

Divorced Me 761

Chapter 761

Lucas agreed, and a wave of excitement surged through Aveline's heart.

He agreed! He finally agreed!

The marriage that had caused her so much pain, despair, and heartache was finally going to end!

Aveline struggled to contain her excitement, her eyes fixed on his handsome features. "Are you serious? You're not joking with me, right?"

Lucas gave a slight nod. "I'm serious, Aveline. When it comes to discussing divorce, have I ever been the one to back down?"

He looked at her with a faint smile, almost teasing.

Aveline was speechless.

Alright, she admitted it. She had been the one who wavered every time. First, there was the situation with Annie, and now there was the mess with Hilda. But this time, she was certain that the outcome wouldn't be like before. She believed things would be different on the third try.

Lucas still held her hand firmly. "Since I said I'm going to win you back, I need to show some sincerity. I won't do what you dislike, and I'll double down on everything you love. Aveline, when I say I love you, I mean it." The cracks in the walls around her heart seemed to deepen a little more. She didn't respond to his words.

Just then, her phone rang, and she was immensely grateful for the interruption.

She looked at the screen-it was Selena.

"Hello?"

Selena's anxious voice burst through. "Where are you, my dear? Are you okay?"

Aveline replied, "I went to Arthur Town for a bit. What's going on?"

"You scared me to death! I thought that jerk Lucas had locked you up somewhere," Selena exclaimed, clearly relieved.

The car was quiet, and Selena's voice was loud enough for Lucas to hear every word.

Aveline instinctively shifted a little farther away from him.

"I'm fine. It was just a quick trip to Arthur Town. I'm on my way back now."

Selena asked, "Why did you suddenly decide to go to Arthur Town? Did something happen at the orphanage?"

"Kind of. I'll explain everything when I get back," Aveline replied.

"Alright, I'll be waiting," Selena said.

"Okay."

With that, she hung up.

The subtle, ambiguous tension between them dissipated instantly.

Aveline shifted her hand slightly. "It's a bit warm. Could you let go for a minute?"

"How about this?" Lucas released her hand, only to grab hold of her index finger instead.

Aveline was speechless.

How childish could he be?

"But I think you should tell your friend to watch her mouth," Lucas remarked. "If she keeps it up, she's bound to get herself into trouble."

Aveline glanced at him. "The only one who might take revenge on her is you."

Lucas raised an eyebrow. "Not necessarily. She's got a sharp tongue; I'm sure I'm not the only one she's rubbed the wrong way. She should be careful-who knows, one day she might get up in the middle of the night, head to the bathroom, and fall headfirst into the toilet."

Aveline was speechless.

What a wicked curse!

If Selena ever heard that, she'd probably chase Lucas down eight streets, hurling insults at him!

...

By the time they returned to Cloudflare City, night had fully fallen.

The lawyer's office had already closed, so the divorce would have to wait until the next day.

They went straight back to Maple Garden.

In the elevator, Lucas still clung to

her finger, as if he couldn't bear to et

let go. Aveline could feel

swnovel.

goosebumps rising on her skin.

Had this man been possessed by someone?

When the elevator doors opened, she quickly shook off his hand. "You're home!"

Lucas gave her a wistful look. "How about coming over for a cup of tea?"

Aveline replied, "No, thanks."

If she went, would she even be able to leave again?

Lucas' face showed a hint of disappointment. "Alright then."

But in a heartbeat, he asked, "Then can I come to your place for a cup of tea?"

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"No," Aveline replied firmly.

She quickly reached out and pressed the elevator's close button. The doors slowly shut, blocking out Lucas' sharp, handsome face. She let out a barely noticeable sigh of relief.

She had to admit that this new tactic of Lucas caught her off guard. She was worried she might end up agreeing to his requests if she wasn't careful.

Stay calm. She had to stay calm.

When Aveline got home, she found Selena lounging on the sofa in the living room, watching TV. Hearing the door, Selena turned her head, and then jumped up, rushing over with excitement. "My beautiful Ave! I missed you so much!"

