

Kissed AOM 2291

Chapter 2291

"That's how it should be. Let's go. I've asked Lynette to make some of your favorite food. You probably don't have much of an appetite since you just came back from the hospital, so how about a bit of oatmeal first," Beatrice asked as she led Melody to the dining area.

Lucas, however, stopped her and said, "That might cause bloating. You'd still want her to eat dinner, don't you? You said it yourself that she doesn't have much of an appetite now. The oatmeal might be a little too heavy for her. Something lighter would be better for now."

He managed Melody's meals during her hospital stay and knew that her appetite had changed due to her health condition. Aside from no longer being able to indulge in her favorite sweet and spicy dishes, she would easily get full even with a small-portioned meal. Lucas had to coax her into eating more during their time at the hospital. The memory of spending time alone with him in the hospital room made her feel a little awkward and uncomfortable.

Beatrice insisted that Melody eat a bowl of oatmeal, which Melody eventually relented because she did not want Beatrice to feel dejected for having such a caring gesture turned down.

The family's cook whipped up some fantastic oatmeal that was complete with all sorts of nuts and fruit, but Melody felt that she might not have any more room for dinner if she ate too much of it. The interaction between Melody and Lucas drew a satisfied smile from Beatrice, believing that it exemplified an ideal relationship between a husband and wife.

"I see. Well, if you don't feel like eating, you can just let me know. All I want is for you to be healthy, but if this is too much for you right now, then don't force yourself. We can always ask the cook to make more when you've fully recovered," Beatrice remarked as she looked approvingly at Melody.

Meanwhile, Thalia felt left out, and she wondered how Melody managed to gain Beatrice's approval and concern. She did not think that Melody was all that amazing, much less deserve Beatrice's approval as a granddaughter-in-law. Beatrice's thought processes seemed hard to understand in Thalia's opinion.

Melody came back because she just wanted to spend more time with Beatrice. Since she turned down the oatmeal, Beatrice decided to bring Melody into the quiet back garden for a walk.

The others were not invited, of course. Thalia wanted to tag along, but before she could say anything, Beatrice nipped the idea in the bud by declaring how much she had missed spending time alone with Melody.

Melody did not look at Thalia, as she was worried about accidentally showing an ugly expression after seeing Thalia try to be close with Lucas.

Beatrice held Melody's hand and walked to the garden.

Flowers were scant in the cold of November, and Cedric-knowing that Beatrice loved flowers-made a point to have fresh flowers brought in daily from various places just to add a splash of color to the garden.

Specialist horticulturists maintained the garden, and they were already wearing added layers to keep warm. Through their dedicated efforts, the garden seemed to be blossoming with vitality. "Look at these flowers! They bloom so beautifully even in the cold," Beatrice remarked, gesturing toward a patch of red blooms.

"Yes. The white walls at the hospital are so drab. Seeing these flowers brings quite a warm feeling," said Melody, intending to share her newfound appreciation rather than evoke pity.

Beatrice knew Melody well and understood what the remark meant. She patted the back of Melody's hand and said, "You've suffered a lot during this period. I'll make sure you receive proper care when you've recovered and come home."

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Melody smiled and said, "I wouldn't say I suffered that much. Lucas probably had it worse than I did. He had to travel to and from home just to take care of me. You can see he lost weight."

"Sigh! When will you learn not to keep all the pain and suffering to yourself? You need to show a little bit of weakness in front of men, if you get what I mean. Lucas is my

grandson, so I know him better than anyone. Two hard-headed people will have trouble communicating with each other," said Beatrice.

She then added, "Don't you think it'd be much better if you could speak with each other in a nicer tone instead of arguing all the time? The key to communicating as a couple is to be tactful. He didn't let me and Cedric take care of you because he was worried for our health, and I decided that I shouldn't bother you so you can have some time to be alone with each other."

"But I'm happy to have you and Grandpa Cedric around. It doesn't bother me at all. Lucas and I will always welcome you with open arms," Melody insisted, her voice sincere. Cedric and Beatrice had been so kind to her, and they would never be bothered by her.

