

Mission To Remarry Chapter 1263-1294

Chapter 1263

Cayden had always been highly efficient at work. Besides, he only had to investigate the research institute's recent purchase orders.

That evening itself, he entered Farwell Group's CEO's office with the latest purchase order in hand.

"I've done as you asked, Mr. Farwell. Here, have a look."

Taking the order from Cayden, Lucian looked it over while listening to his report.

"A bottle of medicine on this order doesn't match the actual quantity purchased by the research institute. From my investigations, Colby was the one who privately arranged for the purchasing staff to buy it. He placed it with one of the other medicines and sneaked it into the research institute."

At that point, a conflicted expression showed on Cayden's face as he admitted, "However, I couldn't find out what medicine he smuggled in. He hid it so well that even the purchasing staff doesn't know the answer."

In a flash, Lucian's gaze darkened a shade.

Although we don't know the kind of medicine Colby privately bought, it's a fact that his behavior is suspicious enough. Furthermore, he appeared to be exceedingly apprehensive when I noticed something amiss with that bottle of medicine. He might think that he's hiding it very well, but still, I saw right through him.

Following that thought, he frowned slightly.

With all these leads, it's a veritable fact that Colby was the culprit. Indeed, I've misunderstood Jack. But then, how can his suspicious activities be explained?

A long while passed before he corralled his thoughts.

Anyway, the most important thing now is to have Colby pay the price for his actions!

"Got it. You may be dismissed."

Putting the purchase order away, Lucian got to his feet and headed out.

He had figured out a way to have Colby confess to his crime even without solid evidence.

However, he needed to seek Roxanne out and discuss it with her.

Cayden had no idea what his employer wanted to do, but still, he obediently left the office and watched as Lucian went into the elevator.

After stepping out of the office building, Lucian drove straight to Roxanne's house.

It happened to be dinnertime right then.

When Lucian arrived, Roxanne was preparing dinner for Archie, Benny, and Estella in the kitchen. As such, it was the children who opened the door for him.

"Mr. Farwell!"

"Daddy!"

At the sight of him, all three children wore expressions of joy.

Smiling, Lucian stroked their heads before sweeping his gaze around the living room. "Where's your mommy?"

Archie pointed in the direction of the kitchen. "In the kitchen."

Upon hearing that, Lucian inclined his head a fraction in acknowledgment. He excused himself before heading to the kitchen.

The three children looked at each other, but ultimately, they didn't follow. Nonetheless, they still fixated their gazes on the kitchen in curiosity.

When Lucian reached the kitchen door, he didn't go in directly or say anything. Instead, he merely stood there quietly and watched Roxanne bustle around.

As soon as Roxanne whirled around and spotted the man behind her, she inexorably jumped in fright. "When did you come? And why didn't you inform me beforehand?"

Gathering her wits about her, she inwardly breathed a sigh of relief and continued her work at hand.

Lucian's eyes brimmed with tenderness. "Just a while ago. The kids opened the door for me."

After saying that, he glanced at the ingredients she was preparing. "Did you count me in?"

Roxanne wanted to deny it, but the portion she prepared was evidently too much for her and the children to finish. Thus, she didn't answer but asked, "Are you not eating here tonight?"

At that, Lucian arched a brow. "From the look of things, you counted me in. How embarrassing that I've been eating for free these few days!"

Sensing that there was a hidden implication in his words, Roxanne stilled. She spun around and eyed him in puzzlement.

"Therefore, I brought you good news today. We'll talk about it after dinner later."

Lucian met her gaze calmly.

Chapter 1264

Glimpsing the grin on Lucian's face, Roxanne was stunned for a moment. Then, faint shades of crimson stained her cheeks.

She only snapped back to her senses after a while, upon which she guiltily turned back around and continued cooking.

Meanwhile, Lucian watched behind her with his arms crossed.

When she had finished cooking, he helped to carry the dishes out and lay the table.

Archie, Benny, and Estella, on the other hand, had long since seated themselves at the dining table in proper order.

Dinner was a warm and cozy event.

After dinner, Lucian ordered the children to play in the living room while he went to the study upstairs with Roxanne.

"What's the good news?"

Sheer mystification deluged Roxanne. I wonder what exactly it is that he's acting so mysterious.

Lucian's expression turned solemn. "I think I've ferreted out the person who tampered with your experiment."

At his remark, Roxanne's expression likewise changed slightly, anxiety marring her features. "Who was it?"

Lucian stared at her, suddenly hesitant.

In the past, every time we discussed this subject, she had been reluctant to suspect Colby for no other reason than they had worked together for many years. I wonder if she'd be able to accept it if I were to tell her the truth.

For a fleeting second, he even contemplated giving up his initial plan and waiting until there was solid evidence before telling her about it.