Selena's enthusiasm was overwhelming for most people.

Aveline stumbled back a few steps, a bit helpless. "I wasn't even gone for that long."

"But I missed you anyway!" Selena said, clinging to her dramatically.

Aveline felt the goosebumps rise on her skin once more and quickly said, "I've got a cold and don't feel too great. Don't hug me so tight-I can't breathe."

Selena immediately let go, grabbing her hands and looking her up and down. "What happened? How did you catch a cold? Did you get chilled? Wait here I'll make you some ginger tea." And with that, Selena sped off to the kitchen like a whirlwind.

Aveline was speechless.

Selena was overly enthusiastic.

She seriously suspected that Selena's relationship with Aaron had her over the moon and overly thrilled!

She followed Selena into the kitchen and saw her clumsily slicing ginger. Aveline couldn't help but shake her head. "I'm already feeling better. There's no need for ginger tea. You can stop slicing." Selena turned around, "Really?"

Aveline held up her hand, "See? The IV mark is still there."

Selena immediately put the knife

down.

to drink then, I won't force you

to drink my ginger tea. But come on, tell me what happened when you went back?"

So, she'd been waiting here all this time just to hear the gossip firsthand!

Aveline settled into the sofa and recounted everything that had happened in detail.

"What!" Selena leapt to her feet, stunned. "Your parents are from the Cooper family, the wealthiest in Larbor City?"

Aveline nodded. "Yes."

Although they hadn't done a paternity test yet, it was almost certain.

Selena's face went blank with shock. "So, you're actually a wealthy heiress! My dear, my beautiful friend, my future happiness now rests in your hands!"

She immediately flashed a fawning smile, and Aveline felt the goosebumps rise on her skin all over again.

Aveline kept her face blank. "Can you be normal?"

Selena saluted playfully, "Yes, ma'am!"

Aveline sighed. "It's not that simple. I still haven't decided whether I want to meet them."

First, she needed to find out what role the Cooper family had played in the orphanage fire. Only then could she think about everything else.

Selena jumped in, "Of course you

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should meet them! No matter what the Coopers think, you need to knock that imposter out of your rightful place. Why should that thief enjoy the life that was meant for you all these years? If the Coopers want a fake, then make it a public scandal-let's see how they like that!"

Aveline couldn't help but laugh. "That's a bit extreme, isn't it?"

Selena's expression turned serious "There aren't many sane people left in this world. If you can't beat them, join them. If they're crazy, you just have to be crazier!"

Aveline gave her a thumbs-up!

In a way, Selena's thinking wasn't all that different from Lucas's.

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Selena looked at her and asked, "So when are you planning to go to Larbor City?"

Aveline replied, "I'll wait until the divorce with Lucas is finalized."

"What?" Selena was shocked again. "Did I hear that right? He actually agreed to a divorce?"

"Yes, he did." Aveline nodded. "To be honest, I'm surprised too. But when I thought about it, I realized that every time we've talked about divorce, he's agreed and showed up. It was me who kept backing out." Selena looked incredulous. "After all the back-and-forth, he's finally giving in? What's he up to?"

"I don't know." Aveline shook her head, then yawned. "I'm exhausted. I'm going to bed. You should get some rest too."

Selena nodded. "Alright, you get some sleep. I'll head out."

She grabbed her bag and was about to leave, but at the door, she paused. "Oh, by the way, Aveline, Russ' wedding is in three days. Are you really not going?"

Aveline stopped for a moment and replied, "No, I'm not going."

Russell didn't want her there, and she was indifferent to Rina, so i I was better to stay away.

Selena nodded. "Alright then, I'll go and see what drama unfolds. I'll tell you all the juicy details later."

"Sure."

After Selena left, Aveline took a shower and put on her bathrobe, applying her skincare routine.

Just then, her phone buzzed.

She checked it—it was a message from Russell.

"Isn't tonight's starry sky beautiful?"

He attached a photo.