"I know what you're trying to say. We wouldn't have allowed you to be with Lucas if we didn't know the kind of person you were. Speaking of which, you were keeping your sadness to yourself when you came back and saw Thalia again, didn't you?"

Melody bit her lower lip at the mention of that name and did not know how to react. Nothing could escape the old couple. Beatrice understood Melody well, and Melody's sad response should not come as a surprise after Thalia had shown up there.

"I told Lucas not to tell you about this in advance," Beatrice said, surprising Melody with that statement. She had initially thought that Lucas hid it from her.

"Why not?"

Melody found it perplexing. She would have been so surprised if she knew about it in advance, and she would at least be somewhat mentally prepared to face the situation.

"I know what you're thinking, but we were more concerned about your health than anything else. You were well on the way toward recovering, and telling you this is only going to make you worry. Would you be able to control yourself from overthinking back at the hospital if I had allowed Lucas to tell you about it?"

There was a smug little smile on Beatrice's face. She was concerned about Melody's health more than anything, even though she knew that Melody might be a little surprised

to come home and find out about it. Even so, it was better than letting Melody worry too much while at her weakest.

"You're right, Grandma, but I..." Melody did not want to project herself as being too petty. After all, she knew very well that the connection between her and Lucas was just a contract.

She could not help but wonder if Beatrice and Cedric would feel that she was reading too much into the relationship once they found out that it was born from a contract. After all, she was in no position to question Lucas about it.

"I know it pains you to see this, but don't hesitate to tell me about all this. Cedric and I will always stand with you." The warmth in Beatrice's expression made Melody feel a sense of warmth in her heart.

"It caught me a little by surprise, that's all. I thought Thalia had returned to Molomia. In any case, he's known Thalia for several years, while I've only known him for a while. I don't think I can compare to Thalia in terms of our relationship to him."

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Beatrice immediately grasped Melody's gripe. Thalia's presence in the house did not bother Melody much-it was Lucas' lack of consideration in neglecting her feelings that did not sit well with her. Furthermore, Thalia's several years' worth of friendship with Lucas dampened Melody's confidence in herself and her connection with Lucas.

"I understand where you're coming from, but I was the one who told Lucas not to tell you, and I apologize for that. I won't deny that he has some history with Thalia, but it's only because certain things happened in the past, and it was because of Thalia that he is safe and sound now. This was why he's been very attentive to her. Thalia had a sister, and before she passed away, she had requested Lucas to take good care of Thalia," Beatrice said.

Following a pause, she continued, "That being said, I'd still like to reassure you that there's nothing going on between them. If there was, it would've materialized into a concrete relationship before you showed up."

Beatrice knew her grandson well. He was not a coward, and he would have confessed to Thalia long ago if he truly had any feelings for her.

However, Melody did not anticipate that there would be such a connection between Lucas and Thalia. Melody smiled bitterly as she heard the explanation. She would have felt relieved after hearing that statement if she and Lucas were genuinely married, which they were not. She also wondered why Lucas did not ask Thalia to help resolve the misgivings and reassure his grandparents.

There were times when the situation might not be as clear-cut as Melody thought it should be. For example, Beatrice opined that no one-not even Thalia-could ever come between Melody and Lucas after observing their interactions. Yet Melody and Lucas remained in the dark and were not able to discern each other's true feelings.

Nevertheless, Beatrice was sure that true love existed between them, and that time would eventually unveil the truth.

"Don't worry. I can see that Lucas cares about you more," Beatrice assured.

Despite the genuineness of those words, Melody felt like Beatrice was merely trying to console her. She smiled and replied, "Please don't worry too much about Lucas and me. We're mature enough to handle things."

Beatrice sighed with a sad expression. "And how do you expect me not to worry? Young people often think that they understand everything, but some things become clearer only when you've experienced them. I'm worried that your stubborn personalities might lead to more misunderstandings. Please promise me that you'll give Lucas a chance to explain whenever he makes a mistake in the future." Melody asked, "May I ask why?"

The old lady shook her head and simply insisted that Melody agree to her request. "Because I know my grandson well. I know how stubborn he is. He might be a force to be reckoned with in the business world, but he's a blockhead when it comes to relationships. I just want to give him a happy life. Please allow him to explain himself when it's warranted, okay? Do it for your sake, too."

