

Divorced Me 661

Chapter 661

That was Russell's business; she had no intention of being with him anyway.

But as Aveline noticed, Lucas' gaze grew increasingly colder.

"Fine!"

He sneered, leaving those words behind as he stood up and walked away.

Aveline frowned, feeling completely baffled. "What on earth?"

She continued staring outside, where the sky had become overcast, and raindrops had already begun to fall.

"Miss Young, it's starting to rain. You should come inside," the housekeeper called.

"Alright, I know," Aveline responded. She stood up to head indoors and then noticed Lucas' phone on the table. He must have forgotten to take it with him.

She picked it up and started walking toward his room. Curiosity got the best of her, and she glanced down at the phone, still displaying the photo of Russell and Rina in bed. But she felt nothing as she looked at it.

Lucas returned to his room, realizing he had left his phone behind. His expression was cold as he walked back to retrieve it, only to find Aveline holding it, still looking at the photo.

So, she did care, after all.

She might claim not to mind, but her actions said otherwise. Had she developed feelings for Russell? Why else would she be staring at that photo?

This realization filled Lucas with irritation and frustration, and he felt a strong urge to do something to release his pent-up emotions. But he held back.

In the past, he hadn't been able to control himself, which led to the current situation.

"Done looking?" he asked coldly, standing in place.

Hearing his voice, Aveline quickly looked up, caught off guard, feeling like she'd been caught snooping.

"Here, take it. I wasn't looking on purpose," she said, handing the phone back to him and offering a brief explanation.

Lucas' eyes bore into her as he suddenly stepped closer, wrapping an arm around her waist.

Startled, Aveline's eyes widened. "What are you doing?"

Lucas leaned in, his eyes darkened with a chilling intensity.

"Aveline, didn't you say you liked my face?" he said, his gaze locked onto hers.

Aveline froze. "What are you talking about?"

Lucas continued, "You were staring at my face just now. Isn't it because you like looking at it? So, if I stay close to you every day, without saying anything... can you.

His words faltered. He furrowed his brow, clearly struggling with what he wanted to say, before finally continuing, "Can you..."

"What kind of nonsense is this?"

Aveline abruptly pushed him away. "Lucas, if you can behave yourself while staying here, I won't have a problem with it. But don't make any

other demands-Ret

them!"

Her expression had grown colder.

U.

With that, she walked past him and returned to her bedroom.

Lucas gripped his phone tightly, his lips pressed into a thin line.

Why couldn't he say it? Was it really so hard to get the words out?

"Got rejected again? Serves you right."

Selena's voice rang out, dripping with undisguised satisfaction.

Lucas shot her a cold look, then silently turned and left.

"Ha!" Selena scoffed, then made her way to Aveline's room. Seeing her sitting on the edge of the bed, lost in thought, she asked, "My dear, are you wavering?"

Aveline blinked, snapping out of her thoughts. "What?"

Selena leaned in closer, studying her face. "Being that close to him-did it make you think of the way he used to be?"

Aveline blinked again. "How did you know?"

Selena smirked. "It's obvious. Lucas

has been dressing like this the past

few days, just like he did when you two first met. He's trying to stir up old memories and get you to reminisce about the past."

Chapter 662

"And that line he used earlier, 'Don't you like my face?'-ugh, it's unbelievable. He'll do anything to get what he wants." Selena sat beside her, thinking about what Lucas had said to Aveline earlier, and couldn't help but shiver in disgust.

Aveline fell silent for a moment.

It really seemed like Lucas was behaving strangely. Had he realized that she had a weak spot for his face and was deliberately using that against her?

Thinking more about what Selena said, it did seem to make sense. His behavior over the past few days wasn't much different from before.

When Aveline first met Lucas, he seemed lost and out of place, yet he trusted her without reason. If she suggested he read, he would do it. He was a remarkably quick learner, swiftly mastering sign language and handwriting. He'd often sit quietly on the living room sofa, absorbed in a book...

Aveline abruptly shut her eyes, forcing herself to stop thinking about it. Those days were in the past.

The Lucas of today wasn't going to lose his memory again.

...

In the following days, news of the successful merger between the Tudor family and DK Enterprises dominated the headlines, solidifying the Tudor family's position as the leading enterprise in Cloudflare City.

Lucas' mood was noticeably sour. Everyone could sense it because whenever he appeared, his expression was always cold and grim.