She stared at the picture. He was standing on a mountaintop, back to the camera, gazing up at the starry sky, his silhouette lonely and forlorn. Aveline frowned slightly.

This was the path he chose; he should know what the consequences would be. Talking about it now was pointless.

She didn't reply, instead tossing the phone aside and getting into bed. But just as she was drifting into a hazy sleep, her phone rang again, startling her awake, irritation

crossing her face. FindNovel

"Hello?"

Her tone was sharp and heavy as she answered.

A deep, raspy voice came through the line, "Aveline, I don't feel well."

Aveline squinted at the screen; it was Lucas' name.

"If you're not feeling well, go to the hospital. I'm not a doctor, so why are you calling me?" she snapped, annoyed at being woken up from her sleep. Being disturbed like this was truly infuriating.

There was a moment of silence on the other end before Lucas spoke again, "I think you got me sick, Aveline. You need to take responsibility." Aveline resisted the urge to roll her eyes, gritting her teeth. "Do you have any medicine at home?"

Lucas replied, "I don't know."

Before she could say anything more, he continued, "My head hurts... I feel so awful, Aveline, I'm really suffering."

He kept mumbling in a dazed state, making any further conversation impossible.

Remembering how he had taken care of her when she was feverish and barely conscious, Aveline swallowed her irritation. She hung up, got up, changed her clothes, and headed downstairs.

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She rang his doorbell, and it took a while before the door finally opened.

Lucas stood in the doorway, his tall frame silhouetted against the dim light behind him. His brows were furrowed tightly, and he was wearing a deep blue robe, slightly open at the collar, revealing a hint of his chest muscles.

His face was flushed unnaturally.

"You have a fever?" Aveline asked.

His body radiated heat, and his lips were dry and cracked. He turned and walked back inside, answering weakly, "Yeah."

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Lucas turned and stumbled back toward his bedroom, collapsing face-first onto the bed, completely drained of energy.

Aveline glanced around before starting to search for the first aid kit. After a few minutes, she finally found it beside the TV cabinet. She pulled out a thermometer and walked back into the bedroom. "Let's check your temperature first."

She approached the bed and aimed the digital thermometer at Lucas' forehead. The reading quickly appeared on the small screen-39 degrees Celsius.

Definitely a high fever.

Aveline found some fever-reducing medication, filled a glass with water, and returned to the bedroom.

"Lucas, take the medicine."

The man lying on the bed didn't respond.

She placed the water and pills on the side table and gently pushed his shoulder. Still no reaction.

"Lucas?"

Aveline reached out to touch his face. The moment her fingers brushed his skin, she felt a wave of intense heat radiating from him. Before she could react, her wrist was suddenly grabbed, and she was pulled onto the bed. Lucas' fevered body pressed against hers. "What are you doing, Lucas?"

Aveline tensed, her hands pushing against his chest, trying to keep some distance between them.

Lucas's weight bore down on her, his half-closed eyes staring at her with a frown.

"Aveline, you're so fierce," he murmured in a raspy voice, his flushed face looking strangely vulnerable.

Aveline frowned, "I told you to take your medicine. Why are you pulling me onto the bed?"

Lucas gazed at her steadily for a moment, then reached for the pills and swallowed them with a gulp of water.

"I took them," he said, setting down the glass and looking at her with an expression that almost seemed like he was seeking praise.

Aveline pushed against him, "Now get up. You're too heavy."

She felt like he was crushing her.

But instead of moving, he only sank further down, his hot breath brushing against her ear. He closed his eyes and fell into a heavy sleep, his breathing deep and labored.

"Hey!"

Aveline struggled to breathe as his weight pinned her down, her body wriggling as she tried to free herself.

"Stop squirming," Lucas's raspy voice came through. He tightened his hold on her, mumbling, "If anything happens, I won't be held responsible."

Aveline sensed something too. His body was burning hot, and now it felt like he was trying to melt into her.

She felt too warm and quickly began sticky feeling making

to at theble. But he was too

her

heavy, pinning her down tightly, and she couldn't break free.

She suddenly began to reconsider why had she come here in the middle of the night?