Beatrice's sudden seriousness caught Melody off-guard, and she took a moment before smiling and nodding. "It's not because I don't want to. You know that, Grandma Beatrice."

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Beatrice nodded. She understood Lucas' character well, especially his occasional bouts of obstinance. Moreover, she observed a level of tolerance in his relationship with Melody that he rarely extended to other people.

Lucas' interactions with Thalia seemed like tolerance, but Thalia usually based her actions on Lucas' every move. She maintained certain boundaries despite playing coy and teasing him. The fear of Lucas growing bored with her held Thalia back from crossing any lines that could make him turn away without a second glance.

When it came to Melody, however, the dynamic changed entirely. They showed tolerance toward each other, and Melody unknowingly influenced Lucas to do things he never considered doing before. Whenever he argued with her, he discovered that he could repeatedly lower his once unyielding bottom line for each person. There were even instances when he was willing to forgo countless things as long as Melody paid attention to him.

Melody, however, remained oblivious to those revelations. From her perspective, she and Lucas were always at odds with each other.

As an observer, Beatrice quickly noticed those little details. Few were brave enough to argue with Lucas, and even those from families with backgrounds almost equal to theirs would defer to him. Having weathered the cutthroat world of business, Lucas exuded a cold and decisive demeanor when dealing with peers.

Meanwhile, Melody was fearless when facing him, demonstrating her unique place in Lucas' heart.

"Your hands must be freezing after being outside for so long. It's about time we go back in. Lucas won't be happy with me if the cold wind from our little stroll affects your recovery," the old lady advised. She was concerned about Melody's well-being, and Lucas had grown so attentive to her health that he even fretted over minor injuries.

Melody felt a pang of embarrassment. Lucas' concern had reached an unprecedented level. Even a minor scratch on her finger could become the subject of lengthy interrogation, which Beatrice was very pleased about.

By the time they returned, Melody's internal turmoil had eased greatly. There was nothing she could do about the situation-it was not like she could change the fact that Thalia's sister had already sacrificed her life to save Lucas.

When they returned to the house, Lucas was busy making some tortellini with Cedric and Thalia. Cedric had very tactfully stood between Thalia and Lucas, thus maintaining their gap with each other. Beatrice was very happy to see that.

"Ah, I see you're learning to make tortellini now," Beatrice said to Lucas as he scooped some filling.

Melody had already gone off to wash her hands and join them when she was halted.

"You're still recovering," Beatrice said. "Don't exert yourself."

Melody wanted to join in because everyone was working together to do it, but Thalia slipped in a remark, "Let us handle this. Your body is still healing."

Lucas recalled Melody telling him at the hospital that she wanted to eat something similar, and he figured that it would be more enjoyable for Melody to have a freshly made, piping-hot serving at home. Lynette had specifically prepared the filling to suit Melody's tastes.

Lucas gestured for Melody to rest on the sofa, clearly suggesting that he would be incredibly pleased if Melody sat on the sofa and watched some television.

Melody rolled her eyes at Lucas and made a gentle complaint. "They already allowed me to leave the hospital, so I'm sure I'll be allowed to do something this simple. Are you going to coddle me like a baby and let me do nothing but eat and laze around all day?"

Lucas raised an eyebrow, still struggling to match the dexterity of his grandparents but surpassing Thalia's attempts.

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"But babies don't eat and laze around all day. Only piglets do that," Lucas declared with a teasing smirk.

Melody shot him a glare, "Grrr! You!"

Beatrice approached them to check on the situation and asked Thalia to take a break. "You're our guest, Thalia. There's no need to trouble yourself with all this."

She did not have a knack for that, and her tortellini would not be able to hold together when cooked because they were practically falling apart.

Thalia felt a pang of embarrassment but persisted, "I can practice! Cooking is all about practice, right? Once I get the hang of it, I can cook them once I'm back in Molomia."

Melody's smile dimmed slightly when she heard that. Lucas noticed the change in her mood but could not discern the reason behind it, so he decided to mischievously smear some flour on her nose. "Go over there and rest, or you could help fetch some water for me."