"Was it truly Mr. Damaris?" Upon receiving no response from him after some time, Roxanne couldn't help making a wild guess.

Hearing that, Lucian put his thoughts away, his gaze darkening a shade. "You're that worried about him?"

During this time, we've hardly mentioned him. But no sooner had I said there was progress in the investigation than he popped into her mind. That aside, she sounds wholly incredulous.

Exasperated, Roxanne explained, "It's because you've been suspecting him all this while that I hazarded such a guess. So, who else could it be if not him?"

A frown marred Lucian's face. "That day, only the three of you were at the lab counter."

In other words, he was steering her into directing her suspicions onto Colby.

Immediately, the intimation of that dawned upon Roxanne. When she perceived the only person left other than her and Jack, shock flooded her. "You mean it was Colby?"

How could it be him? We've partnered together for so many years. If he hated me, he would've made a move ages ago! Even if he were jealous that I got to take the lead in this project, he had plenty of opportunities to sabotage things before this. Why would he pick this time and use such a cruel method?

Verily, Roxanne couldn't fathom it.

At the look on her face, Lucian's heart inexorably grew heavy. "At present, he's the prime suspect."

"Is there proof?" Roxanne furtively clutched at the hem of her shirt, still harboring a shred of hope within her.

In response, Lucian shook his head.

Utter relief suffused Roxanne. "If there's no proof, perhaps you misunderstood. Didn't you previously claim that it was Mr. Damaris—"

Before she had finished speaking, Lucian interrupted, "There's no proof now, but I've got a way to prove that it was him as long as you're willing to play along."

That promptly took Roxanne aback.

If someone else were to say that to her, she would only regard it as a baseless accusation.

However, the person in front of her was Lucian.

For him to make such a statement meant that he was nearly one-hundred percent certain of Colby's culpability.

"I know you can't accept it, but I think you're far more interested in knowing why he did such a thing. I'm also beyond curious about his reason for consigning you to death!"

Lucian pinned his eyes on her with a grim look in them.

Chapter 1265

When Roxanne met Lucian's gaze, the confidence in her eyes gradually started wavering.

A long moment passed before she dipped her eyes and agreed softly, "Okay, I'll do it. What do you need me to do?"

During those few seconds when their eyes held, she searched the depths of her heart.

Perhaps she didn't believe that Colby would do such a thing, but given a choice between him and Lucian, her heart would still be biased toward the man before her.

On top of that, the look in Lucian's eyes was incredibly resolute.

Following her agreement, Lucian's expression eased. He told her about his plan in a deep voice.

As Roxanne listened, she nodded thoughtfully.

"Will this really work? We don't have concrete evidence."

Truth be told, she was still a touch hesitant after listening to the man's plan.

Lucian's expression turned chilly. "As long as he was the one behind it, he would definitely feel guilty in such a situation. Even if not, he'll be afraid of dying!"

Upon hearing that, Roxanne fell silent for a few seconds. Yet in the end, she still relented.

She took out her phone and gave Colby a call, informing him that she would be making a trip to the research institute tomorrow.

On the other end of the phone, Colby readily agreed without a trace of oddity in his voice.

After she had hung up the phone, doubts again surfaced within her.

If it was truly his doing, how could he have hidden it so well? Could it be that... we've really misunderstood him?

As though discerning the misgivings within her, Lucian lifted his hand and placed it on hers. His voice was calm and steady. "Trust me. If it really wasn't him, you can also rest assured."

Pursing her lips, Roxanne bobbed her head.

That night, she didn't sleep a wink.

No matter what, she couldn't accept that a partner with whom she had worked together for many years turned out to be the culprit who almost killed her.

Her only hope was that she would obtain an answer tomorrow.

Early the following morning, Lucian was already seated in the living room when Roxanne went downstairs.

She hadn't slept well, so she was somewhat dazed. At the sight of him, she spaced out for a few seconds before asking in a murmur, "Are we going over right now?"

At her wan look, Lucian's gaze darkened. "We'll go over as soon as possible when you've had breakfast. We can't give him any breathing room."

If it was really Colby behind the incident, he's exceedingly meticulous. With just a bit of breathing room, it'll be enough time for him to do many things.

Roxanne nodded with a heavy heart. After eating some food, she bid Archie, Benny, and Estella farewell before getting into Lucian's car to head to the research institute.

By the time they arrived at the research institute, Colby was already there, busy with something or other.

The instant he saw Roxanne and Lucian appearing together, his expression stiffened for a heartbeat. "Dr. Jarvis, Mr. Farwell, why did you both come together? You should've told me in advance."

"Does Dr. Jarvis need to tell you before returning to the research institute to work?" Lucian retorted unceremoniously.