But there wasn't much she could do now. After struggling for half the night and still recovering from her own cold, exhaustion finally took over, and she drifted off to sleep.

The next morning.

Aveline felt someone moving against her body.

She frowned, trying to push them away gently. Then, suddenly, she felt his lips on hers.

Her consciousness snapped back into clarity, and her eyes flew open to see Lucas kissing her with intent. "Let go, mmph..." she tried to resist, but the moment she spoke, he took advantage, deepening the kiss. They hadn't moved much throughout the night, and now their position made it all too easy for him. Aveline's body shivered, his heat radiating into her, making her tremble.

This bastard!

The intense morning activity left her breathless, and any chaotic thoughts were cast far away.

As the storm of passion subsided, Aveline's breathing was uneven, her fingers trembling slightly.

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Lucas carried her into the bathroom, a hint of amusement playing in his eyes as he washed her. "See? My service is quite thorough. Are you comfortable?" After the intense passion they had just shared, Aveline's body felt weak and limp, but her tone was icy. "Very comfortable. How much do I owe you?"

Lucas paused mid-wash, a dangerous glint appearing in his eyes. "What did you just say?"

Aveline continued as if she hadn't noticed, "Based on market rates, your skills and service were decent. How about a thousand bucks?"

Lucas laughed in disbelief. This woman-she was treating him like some hired plaything!

He squeezed her gently, teasingly. "Seems you're satisfied with my service. How about we continue?"

Aveline met his gaze coolly.

Lucas didn't hold back, bending down to capture her lips in a deep kiss, only letting go when he felt her breath become uneven.

Aveline reached up to push him away, but he simply resumed washing her.

Resigned, she leaned against his shoulder and said, "Your fever's down, and I'm fine too. Let's head to the lawyer's office afterward." For a moment, Lucas didn't know what to say.

They were in such an intimate position, having just shared such a passionate moment, and now she was talking about getting a divorce... But he couldn't argue. He had agreed to it.

"Fine," he replied, pulling a towel over and wrapping her in it.

Aveline pushed him away. "I can walk by myself."

Lucas didn't stop her, watching her slender figure as she moved away, a hint of sadness in his eyes.

She was such a cold-hearted woman to just forget all their intimacy as she put on her dress.

After dressing, Aveline returned upstairs, freshened up, had a light breakfast, and grabbed her documents. She headed back downstairs.

As the elevator doors opened, Lucas stepped in just at that moment. There was a subtle tension between them.

Aveline said, "Just to be safe, I'll take your car."

Lucas remained silent.

Aveline glanced at him. "There shouldn't be any surprises this time, right?"

Lucas met her gaze. "How would I know?"

Aveline let out a slight scoff, saying nothing more. Last time, she thought they really got divorced, but what happened? He'd pulled a stunt with a fake divorce certificate!

This time, she wouldn't let anything like that happen again.

When they arrived at the underground parking lot, Lucas took out the car keys, and Aveline opened the passenger door and got in.

They were the first clients to arrive at the lawyer's office. Aveline could hardly contain her excitement, but she noticed that Lucas wasn't following her inside. She turned back to him. "What are you doing?"

Lucas replied, "I seem to have a strange connection with this place."

Aveline's mouth twitched, but she didn't respond.

They went through the formalities, following the steps one by one. But once again, things stalled at the point where they needed to settle the division of marital assets

Aveline said, "I don't want a penny. I'll leave with nothing."

Lucas countered, "How can that be? You're my wife, and you've stood by me through tough times. I insist on compensating you. I'll have my lawyer calculate my assets, and then we'll divide them." FindNovel

Aveline frowned. "You agreed so quickly. Were you planning this all along?"

Lucas' expression remained calm. "Not at all."

Aveline insisted, "Then let's do it my way. I'll leave with nothing. No money. Let's get this done now."

Lucas looked at her deeply for a long moment before finally turning to the clerk. "Do as she says."

Aveline glanced at him, her heart unable to find peace.