Aveline attributed his mood to the company's affairs.

Even though he claimed not to care, that company was his hard work and passion. Watching it be taken away, who could truly remain calm? However, she didn't dwell on it. Whether he was heartbroken or upset had nothing to do with her.

After nearly two months of rehabilitation, Aveline's body had almost fully recovered, and tomorrow was the court date.

The lawyers recommended by Russell and Gernard both visited Aveline that day to discuss the details of the upcoming hearing.

As the plaintiff, Aveline had already submitted evidence proving the discord in their marriage, seeking to dissolve it.

After finishing their discussions, the group went out for dinner. By the time they returned to Maple Garden, night had already fallen.

Selena wasn't home.

Aveline checked her phone and saw a message from Selena, saying she would be back late tonight.

She replied, "Have fun," then put her phone away and headed to her bedroom.

Entering the bathroom, she undressed and began to shower.

With the court date only three days away, her emotions were a mix of excitement and nervousness.

Freedom was within reach!

She even started humming a tune.

But suddenly, the bathroom door swung open, startling her. She quickly grabbed a towel.

"Lucas, what are you doing?"

She clumsily wrapped herself, staring at the tall man approaching with a calm yet intense expression.

As he drew closer, the strong scent

of alcohol hit her, and his gaze was

as dark and deep as a well,

threatening to pull her in if she

wasn't careful.

Lucas stepped closer with each passing moment, and Aveline, sensing danger, backed away,

frantically looking around for

something she could use to defend herself.

But there was nothing.

In the end, she was cornered against the wall.

His tall figure loomed over her, and her small frame seemed even more vulnerable. Her eyes filled with anger as she glared up at him.

"What do you think you're doing?"

She struggled to keep her voice calm, not wanting to provoke him.

Right now, he looked incredibly dangerous!

Chapter 663

"Do you really have to divorce me?"

Lucas stood in front of her, blocking any way out. His eyes were filled with a complex mix of emotions as if there were countless words he wanted to say but couldn't.

Aveline tried to keep herself calm. She responded, "The court date is in three days, Lucas. What's the point of saying this now?"

Lucas reached out, gently caressing her face. "Aveline, do you really not love me anymore?"

She turned her head slightly, avoiding his touch.

His hand froze in mid-air as he saw the rejection on her face. He forced a smile, a mix of self-mockery and bitterness.

Though he was a towering figure, at that moment, he seemed enveloped in a faint aura of loneliness and sorrow.

He stared at her intently for a while before suddenly cupping the back of her neck and leaning in to kiss her.

"Mmph!"

Aveline had been on guard, but she was no match for him.

Her delicate lips were captured, and she struggled with all her might, but there was no escaping his hold.

With one hand, Lucas easily grasped both of her wrists, pinning them behind her back. Then, with a firm press, her soft body was pulled against his chest, forcing her to tilt her head up to endure the kiss. It had been so long since they had been this close.

Aveline resisted, but Lucas only grew more intense, like someone savoring a forbidden taste, delving deeper and deeper.

Aveline felt as though her lips were no longer her own as if he was devouring them completely.

His fresh, intoxicating scent overwhelmed her senses, clouding her mind. Despite her reluctance, her body responded honestly to his touch.

Under the intensity of his kiss, her body began to weaken uncontrollably.

She felt disgusted with herself for reacting this way, and tears began to spill from the corners of her eyes.

Lucas, still kissing her, soon tasted the salty hint of her tears. He opened his eyes slightly and saw the tear tracks on her cheeks.

His breath hitched, his Adam's apple bobbing as he swallowed. After a moment, he gently kissed away her tears.

"Ave, I can't believe you don't see that I'm trying to win you back."

His voice was husky as he continued, "You said you liked the old Lu, so I've tried to be that person again. But it seems you don't like him as much as you used to."

His nose brushed gently against hers as he continued in a measured tone, "So, you really don't love me anymore, do you?"

Aveline's lashes trembled

bet

uncontrollably. She wanted to admit

it, but before she could get the words out, her lips were captured again.

Lucas swallowed her unspoken words.

"Forget it," he murmured against her lips, his voice muffled. "I don't want to hear it."

Aveline fell silent.

She was pressed against the cold wall, her body instinctively shivering. She unconsciously leaned closer into his chest.

That small movement seemed to

please him. His kiss softened, trailing down from her lips, lingering

on her neck, and then lower to her collarbone...