"I thought you wanted me to sit over in the living room? Well, you can fetch some of that water yourself!" Melody retorted.

Lucas was secretly relieved that she continued to pay attention to him.

"Don't you want to eat my tortellini? I've stuffed them to the brim, and each bite is loaded with all that stuffing!" Lucas teased.

Melody replied, "If you won't let me eat yours, then I'll eat Grandma's or Grandpa's. The ones Grandpa made are big, round, and look so cute."

Beatrice joined in, "Yes, you can have ours. Let him eat his overstuffed ones."

Laughter echoed through the room, and Thalia's earlier remarks remained unanswered. Thalia felt her face burn with embarrassment after they responded to Melody's remark but not hers. She could not comprehend Lucas's actions either, wondering why he stood so close to Melody and if he did not hear what he said.

After taking a deep breath, Thalia decided to butt into the conversation, "You're pretty good at this, Lucas. You nailed them on the first try even though you piled them up with filling. Mine doesn't look nice at all. I still end up with some burst ones. It's not as easy as it looks."

Lucas glanced at her efforts and noticed the less-than-impressive tortellini she held. They were clearly falling apart. "These aren't going to hold up when cooked. Go relax on the sofa with Melody." Thalia pursed her lips and said, "You don't like them?"

Lucas shook his head. "It's not about whether I like them or not. Can they be cooked? If not, then the fillings will all go to waste."

Melody glanced over and felt a twinge of pity. Lynette had prepared the filling specially for her.

Thalia gnashed her teeth, wondering if they had to be so serious for just a bunch of tortellini.

"Sorry... I just wanted to learn how to make some and help out while I'm at it. I didn't expect mine to go to waste..."

Her aggrieved demeanor made it seem as though everyone had conspired to bully her, which made Beatrice feel more than a tinge of annoyance. It was ludicrous for Thalia to be sulking when there was such a minimum of exchange in their conversation.

"It won't be a waste. Lynette can fry it in the pan and make it like a stuffed pancake," Melody suggested. She remembered that Lynette had prepared something similar before, and her gesture would save some of the awkwardness from Lynette.

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Melody had saved her from embarrassment, but Thalia did not appreciate it at all and even resented Melody a little. Had Melody not intervened, she could have positioned herself beside Lucas. At least Beatrice might not have regarded her with such impertinence. However, Melody's sentence seemed to have all but sealed Thalia's fate as a mere outsider.

Thalia pretended to comply and washed her hands before standing to one side to observe them. She wanted to stand next to Lucas, but that spot had been occupied by Melody. Consequently, Thalia found herself standing at a distance and had to crane her neck to observe.

"Wow, you're good at this, Lucas! They're looking much nicer than before!" Thalia complimented in a soft tone, which drew a curious expression from Melody. Though her intention was not specifically to target Thalia, she simply could not fathom why

someone so beautiful would feel compelled to be so pretentious in both words and actions.

Lucas smiled and glanced at Melody.

Melody was not one to lavish flattery on others and swiftly redirected her focus. "Hurry up! We have a lot more to do. Look at how fast Grandpa and Grandma are making them."

Beatrice smiled when she heard Melody urging Lucas in that manner.

Thalia was stunned by that, wondering if Melody had somehow put a spell on the old woman. It seemed out of line for Melody to order the Riveras' eldest grandson around, but Beatrice was of the opinion that the both of them should live a life with a bit of jesting and teasing here and there.

Despite their different identities—one an actor and the other the president of a listed company—they ultimately should live like ordinary people. Having been with Lucas since childhood, Beatrice and Cedric always hoped that he could start a lively family of his own instead of being all alone.

With Melody's presence, their hopes that he could have a fun-filled life full of vitality seemed to be within reach, a fact not lost on Beatrice.

Naturally, Beatrice was incredibly happy with that. The process of wrapping all the little tortellini took nearly two hours, but the time it took to cook and serve them took only about 20 minutes.

"We can keep the extras in the freezer so you two can cook whenever you want," Beatrice advised. They specifically made a huge batch for that purpose, as she wanted Melody to enjoy them whenever she wanted even though Lucas might not be available all the time.