He was being surprisingly agreeable...

Lucas sensed her gaze, a faint smile curving on his thin lips. "Regretting it? Shall we leave now?"

Aveline quickly withdrew her gaze.

She really couldn't show him even a hint of kindness; he'd take a mile if given an inch.

With no dispute over the assets, the procedures were much simpler.

However, they couldn't get the divorce certificate today; there was a mandatory thirty-day cooling-off period.

Aveline frowned. If these thirty days passed peacefully, that would be fine, but if something were to happen...

"Can't we just get it done right away?" she asked.

The lawyer replied, "We have to follow the regulations."

Fine.

They left the lawyer's office.

Sunlight fell upon them.

It was a cold winter, but the warm rays managed to disperse some of the chill.

Lucas noticed the hint of regret on her face, and his eyes darkened slightly. "Regretting something? I'll be back in thirty days, you know."

He took a step closer. "But before then, you need to accompany me somewhere."

Aveline looked at him. "Where?"

Lucas replied, "I can't tell you yet. I'll let you know in a couple of days."

Aveline frowned again.

What was he playing at acting so secretive?

She had a bad feeling about this.

She wanted to refuse but considering that Lucas could change his mind at any moment, she decided to hold back for now.

Better to wait and see what tricks he had up his sleeve.

Just then, her phone rang. She took it out and saw it was a call from Maria.

"Hello, boss," Aveline answered, her tone soft.

Maria asked, "Are you done with your matters?"

Aveline responded, "Almost. I can return to work today."

Maria replied, "Good. The client you signed with earlier is asking for the design drafts. If you've completed a rough draft, send it over for them to review."

"Alright, I'm heading back now," Aveline said, then ended the call.

"Where are you headed? I'll give you a ride," Lucas offered.

Aveline thought for a moment, then nodded. "To the office."

Lucas' eyes flickered briefly, but he didn't ask anything further. He got in the car with her.

When the car stopped at the building's entrance, and he watched Aveline walk inside, Lucas dialed Maria's number.

"What's up, boss? Got any new orders?" Maria's voice sounded lazy.

Lucas asked, "She didn't resign?"

Maria immediately understood that the "she" he referred to was Aveline.

"She will resign, but she recently took on a project. I expect that after finishing this, she'll submit her

resignation. At that point, I won't have any reason to keep her here: Boss, you need to step up, stabilize the relationship, use your charm, and make her never want to leave you!"

Lucas' tone was cold. "Seems like you've been too idle lately. There's a shortage of personnel in South Afreeca; maybe you should head over there." "Don't!" Maria wailed instantly.

"I was just offering a suggestion.

You don't have to take my advice. I'm still useful here, like keeping Sidney occupied. He's too distracted to bother Aveline now. Boss, doesn't that count as solving a big problem for you?"

Lucas' stern expression softened a bit. "Merits and faults cancel each other out; your bonus is canceled."

With that, he hung up the phone directly.

Maria was speechless.

She glared at her phone, gritting her teeth, cursing, "Damn capitalist!"

Aveline sent the initial draft to Patrick.

Less than an hour later, she received a response-it wasn't the feel he wanted.

Her brows furrowed, and she spent a long time emailing back and forth with Patrick, but they still couldn't reach an agreement.

Frustrated, she decided to meet him in person.

Patrick readily agreed, and they arranged to meet at a newly opened restaurant in Cloudflare City.

By evening, Aveline arrived at the restaurant's entrance, only to be stopped by the doorman.

"Sorry, ma'am, no entry without a reservation," he said, a polite smile on his face, but his eyes held a hint of disdain.

Aveline was dressed simply a knit sweater, jeans, and a versatile overcoat. Her long hair hung loosely over her shoulders, and she wore no makeup except for a touch of lip gloss, the only color on her.

With Christmas approaching, the weather was getting colder, and Aveline could feel the biting chill of the wind as she stood by the door.

She pulled out her phone and tried calling Patrick, but his line was busy.

Frustrated, she had no choice but to wait at the entrance.