Aveline tilted her head slightly, her breathing becoming erratic and quick. "Lucas, what's the point of saying all this now?"

After hurting her so many times, he wanted to make amends, but not everyone would wait around forever.

She had already let go.

Lucas' breath lingered at her chest, heavy and warm, but he didn't go any further.

He could feel that her body no longer rejected his touch.

But he didn't dare to continue.

Chapter 664

He held her there for a long time, just embracing her, before finally letting her go.

When Aveline's feet touched the ground, the surreal feeling slowly faded. Her breathing remained unsteady, and her body felt weak, too drained to push him away.

Lucas kept his grip on her until she was steady on her feet, then released her. His eyes, dark as the night, lingered on her for a long moment, but he said nothing before turning and leaving the room. The crisp scent that clung to him faded as he walked away.

Aveline, nearly drained of all energy, emerged from the bathroom. As she sat on the edge of the bed, her emotions gradually settled.

She thought...

"Ave!" Selena's voice called out suddenly.

She rushed in, and seeing Aveline sitting on the bed, quickly asked, "I just saw Lucas leave. It looked like he'd been drinking, and his clothes were a mess. He didn't do anything to you, did he?"

As she spoke, her gaze landed on Aveline's face, instantly noticing her swollen, kiss-bruised lips.

"Oh... this..." Selena pointed at her lips, "He really went all out, huh?"

Aveline was speechless.

The complex and heavy feelings she'd been grappling with evaporated the moment she heard Selena's words.

"He didn't do anything," Aveline replied. "What about you? Didn't you say you'd be back late?"

Selena explained, "I finished up early and decided to head back. I didn't like the thought of you being home alone, so I came to keep you company. But wow, if I'd come back just a bit sooner, would I have walked in on something I shouldn't have?"

Aveline gave her a silent, pointed look.

Selena immediately backtracked, "Okay, okay, I'm sorry! Don't be mad, beautiful Ave. I won't tease you anymore."

Aveline got up to apply her skincare, but as she looked in the mirror, her eyes couldn't help but fall on her swollen, kiss-bruised lips.

Thinking about Lucas's earlier demeanor, she felt a strange sense of fragility from him.

It was as if her insistence on divorcing him meant that no one else would want him.

How could that be?

He had friends and family-she was just a passerby in his life.

Aveline closed her eyes, willing herself not to dwell on those thoughts any longer.

The day before the court hearing.

Aveline met with the two lawyers again to finalize the details for the courtroom. By the time they finished, it was already afternoon.

As she stepped out of the café, the warm sunlight bathed her, making her feel cozy. She headed towards her car, got in, and fastened her seatbelt. Suddenly, every hair on her body stood on end.

"Drive."

A raspy male voice came from the back seat.

Aveline's face turned pale instantly. She glanced at the rearview mirror but could only see a figure sitting in the back, wearing a black hat and mask, his face completely obscured.

"Who... who are you?" she stammered, her voice trembling.

Anyone would be terrified to suddenly find someone in their car!

A knife appeared out of nowhere, pressing against her neck. The voice grew even colder. "I said, drive!"

Aveline didn't dare move recklessly. "Okay... I-I'll drive. Please don't kill me."

Her hands and feet shook as she started the car, the sharp blade pressing against her throat, a deadly reminder that with just one push, her life would end in an instant. Her face grew even paler, her hands gripping the steering wheel tightly. Her voice shook as she asked, "W-where are we going?"

The man gave her an address.

Following his directions, Aveline

drove towards the specified

location. The man kept the knife at

her throat, positioned so cleverly

that even as they passed by traffic police, nothing appeared out of the ordinary.

Chapter 665

Aveline wanted to stop the car, but the man in the backseat seemed to sense her intention. He warned her, "If you dare stop, I'll stab you. I don't care about living anymore!" Terrified, Aveline didn't dare to pull over and continued driving. He might be ready to die, but she wasn't!

Her voice trembled as she asked, "W-what do you want?"

The man didn't answer.

Instead, he pressed the knife against her neck harder, as if to teach her a lesson. The blade lightly sliced her skin, just enough to draw blood.

A chill ran down Aveline's spine, and only then did the searing pain register. Her brows knitted together in fear, and she dared not say another word.

This man was serious-he could kill her at any moment!

Who was he? Why had he kidnapped her? What was his goal?