That pragmatic suggestion irked Thalia, who thought that Melody should just buy some ready-made frozen ones or order takeout if she craved it rather than putting so much of the burden on Lucas.

"You just recovered, so I'll have Lynette prepare some nourishing food once you've been properly discharged," Beatrice assured Melody, treating her like a granddaughter.

Thalia's envy was ignited. She knew that Cedric and Beatrice's approval was crucial if she wanted to be with Lucas, and they were also formidable obstacles that stood in her way.

As Lucas observed Melody savoring the tortellini he made, a genuine smile appeared on his lips. That meal marked the best yet that she had in many days.

"Can I cook some more for you tomorrow?" Lucas inquired.

Melody shook her head cautiously, "No, I just want to enjoy them tonight. Eating this every day is going to get boring super quickly! We'll eat this once in a while!"

"Alright, let's decide tomorrow's meals when tomorrow comes," Lucas agreed.

Melody added, "I might even be discharged tomorrow."

"You're right," Lucas acknowledged.

Satisfied with the meal, Beatrice packed plenty of fruits before they left.

Although Melody had already intended to return from the hospital the next day, they graciously accepted the old couple's insistent gesture. Except for the unexpected encounter with Thalia, the rest of the day could not have unfolded any better.

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Melody did not immediately head upstairs when they arrived at the hospital. Lucas spent some time with her downstairs for a stroll to help her digestion. She indulged herself with a few extra pieces earlier because of the rather plain food she had been eating recently, so she ended up feeling a little uneasy as a result.

"You can always have some more next time. Why'd you have to eat so much at once and make yourself feel bloated?" Upon seeing her discomfort, Lucas contemplated asking the doctor to prescribe her some medicine.

Melody rolled her eyes at him. "Couldn't you see how happy Grandma was when she saw me enjoying my food? I finally get the chance to go home, and seeing them being so welcoming to me helps a lot in improving my appetite."

"Are you implying that you tend to lose your appetite when I'm the only one around?" Lucas gritted his teeth, feeling a little irked that she did not seem to appreciate how challenging it was to take care of her amid his busy schedule.

Melody was caught off-guard by that sudden question. "Why would you think that? I'm not ungrateful. You've spent so much time rushing over to take care of me that you've lost a little weight. I can see that pretty clearly, you know? It'll be my turn to take care of you when I'm back tomorrow. You just need to worry about work. I'll spend more time with Grandpa and Grandma too."

"They have Thalia at home now. You don't need to worry too much. You should be more concerned about yourself," Lucas answered.

Melody's smile faded. They had known Thalia for a long time, so there was no need for an outsider like her to interfere. "You're right. I shouldn't be in over my head about this. Thalia can take good care of them at home, and they have plenty of servants too. I shouldn't worry so much about them."

Lucas frowned after hearing what she said. A sense of unease came over him. He wanted to explain himself, but Melody had already walked ahead of him and left him without a chance to do so. He was not trying to tell her that her return was not important. Rather, he simply wanted her to stop worrying.

"Have you thought about when you'll return to the set? I can make arrangements if that's the case," Lucas changed the subject.

Talking about work managed to capture Melody's attention.

"I have, and since I'm going to be discharged from the hospital soon, so if all is well with tomorrow's test results, I'm thinking of resuming work the day after tomorrow." Lucas frowned. "Do you have to be in such a rush?" He was concerned about Melody's health, which had to fully recover.

Melody shook her head and said, "You can decide everything else for me, but let me decide when I'll return to the set. Besides, there will never be a time when everything is perfect because no amount of preparation is ever enough. I'll feel better when I return to the set."

Melody's expression softened at the thought of acting with other crew members. After all, it was her career. Lucas also breathed a sigh of relief, as she seemed to be a bit unhappy when he mentioned Thalia earlier. He was not so dull as to be completely oblivious to that.

At around eight, Lucas suggested that they head upstairs together. If they continued walking, Melody's body might not be able to bear the cold.

"Okay."

When the report came out the next day, the doctor confirmed that there were no issues, which allowed Melody to breathe a sigh of relief. "Does that mean I can go home now?" she asked excitedly.