Although the restaurant had just opened, business seemed good.

In the hour Aveline had been waiting, several groups had already gone inside.

Seeing her still there, the doorman's contempt was now barely concealed.

"Ma'am, this isn't the kind of place just anyone can walk into. You'd better leave," he sneered as if her presence was somehow hurting their business.

Aveline looked up at him and said, "What's the difference between us? We're both just working."

Where did his sense of superiority come from?

For a moment, the doorman's face darkened, but he quickly turned away.

Another hour passed, and the sky had fully darkened.

Aveline was freezing, feeling the cold seeping into her bones.

She held her phone, intending to call Patrick, but realized it had already shut off. Her phone was frozen.

She rubbed her hands together, her breath warming her fingers with each exhale. Two and a half hours later, a car pulled up in front of the restaurant.

Patrick, his stout figure emerging from the car, spotted her at the entrance and quickly hurried over. "Miss Young, have you been

standing out here waiting for me this whole time? I'm so sorry! My

previous meeting ran over..

Come on,

de-are you

come on, let's get inside-

freezing?"

Patrick's face was full of concern and guilt.

He shot an irritated look at the doorman. "What's going on here? Making a guest wait outside? What if something had happened? Could you take responsibility for that?"

The doorman immediately lowered his head. "Yes, yes, my mistake."

Aveline didn't make a fuss, simply following Patrick inside.

The luxurious décor spoke of elegance at every corner, and a subtle scent of incense lingered in the air.

The moment she stepped in, the warmth enveloped her, instantly dispelling the cold. Only then did Aveline feel herself slowly coming back to life.

Once inside a private room, Patrick summoned a waiter, smiling warmly at Aveline. "Miss Young, what do you like to eat?"

Aveline smiled politely. "I'm fine with anything, Mr. Gunner. Whatever you choose is fine."

Patrick nodded. "Bring out all your signature dishes."

"Of course," the waiter replied, nodding before leaving the room.

As soon as the door closed, Patrick turned to her with genuine concern. "Miss Young, are you still cold?"

Aveline's fingers were still a bit

chilled, but she was gradually

warming up. She replied, "I'm alright, Mr. Gunner. I was wondering if you had any additional thoughts on the vineyard?"

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Patrick chuckled warmly. "No need to rush. Let's eat first, and we can discuss as we go."

Aveline kept her expression calm. "You mentioned earlier that my initial draft wasn't what you were looking for. Could you tell me what specifically you found unsatisfactory?"

The smile on Patrick's face faded slightly. "Miss Young, I'm not the type who likes to discuss business over a meal."

Aveline paused for a moment, then replied, "Alright, understood."

Seeing her tactfully drop the subject, Patrick's demeanor softened a bit.

"Are you from Cloudflare City, Miss Young? Being an architectural designer must be quite demanding, isn't it? You know, someone as beautiful as you could easily find a more relaxed and comfortable job. There's no need to work so hard," he began chatting, though his choice of topic felt a bit inappropriate. Aveline responded mildly, "I'm genuinely interested in architectural design, so I've stuck with it."

Patrick nodded. "That's impressive, making a career out of something you love. But have you ever thought about starting your own studio? Working for someone else can only get you so far. In the end, you're just lining someone else's pockets. Isn't it time you did something for yourself?"

His words seemed to be leading in a certain direction.

Aveline replied, "It's not so bad. My boss is a friend, and I have quite a bit of freedom in my work."

Patrick's gaze lingered on her serene face, the soft light highlighting her features. Though her demeanor was polite and distant, there was a certain ethereal beauty to her, making him curious to see another expression on her face.

His fingers tapped rhythmically on the table, his interest in her clearly growing.

Aveline's brow furrowed slightly, a sense of caution rising within her.

Knock, knock!

At that moment, the door to the private room was knocked.

"Who is it?" Patrick turned his head.

The door swung open, and Baron walked in, his demeanor respectful. He gave Aveline a slight nod and said, "Mrs. Tudor, this is a gift from Mr. Tudor."