The car continued along the road, soon leaving the city and reaching the location the man had specified.

The factory was long abandoned, its structure in disrepair and swaying with the autumn breeze. Scorched marks on the weathered walls hinted at a past fire, adding to the sense of decay. As Aveline looked at the place, a faint sense of familiarity tugged at her.

"Stop the car!"

The man commanded, and Aveline slammed on the brakes. He got out and immediately opened the driver's door, pressing the knife against her once more.

"Get out!"

Aveline didn't dare disobey. She unbuckled her seatbelt and stepped out of the car as instructed.

At that moment, she caught a glimpse of the man's eyes-she recognized him.

Darren!

He was the same man who had repeatedly tried to kill her before, filled with inexplicable hatred!

She never expected that after all this time, he would reappear and, without anyone noticing, manage to get into her car!

Aveline's face turned even paler.

Darren was truly capable of killing her.

"You recognize me?" Darren asked noticing the shock on her face. He laughed darkly before pulling down his mask, revealing a face twisted with malice.

Aveline's eyelashes trembled uncontrollably as she asked, "Why... why do you want to kill me?"

Darren shoved her forward. "Get in!"

Aveline stumbled but didn't dare to run, fearing that resisting would only enrage him further.

As they entered the dilapidated factory building, the traces of fire damage became even more apparent.

Darren kept the knife pressed against her. "Now that we're here, don't you remember?"

His gaze was venomous, like a poisonous snake ready to strike.

Aveline shivered as a chill spread

through her body. Her lips pet

slightly as she surveyed her surroundings, vague memories

stirring in her mind.

Fire...

A roaring inferno.

It seemed to consume everything in its path, a vivid image from her childhood.

It was also a hazy fragment of her past.

But why did she remember seeing this place on fire?

"I... I..." Aveline tried to speak, but the words caught in her throat as she looked at Darren's malicious face.

Suddenly, Darren's hand struck her face with a resounding slap.

"You still don't remember! You've forgotten, you worthless woman! If you hadn't called the police back then, I wouldn't have gone to prison.

I would've left Cloudflare City with

two million dollars. It's all because of you! All because of you!"

Darren lost control, punching and kicking Aveline viciously.

Aveline covered her head with her arms. As she listened to his words, a sudden realization struck her.

That was it!

She remembered now!

When she was ten years old, Hilda had sold her to a farmer in these mountains, but she had managed to escape!

Chapter 666

As she passed an abandoned factory, she stumbled upon a horrifying scene-two teenage boys bound together, and a man splashing gasoline around them, threatening to burn them alive. The sight terrified her, but she knew the boys were moments from death. In a panic, she fled the scene

and ran until she found a supermarket where she called the police. By the time the police arrived, she had fainted.

When she woke up, she found herself back at the orphanage, her fever having erased the memories of that fateful day. Now, those memories flashed through her mind like a film on fast-forward. With a jolt of shock, she realized Darren was the very man who had intended to kill the teenagers!

"It was you who did wrong, you deserve to be in jail. Why are you blaming me?" Aveline remembered and lunged at Darren.

Caught off guard, she knocked Darren down!

Aveline scrambled to her feet and ran with all her might.

She had to escape!

The realization hit her like a thunderbolt. At last, she understood the source of Darren's intense malice. Her actions that day-calling the police had led to his imprisonment. Even after a decade, his hatred burned as fiercely as ever. "Bitch, I'm going to kill you today!" Darren quickly got up and chased after Aveline.

Battered and bruised, Aveline felt pain radiating through her entire body. After sprinting a short distance, a sharp stitch beneath her ribs nearly brought her to her knees. She stumbled, fighting to stay upright.

But Darren caught up, grabbing her hair and dragging her back into the factory.

"Let go, let go of me!" Aveline struggled, scratching at him and resisting with all her might.

But it was no use.

She was dragged back into the abandoned factory, and this time, Darren didn't hit her but took out a rope and tied her up.

Aveline's eyes were red with

desperation as she struggled, "Do you really want to go back to jail?

You're out now, haven't you thought about starting over?"

"You think I don't want to start anew? It's impossible. I have no chance to start over!" Darren roared, slapping Aveline across the face.

Blood trickled from the corner of Aveline's mouth, her head spinning from the blow.

What did he mean by no chance? Why was it impossible?

Darren tied her up and then stood before her, his gaze chillingly sinister. "Perfect, today I can finish what I didn't years ago."

