rage. "No one has ever dared to treat me like this! Aveline, you're finished!"

Aveline raised an eyebrow. "Oh? And how exactly do you plan to finish me? I've recorded our conversation, Miss Thompson. So, if anything happens to me in the near future, you'll be the prime suspect." Judy's fury intensified as she glared at Aveline. "You just wait."

Aveline let out a slight scoff, not bothering to respond further.

Judy stormed out in anger, while Aveline calmly walked back toward the dining area. As she turned a corner, she found Lucas leaning against the wall, his expression cold as he looked at her. "You've got some nerve, laying a hand on the Thompson family's heiress," Lucas said icily.

Aveline met his gaze and replied, "She was asking for it."

Lucas stared at her intensely. "And what about you?"

"Me?" Aveline asked, puzzled. "What about me?"

Lucas stepped closer to her. "As my ex-wife, giving another woman tips on what I like and don't like-you're so generous and magnanimous. Should I give you a medal for it?"

Aveline smirked slightly. "No need for a medal. Just stop targeting the people around me, and that'll be enough."

Unexpectedly, Lucas' hand shot out, grabbing her by the throat and pinning her against the wall.

"Aveline, do you have a death wish?" Lucas' voice was icy cold. "You think I need you to speak for me?"

Aveline frowned and tapped his hand, trying to ease the pressure. "Could you stop grabbing my throat every time? You're not going to kill me."

Lucas let out a dark chuckle. "No, I can't kill you, but I can make you understand what true despair feels like."

With that, his grip tightened, and

Aveline immediately felt her breath being cut off. Her mouth opened slightly as she struggled to breathe, her eyes widening with fear as she looked at him.

His gaze was so cold-was he really going to kill her?

Just as Aveline was on the verge of suffocating, Lucas abruptly released her. She gasped for air, coughing hard as his cold eyes watched her struggle. When her coughing fit subsided, he suddenly grabbed her chin and bent down to kiss her.

The kiss was fierce and demanding, stealing her breath and overwhelming her with his intensity. The relentless torment was too much for anyone to bear. Aveline tried to push him away, her thoughts racing-he's completely lost it!

Lucas bit down on her lip, making her wince as the sharp pain registered. She tasted blood, realizing he had bitten hard enough to break the skin. "Aveline," Lucas growled, his voice low and threatening, "behave yourself. Don't provoke me, or I really won't be able to stop myself from locking you up."

With that, he turned and walked away.

Aveline leaned against the wall, breathing heavily. As she watched his figure retreat, a flicker of panic crossed her eyes.

When she eventually returned to the dining area, Lucas and Judy were already gone.

Maria noticed Aveline's disheveled appearance and frowned, asking "What happened to you?" Her eyes landed on Aveline's swollen, bloodied lip, but she hesitated to press further.

Aveline shook her head. "I'm fine. Let's just go."

Maria nodded, though concern lingered in her eyes. "Alright."

Back at the studio, Aveline was far from okay. She stared blankly at her computer screen, her mind spinning with thoughts. Suddenly, an idea began to take shape.

Chapter 610

Resign.

Leave.

To disappear without a trace.

If no one could find her, then those around her wouldn't get caught in the crossfire. Aveline pressed her lips together, feeling that this plan might actually work.

She had no close family, and only a few friends-Selena, Sidney, and Russell. Lucas couldn't touch Russell, so Selena was his only leverage. If she could find a way to leave with Selena, it would solve the problem.

And Sidney? Once she was gone, Lucas would have no reason to trouble him anymore.

Yes, it seemed like a solid plan.

Aveline pulled out her phone, hesitating on whether to tell Selena about her idea. No need to rush-she'd wait and see. If things didn't improve, she would consider leaving.

The whole afternoon, Aveline was preoccupied, her mind weighed down by her thoughts. Her mood didn't improve even after work.



When she returned to Maple Garden and stepped into the elevator, two others followed her inside. Aveline instinctively looked up, and when she saw who it was, her expression froze. Lucas and Judy.

He actually brought Judy home?

Judy shot her a smug look and then casually wrapped her arm around Lucas', her posture intimate and possessive.

Aveline frowned, a wave of disgust washing over her.

Thankfully, no one else got on the elevator, so Lucas and Judy were the first to step out. Aveline followed a moment later. When she opened the door to her apartment, she found Selena sitting on the couch, watching TV.

"Selena, I need to discuss something with you." Aveline slipped off her shoes and walked over to her.

"Hmm? What is it?" Selena asked, her attention shifting to Aveline.

Aveline leaned in closer and said, "Let's leave together."

Selena gave her a surprised look. "Are you serious?"

"Yes," Aveline nodded. "We'll slip away quietly so no one can find us. What do you think?"

"That sounds perfect!" Selena's eyes lit up with excitement. "Girl, you're worth millions-you can live well wherever you go!"

Aveline smiled. "Then let's start planning slowly. We need to keep it under wraps."

Selena nodded eagerly. "Alright, I'm with you."

Aveline had made up her mind to leave, so the next step was to figure out which city they should settle in.

In the following days, Aveline kept running into Lucas and Judy after work. Lucas acted as if he didn't even see her, chatting away with Judy. Meanwhile, the gossip about them frequently made headlines, with rumors swirling that the last heir of the Tudor family was close to getting engaged to the Thompson family.

One day, Maria walked over to Aveline's desk, phone in hand, and shook her head. "Aveline, have you seen the news? Lucas is about to get engaged to Judy. Are all men this trashy?"

How long had it been since their divorce? And now he was already planning to get engaged?

Aveline's expression remained calm. "He's single now; he's free to do whatever he wants."

Maria gave her a probing look. "You really don't care?"

Aveline countered, "What should I care about?"

Maria leaned in a bit closer. "But he's Lucas-good-looking, great physique, comes from a wealthy family. And you two were married. Don't you love him?"

Aveline shook her head. "I don't love him."

Maria's eyes flickered for a moment. "Well... maybe that's for the best. At least you won't get hurt."

She handed Aveline a file. "Anyway, focus on making money. This is a new client's brief-they want you to design a villa for their wedding. Take a good look at it."

"Got it." Aveline nodded.

This might be the last design she completed because she had already chosen the city where she would start her new life.