He presented a box to Aveline with both hands.

"Mrs. Tudor? You're married?" Patrick exclaimed in surprise, his eyes darting toward Aveline.

As Baron entered, Aveline's brow immediately furrowed, but before she could say anything, Baron turned to Patrick and announced, "This is Mrs. Tudor, the wife of Lucas Tudor." en
FindNovel

What?!

Patrick nearly jumped out of his seat with excitement.

Lucas Tudor!

The newly appointed head of the Tudor Group, a century-old powerhouse in Cloudflare City!

Just recently, Lucas had stunned the city's elite with a bold and unexpected move that seemed destined to ruin him. Yet, against all odds, he turned the tables and secured the largest share, effectively taking control of the Tudor Group!

Frederick was ousted from the board, and now, after a stroke, he was still in the hospital!

Suddenly, Lucas had become the most talked-about figure in Cloudflare City, and everyone was reevaluating the young Chairman.

And this seemingly unremarkable woman in front of him was his wife?!

Patrick felt a cold sweat break out

on his palms. Thank goodness he hadn't said anything inappropriate. If he had, he might as well start packing his bags!

Baron noticed Patrick's face turning pale and allowed a hint of disdain to flash across his eyes.

He then turned back to Aveline. "Mrs. Tudor, Mr. Tudor is still waiting for your response."

Aveline took a deep breath, accepted the box, and opened it.

Inside, a pink diamond bracelet lay quietly.

Under the light, the pink diamonds sparkled brilliantly, and the intricate floral design made the bracelet a work of art.

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Aveline paused for a moment, then closed the box and said to Baron, "I like it very much."

Baron nodded. "Good, I'll let Mr. Tudor know. Enjoy your meal, Mrs. Tudor."

With that, he turned and left, though his gaze lingered on Patrick for a moment—a look filled with cold warning that sent a chill down Patrick's spine. The door closed again.

Aveline remained calm as she looked up at Patrick, who no longer seemed as relaxed as before.

"Ahem... So, you're Mrs. Tudor. I'm sorry, I didn't realize." Patrick coughed awkwardly, trying to recover.

Aveline replied evenly, "No need to apologize, Mr. Gunner. Right now, I'm just your designer. Feel free to share any requests you have."

Requests? He wouldn't dare make any now!

But still...

Patrick's eyes flickered nervously. "Oh, about the draft you mentioned earlier? On second thought, I think your design is exactly what I wanted. No issues at all. Just follow your original inspiration and show me the final version when it's ready." Aveline raised an eyebrow slightly. "Are you sure, Mr. Gunner? We could still discuss it further."

"No need, no need! I trust your talent completely. Your designs have a unique flair, and I'm sure the final result will be impressive," Patrick replied, waving his hand with a forced smile.

Aveline nodded. "Alright, then I'll continue working on it. Enjoy your meal, Mr. Gunner."

"Yes, yes, take care," Patrick hurriedly responded, not attempting to stop her.

As soon as she left, he wiped the cold sweat from his forehead.

He knew Lucas was married, and some in their circle had met his wife, but he hadn't. He never imagined that this woman was Lucas' wife!

He'd planned to gain some advantages while carrying out his task, but now... he was growing uneasy about the whole thing.

Taking out his phone, he made a call.

"Miss Cooper, it turns out that

Aveline is Lucas Tudor's wife. I'm afraid I can't handle what you've asked me to do. Maybe you should find someone else..." Patrick spoke cautiously.

Juliet's voice came through, laced with a cold sneer. "Patrick, your wife and kids are overseas now, aren't they? And now you say you don't want to go through with this? Are you not thinking about them?"

Patrick, startled, quickly replied, "Miss Cooper, there's no need for this. We're just business partners. What you're doing... is this a threat?"

Juliet replied coldly, "Yes, I'm threatening you. What are you going to do about it?"

"You-!" Patrick sputtered, fury rising in his chest.

But he knew he couldn't fight back-his weakness was firmly in her grasp.