He walked to a corner and rummaged through, pulling out two large barrels. Upon opening them, he began to splash their contents around.

The pungent smell assaulted her, and Aveline's eyes widened in terror. It was gasoline!

He intended to burn her alive!

After emptying both barrels of gasoline, Darren took out his phone and dialed a number.

"Lucas," he snarled, his voice dripping with malice, "your beloved is in my hands. If you don't want her burned alive, have sixty million ready. Meet me at the old place you should remember it well. After all, it's where your brother died, engulfed in flames!" His maniacal laughter echoed through the line.

Aveline closed her eyes, his words sinking in.

So, the two teenagers he had kidnapped years ago were Lucas and his brother, Leo?

What a cruel twist of fate...

Years ago, she had acted upon seeing injustice, and now, she was the one about to be burned alive.

Darren dragged a chair across the floor, the scraping sound grating in the silence. He sat not far from her his menacing gaze fixed on her face. As he stared at her, he absently flicked a lighter open and closed in his hand, the small flame dancing with each motion.

Chapter 667

When Lucas received the call, his expression instantly turned icy. He looked at Desmond and spoke in a stern tone, "Have Maria locate Aveline's current position immediately, and gather the team." Desmond hesitated slightly. "But Mr. Tudor, the shareholders' meeting is about to start. If you don't attend now..."

"Go, now!" Lucas's urgency was unmistakable.

He was already standing outside the Tudor Group building. Without another word, he turned and got into his car, driving off in a specific direction.

As Lucas thought about the old place that Darren had mentioned, painful memories came flooding back. He and Leo had been kidnapped and kept in an abandoned factory for days.

Five days without food or water had left them utterly drained.

During those five days, the Tudor family hadn't appeared. The kidnapper, enraged by the delay, brought gasoline and doused the factory floor with it.

The overpowering stench made them both realize they might not survive.

Just when they were losing all hope, the sound of police sirens drew near. Their eyes lit up with a glimmer of hope!

But the kidnapper, driven mad by desperation, set the factory ablaze.

At that moment, somehow, Leo managed to untie himself and rushed over to free Lucas. His hands were trembling, and Lucas noticed a deep wound on Leo's wrist. Lucas' face was blank when he saw the injury. "You're hurt."

But Leo was focused on untying him. "Lu, it's fine. I'll get you out of here. We'll both be okay."

Even as the flames crept closer, Leo remained as gentle and optimistic as ever, smiling despite the danger.

Lucas silently watched him.

Suddenly, the kidnapper, in a frenzy, grabbed a knife and lunged at them, stabbing Leo in the back just when Leo freed Lucas' hands.

"Lu, run, run..." Leo turned and held the kidnapper in a desperate embrace, his eyes pleading as he looked at Lucas.

Lucas stood, his body weakened after days without food or water.

He was so weak-how did Leo manage to muster the strength to hold back the kidnapper?

Lucas glanced around, then stood up, grabbing a chair and hurling it at the kidnapper!

The kidnapper was struck, blood streaming from his head. Lucas seized the moment, grabbing Leo's arm and they ran together towards the exit.

Thick smoke billowed around them, blurring everything in sight.

Just then, a massive beam fell from above...

Lucas' eyes gradually turned crimson as he slammed the gas pedal to the floor, speeding down the road.

The memories kept replaying in his mind. As the beam came crashing down, Leo had shoved him out of the way, leaving himself trapped underneath. én.swnovels.net

The flames had already started to spread.

The police burst in just as the fire began to consume the factory.

Lucas had been dragged out by the officers, forced to watch as Leo was engulfed by the flames.

He had been in shock, reaching out, trying to grab something-anything-but Leo's face disappeared in the inferno. Yes, Leo had died right before his eyes.

So, Frederick's insistence that Leo was still alive was nothing short of a cruel joke!

And now, Aveline had been kidnapped at the same location and probably experiencing the same nightmare...

The kidnapper from back then was Darren!

Lucas was filled with hatred, realizing he remembered too late.

After the kidnapping, he fell ill as soon as he returned home with a high fever lasting for days. By the time he recovered, he had forgotten what had happened, except for the memory of Leo being swallowed by the flames.

Chapter 668

At that moment, Lucas's phone rang. He tapped his Bluetooth headset, his heart racing.

