

Chapter 2

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"Ms. Wood, Dad, I'm home!"

The sound of my son returning from his art class echoed from the front door.

At the sound, I headed to the living room and caught Mandy lifting Calvin into a hug and planting a kiss on his cheek. She was the picture of motherly love.

"Calvin, you're back early. Weren't you supposed to have a foreign language class?"

At my voice, both Mandy and Calvin stopped in their tracks.

She must have forgotten I was home, judging by her expression. Guilt washed over her face as she quickly set Calvin down.

Before she could get a word out, James chimed in, "He finally got a break. Why wear himself out? I already told Calvin that Mandy would take him to the theme park."

As soon as Mandy heard me, she snapped back to her super polite self.

"Mrs. Carter, Mr. Carter mentioned Calvin's been doing great in school lately, and since you're both busy, he said I should take the little guy to the amusement park for some fun!"

Calvin gave me an impatient look.

"Mom, just drop it. We're heading out. You're always on my case to study. I'm not just some trophy for you to show off!"

Before I could get a word in, Mandy stepped in front of Calvin like a mother hen shielding her chick. Her protective stance took me back to the days right after I had the baby.

I physically could not produce breast milk, and I told James we might have to use formula instead, but Mandy was the first to push back.

She was all about making me eat every kind of nutritional supplement out there.

Sometimes, she even forgot to make my meals because she was too busy hovering over the crib all day.

Aria, the other maid who looked after me, thought Mandy did not know where to draw the line. She would tease, "People know Mandy's your maid, but anyone else might mistake her for the baby's real mom!"

Mandy's face fell, and she hurried to clear things up. "Mrs. Carter went through so much to have this baby, and both Mr. and Mrs. Carter have been so good to me. Of course, I'll do everything I can for the little one."

I could not help but watch the drama unfold with a bit of amusement. I even threw in a curveball.

"Is that so? Or did you secretly swap your own kid with mine?"

Mandy froze, then quickly protested, "Mrs. Carter, what are you talking about? I didn't do anything like that. I'm not even married. How could I have a kid?"

When I stayed silent, she actually started making promises.

On the other hand, James looked like he was on pins and needles.

I could not help but let out a big laugh.

"Gotcha! How could I not know my own kid? I was just pulling your leg. Did you really fall for that?"

I turned to Aria and said with a smile, "Aria, Mandy's been part of the family for ages. She's like a sister to me. Isn't that right, hubby?"

James and Mandy let out a sigh of relief. I caught the exchange of glances between them in my peripheral vision.