Juliet continued, "Just follow my instructions, Patrick. Once it's done, I'll make sure you're reunited with your family, and everyone gets what they want. But if you choose not to comply, none of us will come out of this unscathed."

Patrick's hand clenched into a tight fist. "Fine. I understand."

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As Aveline stepped out of the restaurant, she noticed it had begun to snow!

Soft, white flakes were falling gently, quickly blanketing the buildings around her.

Under the streetlights, the snow danced in the air, making the whole scene look enchanting.

A black Phantom glided up to the curb, and the driver stepped out, giving her a polite nod before opening the back door.

Holding the box, Aveline walked over, bent down, and got in, meeting Lucas' smiling eyes.

"Do you really like it?" he asked, his gaze dropping to her hands.

Noticing she wasn't wearing the bracelet, his brows immediately furrowed.

Aveline handed the box back to him. "It's beautiful, but I don't need it."

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Lucas didn't take the box.

His eyes remained fixed on her as he said, "Even if you don't like it now, keep it. One day, when you do like it, you can wear it."

Aveline fell silent for a moment before replying, "Can't you tell? I don't want it."

Lucas simply replied, "But I've already given it to you. Whether you want it or not, it's yours. If you really don't want it, go ahead and toss it. Maybe some beggar will find it and become rich overnight." Aveline's fingers tightened around the box slightly.

She knew the pink diamond inside was worth a fortune, likely not less than two million dollars. Throwing away something so valuable was out of the question.

Seeing her hesitation, Lucas added, "Just keep it. You'll come to like it someday."

What nonsense...

She didn't like it now; why would she like it in the future?

Still, she didn't throw it away but placed it on her lap instead.

Lucas glanced at her pale wrist and paused before saying, "If you wore it, it would look beautiful."

Aveline ignored his comment, shifting the conversation. "Why did you send someone in there? We're about to get divorced, and now you've made our relationship public. What am I supposed to

do once we're divorced?" Patrick's sudden change in attitude was clearly because he feared Lucas.

But after their divorce, without the status of being Mrs. Tudor, how was she supposed to deal with people like him? She knew she would be vulnerable to those who would crush her if given the chance. The thought of that life made her frown.

Lucas glanced at her and said, "You've been wanting to leave Cloudflare City for a while now. Are you really worried about anyone retaliating against you?"

Aveline looked at him. "How do you know?"

He let out a soft laugh. "You haven't exactly hidden your desire to leave. I'm not blind."

Aveline pressed her lips together slightly.

Now that she thought about it, he had a point.

Once she finished Patrick's project, she planned to submit her resignation.

In the meantime, she was looking for a suitable designer to fill her position. She really wouldn't be in Cloudflare City for much longer.

"So, Aveline," Lucas' deep, alluring voice broke the silence, coaxing her gently, "while you still have the title of Mrs. Tudor, why not make the most of it? After all, you wouldn't t

want to leave this marriage at a loss, would you? Do you ever make deals that don't benefit you?"

Of course not.

Aveline thought it over and realized he had a point.

With his elevated status, hers had also risen by association.

And come to think of it, in all the time they had been married, she had never really used the perks of being Mrs. Tudor.

The heater in the car was running full blast, and a thin layer of mist soon fogged up the windows, blurring the view of the street outside. Back at Maple Garden.

Aveline held the box out to him and said, "Thanks."

Lucas followed her, a few steps behind. "You're welcome," he replied, his long, narrow eyes softening with

a hint of affection as he looked at

her.

Aveline quickly turned her gaze away.

Once home, she made a simple plate of pasta and found a documentary to watch. She enjoyed watching documentaries to find inspiration.

After finishing her meal, she headed straight to her study.

When she finally emerged, the sky was just beginning to lighten.

She yawned and decided to catch some sleep.

But just as she was about to drift off, a noise came from the front door.

Her groggy mind snapped to attention as she walked to the entryway, eyes fixed on the door.

It sounded like someone was trying to enter the passcode, but they were getting it wrong—the sharp beeping noises echoing through the stillness of the early morning.