Desmond's urgent voice crackled through, "Mr. Tudor, we've located your wife. She's being held in an abandoned factory near the forest on the west side of the city."

Lucas' handsome face tightened even further, his eyes bloodshot as he stared ahead. His voice was cold as he said, "Go to the shareholders' meeting for me. You don't need to do anything, just make sure those old men there stay calm." Desmond hesitated briefly before replying, "...Alright."

The pressure was immense.

After a pause, Desmond added, "By the way, Maria found out that Russell is also heading there with his men."

"I know," Lucas replied curtly before ending the call.

At the abandoned factory, Aveline adjusted herself into a more comfortable sitting position. Her hair was disheveled, and her body was covered in dust. Her clear, cold eyes were fixed on Darren, who was still toying with the lighter. "Why did you kidnap Lucas and his brother back then?" she asked. Since there was nothing else to do, she decided to strike up a conversation.

She had always been curious about that incident. After all, Lucas was Frederick's only son; he should have been cherished and doted upon. Yet Frederick had always regarded Lucas with disdain, attempting to control his every move. And now, in a final act of cruelty, he had stripped Lucas of everything, reducing him to an ordinary man.

And who exactly was Leo, the brother they always talked about?

Darren didn't respond, only glaring at her with cold, venomous eyes, like a snake poised to strike.

Aveline pressed her lips together and remained silent.

The air was still, only the sound of the wind howling outside, signaling the growing cold. Fallen leaves were blown into the factory, and Aveline stared at them, a deep sadness welling up inside her.

She never imagined that the actions she took years ago would come back to haunt her like this.

If she could go back, would she still choose to call the police?

Aveline closed her eyes.

Just then, the faint sound of cars approaching could be heard from outside.

Darren paused his fiddling with the lighter, stood up, and walked to the factory entrance. The factory was situated on higher ground, giving him a clear view of several cars speeding toward them.

"Pretty fast," Darren commented with a smirk, pulling a knife from his pocket and casually toying with it.

Soon, three or four cars screeched to a halt. The door of the lead car opened, and Russell stepped out, his expression icy.

"Where's Aveline?" he demanded.

Darren eyed him with mild confusion. "Who are you?"

Russell advanced, his voice firm. "I asked you, where is Aveline?"

"Stop right there," Darren said calmly,

he drenched the area with

gasoline. If you don't want to die, don't come any closer!"

He lit the lighter, the small flame flickering ominously.

Russell halted, his sharp, handsome face showing a hint of irritation. "You kidnapped Aveline. What do you want?"

Darren's eyes gleamed with greed. "I

thought I'd only get Lucas, but you showed up too. I'm not asking for much—one hundred million, and I'll let her go." én.swnovels.net

One hundred million! He had the audacity to make such a demand!

"Russ, leave! Don't worry about me!" Aveline, shocked to hear Russell's voice, shouted desperately.

Her voice echoed clearly in the empty factory.

Russell glanced towards the interior of the factory, but it was pitch dark inside, making it impossible to see where Aveline was.

Chapter 669

"Aveline, don't be afraid! I'll get you out of there!" Russell's voice echoed through the factory.

"Hey!" Darren snapped, his eyes narrowing to slits. "What am I, invisible? You're shouting like that right in front of me?"

Russell's gaze shifted, locking onto Darren. His voice turned cold. "So, you contacted Lucas and demanded money from him. But even if I pay you and he doesn't, you still won't let her go, will you?" Darren replied, "That's right."

He continued to fiddle with the lighter, opening and closing it, making everyone tense with anxiety.

Russell's expression remained cold. "Kidnapping and extortion are crimes. You just got out, do you really want to go back to jail again?"

Darren laughed. "As long as you pay up and help me get away, how could I get caught?"

His eyes gleamed with a hint of madness. "Hurry up and decide. My patience is running out."

Russell turned to his men. "Go to the bank and transfer the money."

Then he looked back at Darren. "Give me your account number."

Darren was surprised by how quickly Russell agreed, momentarily stunned before he recited his account number.

Russell took a step forward, his eyes, usually calm and with a faint smile, now glinted coldly. "Does she know you're doing this?"

Darren's expression immediately tightened, and his gaze turned more vicious as he stared at Russell. "What do you know!"

He was almost frantic. "That damn woman, she deceived me! Why should I care about her feelings?"