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Lucas was relieved too. He had been genuinely concerned about Melody's health, often to the point of ensuring that Lynette prepared only the most nutritious and nourishing food for her. Realizing that her vital signs were all within normal range, his anxieties were finally eased.

Melody packed her belongings eagerly and was determined to do so without letting Lucas intervene. He watched fondly as she busied herself, though he did not realize he was looking at her that way, and neither did she.

Even though Melody was finally able to return home, Melody could not shake off her concerns about how long Thalia might stay at the Riveras. Beatrice's reassurance the previous day had served to remind her that Thalia never ended up with Lucas despite their shared history and memories. Buoyed by this thought, Melody was willing to give it a shot at winning Lucas's heart.

Beatrice's supportive words brought a smile to Melody's face, and Lucas-who caught a glimpse of it in the rearview mirror-remarked playfully, "Are you glad to leave because you no longer have to be alone with me?"

Melody looked out the window at the scenery, recalling the weather forecast with that of snow in the coming few days. Not having seen snow in almost three years, she could not help but feel a sense of anticipation.

"I'm happy because I get to see Grandpa and Grandma, but I never said that I didn't want to be alone with you! You're the one who thinks that day..." Melody responded.

Lucas, attempting to express something deeper, began, "But I never said I didn't want to be alone with you either. In fact, I hope we'll always—"

He stopped talking abruptly as a hint of embarrassment became evident.

Melody looked at him with anticipation and asked, "Always what?"

Lucas remained tight-lipped, yet his silence brought delight to Melody. As long as she knew that Lucas cared about her to some extent, the rest could unfold naturally.

Over the years, Melody had grown accustomed to having to depend on herself to get whatever she wanted. When it came to love, she felt a sense of resoluteness and vowed to do her best to transform her contractual relationship with Lucas into reality.

Thalia's presence did not matter. As long as Lucas held a soft spot for Melody, then Thalia's chances of winning his heart would be incredibly slim.

Beatrice and Cedric waited at the door and braved the weather. Their joy knew no bounds when they received the message that Melody was back in the pink of health and had already been discharged. They had instructed the cook to prepare Melody's favorite dishes, including some that had been omitted the previous day.

Beatrice turned to the cook and said, "Make some clam chowder for her too. It's her favorite, but we had to skip it yesterday just in case."

Lynette then assured her, "Rest assured that everything you've asked for has already been prepared. We'll have them reheated once she's back. You treat her like your own granddaughter."

Thalia joined the scene with a smile and added a playful comment, "Other people might not dote on their granddaughters as much as you do! Melody is lucky. I'd be happy if I could find such a caring grandmother-in-law."

Beatrice's expression froze for a moment. They had no blood ties and Thalia was rather stubbornly overstaying her welcome, yet Beatrice knew that she could not just ask Thalia to leave. She responded, "I'm just like any other old grandmother. Seeing my granddaughter-in-law coming back home will make me happy, of course."

Chapter 2299

"You'll one day find a husband who genuinely loves you, so don't worry. These things can't be rushed," Beatrice added.

Thalia hugged Beatrice's arm affectionately and said, "Gee, I wonder if I'd be able to experience the same care and concern from you that Melody receives? I've always felt a sense of kindness and warmth from you ever since the day I first met you. It makes me feel homely, and it has only deepened during my stay here. You and Grandpa Cedric are such a joy to be with. I feel close to you in my heart, but I'm worried that you won't feel the same way with me..."

Beatrice did not wish to engage in such small talk when she was eagerly awaiting her granddaughter-in-law's return. She gently patted Thalia's hand and removed it from her arm. "Your future husband's grandparents will adore you, too."

Cedric ignored the entire conversation. Thalia was trying to overstep her boundaries. She could never measure up to Melody regardless of how much Thalia tried. Unsure of how to respond, he decided maintaining his silence would be better.

Thalia appeared oblivious to the awkwardness between them. She grasped Beatrice's arm again, but from behind to deliberately create an appearance of closeness.

Lucas' car had arrived at the door by then. Unfazed by what Thalia was up to, Beatrice immediately approached them.

Melody quickly stepped out of the car and said, "Wait there, Grandma! I just need to take some things out of the car first."

As she tried to turn around, Lucas insisted that she go over and greet Beatrice. "I'll bring your stuff down."

Lucas had been helping her a lot anyway, and the belongings were not that heavy either.

Melody therefore went directly to Beatrice, whose smile warmed up considerably more compared to earlier with Thalia. Beatrice immediately held her hands and said, "Why are your hands so cold? Were you freezing in the car? Why didn't you turn on the heater?"

She greeted Beatrice first, then turned and greeted Thalia too.

"Hello, Miss Thalia."

"You're back! I take it that means you're fully recovered now."

Melody nodded in response and turned to Beatrice. "Lucas offered to turn on the heater, but I said no because I didn't want it to be so stuffy inside the car. My hands are cold to the touch, but I'm not feeling cold at all right now."

Beatrice knew that a person's hands and feet would get cold easily during autumn and winter and suggested they find a way to help Melody with that. "Alright, let's go inside. We shouldn't be lingering here at the door. We could get an herbalist to prescribe some herbs that could help you with this, but I think we should let Melody head in and rest."

The two elderly folks ushered Melody in and showed little interest in Lucas. Only Thalia lingered there, gazing at the doorway. The longer she stayed with the Riveras, the more impressed Thalia became with Melody's capabilities.

Although the old couple were technically Lucas' grandparents, the affection they showed toward an outsider like Melody was simply remarkable. Thalia could not wrap her head around what methods Melody had used. If they were not on opposing sides, she might have wanted to seek advice from her.

Beatrice's concern for Melody appeared genuine, much like the affection one had for one's own granddaughter. It even surpassed the love some biological relatives might offer.

Chapter 2300

Lucas glanced over and did not seem bothered that Thalia remained at the door of the house. He was holding a small luggage bag filled mostly with Melody's belongings and only about two or three sets of clothes. When Thalia extended her hand to take it, he skillfully avoided her and handed it to the servant who had come to assist him. "It's too heavy. You won't be able to lift it."

Thalia pouted and expressed some sympathy for him. "Why do your grandparents seem more interested in Melody's well-being, rather than yours? They didn't even wait to welcome you. It saddens me a little, actually."

Lucas did not understand why Thalia felt saddened by that. He came home at least once every two days, and his grandparents were likely not that excited to see him around. Besides, there was no point for either of them to stand at the gate and brave the cold wind. His grandparents were old, and Melody had just recovered too.

He considered Thalia to be a bit sensitive, but he chose not to dwell on it.

"You seem to be getting along with Melody. Does this mean you're less busy this time around? Could you take me out for a walk if you have the time?" Thalia harbored hopes of having some alone time with Lucas as the old couple's scrutinizing gaze at home made her suffocate. After all, she knew that they did not want her to have anything to do with Lucas.

Thalia scoffed at their efforts, determined never to give up on Lucas. She vowed to make the old couple understand eventually that she was the one truly suited for him.

As Lucas and Thalia entered the house, Melody was already savoring her meal. She turned and said excitedly to Lucas, "The clams today are super fresh! You should try them!"

Melody then turned to Thalia and seemed to speak in a more reticent tone. "Join us, Miss Thalia. The clams are very fresh."

Thalia smiled faintly and said, "Really? Well, you should go ahead and indulge yourself then. I already had my fill a few days ago when you weren't at home, and I had regular access to all this seafood because my place is near the coastline!"

The implication of her words was clear-that Melody had little experience with such delicacies. Melody did not think too much about that remark, but Beatrice frowned when she heard that.

"Just because they're fresh doesn't mean you can overindulge in them. How many servings has she eaten?" Lucas' inquiry managed to dispel Beatrice's frown. "Only two bowls. I had Lynette serve them. Come over and have some too. I'll keep an eye on Melody so she doesn't overeat."

Melody pouted. She knew that Beatrice would monitor her food intake when Lucas was around.

"Seafood might not be the best for your health right now, so just have enough to satisfy your cravings," said Lucas as he approached Melody.

"Okay," Melody nodded, acknowledging his advice. "I'll have one more serving at most. Grandma prepared a lot of food for later."

Melody smiled when Lucas gave in. After all, a bland diet had been a struggle for her during the past few days.