Russell responded calmly, "But isn't everything you're doing just so you can have a better life with her?" Darren's eyes began to redden, his grip on the knife tightening, though he hadn't lost his reason.

"What's your relationship with her? How do you know so much? Who are you?"

Russell stepped closer, now only a short distance between them. "It doesn't matter who I am. What matters is that if you let Aveline now, I'll send you abroad and give you enough money to live

comfortably for the rest of your life. How about that?"

The offer was undeniably tempting!

Russell clearly knew his background, and Darren started to waver. But as a woman's face flashed in his mind, he quickly regained his composure. "Step back!" Darren barked.

The wind rustled the leaves, sending them fluttering down, masking certain sounds in the process.

When Lucas arrived, he saw Russell in a standoff with Darren. Narrowing his eyes, Lucas made a call.

"Lucas, what's up?" Rina's voice came through.

Lucas spoke calmly, "Rina, Russell has found a woman he really likes. He's willing to give you up for her."

"What!" Rina's voice shot up in pitch. "Lucas, are you serious?"

"My words aren't to be taken lightly," Lucas replied coldly.

Rina, now agitated, exclaimed, "I'm calling him right now to get to the bottom of this!"

She hung up and immediately dialed Russell's number.

Russell, his expression tense as he planned his next move, was

interrupted by the ringing of

phone. Glancing at the screen, his brows furrowed deeply.

He rejected the call and then looked up at Darren "All this that you've done today won't make her leave with you. Instead, she'll see you as a burden holding her back. Think carefully-how many times has she seen you since you've been back?"

Chapter 670

Darren's expression darkened, his grip on the knife tightening as emotions churned in his eyes. "I don't know what you're talking about. I want money, and I want to get out of here-nothing else matters!" Russell was about to say more, but his phone rang again, persistently interrupting him. With a furrowed brow, he answered, "Rina, what is it?"

Rina's voice was filled with tears, "Russ, come back, please come back! I'm hurt, it hurts so much."

Russell asked calmly, "Have you called for an ambulance?"

Her sobbing intensified. "I did, but Russ, I need you here with me. I can only feel safe with you by my side. Please, come now, okay?"

Russell, trying to remain patient, responded, "Rina, I'm in the middle of something important. I'll come to you as soon as I'm done, alright?"

But Rina was insistent. "No! You have to come now! If you don't, I'll tell my grandfather to cancel our cooperation. Russ, don't make me do this!" Russell's eyes, usually warm and inviting, turned cold. "Fine, I'll come to you."

"Okay, I'll be waiting," Rina replied before hanging up.

Russell closed his eyes briefly, and when he opened them again, he charged straight at Darren!

Darren had been on guard. As soon as he saw Russell coming, he quickly lit the lighter and tossed it behind him into the factory!

The lighter hit the ground, instantly igniting the gasoline. Flames erupted and spread rapidly, too fast for anyone to react.

"You're asking for death!" Russell shouted, landing a punch squarely on Darren's face. Darren stumbled, falling to the ground.

At that moment, the hidden bodyguards surged forward, quickly subduing Darren.

Russell turned and ran towards the factory, but someone else was faster!

He stopped in his tracks, his expression turning grim.

It was Lucas!

When had he arrived? How had Russell not noticed?

Russell wanted to rush inside again, but his phone rang once more. He glanced at it, hesitated, then turned away from the factory and walked towards his car.

Inside the factory, Aveline watched

in horror as the fire quickly spread, engulfing the factory. The gasoline around her ignited, and she began to struggle desperately, trying to escape.

But her hands and feet were tightly bound. Despite her frantic efforts she could only move a little. The fire spread rapidly, and the small e

distance she managed to cover was not enough to save her.

Panic and desperation filled her face as this was where she was going to die today?

Just then, a figure burst through the flames, moving so quickly that the fire seemed to flicker in his wake.

"Aveline, I'm here. It's going to be okay," Lucas called out as he spotted her trapped in the inferno. He quickly untied the ropes binding her and pulled her to her feet, urging her to run.

But the factory had been abandoned for over twenty years, already weakened by a previous fire and the wear of time. The slightest disturbance could cause it to collapse. Darren had likely tampered with the structure further. Just as they began to run, debris and beams started falling from above.

Lucas instinctively shielded Aveline, holding her close as they narrowly avoided a collapsing beam.

His face was steely with determination. They were deep inside the factory, and there was only one exit. They had no choice but to run for it with everything they had!