At once, Colby froze, the smile on his face stained with a hint of guilt.

Sighing inwardly, Roxanne said to Colby, "Please bring me to the lab for a look. I can't shake off the feeling that there was some problem with the experiment that day."

At that comment, even greater guilt swamped Colby.

He had come over early in the morning to go over everything on the laboratory counter and replace the medicine he switched with a bottle of the same size to prevent discovery.

Unexpectedly, Roxanne and Lucian had arrived before he could do so.

Worse still, Roxanne was requesting to reconduct the experiment.

Roxanne, Lucian, and Colby stood next to the lab counter.

"Dr. Galloway, Mr. Damaris isn't here today, so please conduct the experiment with me."

Done with all the preparations, Roxanne glanced over her shoulder at Colby, who was standing at the side.

Colby had a feeling that something was off about the experiment that day. He was downright reluctant deep within, but he could only bite the bullet and concur so that he wouldn't appear even more suspicious. Stepping forward, he walked over to Roxanne.

As Roxanne went about the experiment, she uttered, "You should be clear about the steps for this experiment, so I'm not going to repeat them. I merely want to see where exactly things went wrong."

Colby flashed her a forced smile. "Okay, I'll do my best."

Without looking at him, Roxanne vaguely muttered an acknowledgment.

She wasn't sure whether it was her mind playing tricks on her, but after that brief interaction, she found his reaction seemingly strange.

Consequently, she became very distracted throughout the experiment.

Finally, they came to the segment where the accident occurred.

Surprisingly, no smoke billowed out from the flask as it did the other day.

Roxanne stood at the side with her eyes lowered, rendering her expression indiscernible.

Just as Colby was about to speak, he glimpsed her suddenly turning and casting a glance in Lucian's direction.

When the couple looked at each other, helplessness showed on Roxanne's face.

Colby keenly perceived the expression of her emotions, and a wave of jealousy surged within him.

I'm standing right next to her, and I understand the experiment far better! So why? Why is she asking him for help? Come to think of it, they also came to the research institute together this morning. It seems that their relationship is much closer than I expected!

Belatedly, something occurred to him. Argh! I might have accidentally benefitted him!

At that realization, intense fury and envy instantly displaced the guilt within him. The leash he kept on his expression slipped as well.

When Roxanne turned back, she was greeted by his insidious expression.

"Dr. Galloway," she reflexively called out, her heart clenching.

In all the years they had been acquainted, she had only known him for always being gentle and elegant. That was the first time she had ever witnessed such a dark side to him.

In a flash, Colby jolted back to reality. The baleful expression on his face disappeared in the blink of an eye, a warm smile taking its place. "What's the matter?"

Roxanne's lips parted, but her heart was so heavy that no words came out.

While she was at a loss in facing such a veritable stranger, Lucian's voice rang out behind her.

"If you don't mind, I'd like to have a look."

Lucian casually inserted himself between the two of them, separating them both.

Naturally, Roxanne had no objections since that was part of their plan.

Contrarily, Colby's heart lurched. "The experiment has always been thus. There must have been a mistake somewhere along the way that day. Even if you take a look, you won't be able to find anything."

Acting as though he didn't hear the man, Lucian shifted his gaze to Roxanne beside him. "What is this? I don't think I saw you using it during the experiment."

Following his gaze, Roxanne caught sight of a transparent bottle on the counter. After scrutinizing it for a while, she answered, "Nothing important. It's just distilled water for supplementation."

"In that case, there shouldn't be any problem adding this in, yes? From the surveillance footage, the amount of liquid in this bottle seems to have dwindled, probably having been used in the experiment. But you didn't use it earlier."

As Lucian said that, he had already reached out and picked up the bottle.

Chapter 1267

Colby watched Lucian's actions intently, his breathing catching for a second.

Despite knowing that it wasn't the bottle of medicine from that day since he had personally replaced it with the bottle of distilled water, he still couldn't help breaking into a cold sweat.

He actually realized that someone had used that bottle of medicine! D*mn it! I didn't even notice that tiny detail!

"Dr. Galloway, I can add this in, right?"

Without warning, Lucian turned and looked at him.

Colby's pupils constricted. He dug his nails into his palms to force himself to remain calm. "Of course. It's only going to dilute the solution. Perhaps Mr. Damaris added it that day, but we didn't notice it."

While saying that, he took a step back to make room for the man.

Inclining his head, Lucian walked over and occupied the freed space. Uncorking the bottle, he slowly poured the liquid inside into the flask.

At the same time, a pill slipped out of his hand, which was in Colby's blind spot. After falling into the bottle, it dissolved upon contact with water, blending with the colorless and odorless distilled water before mixing with the liquid in the flask.

"All done."

He corked the bottle back and moved away. "Let's observe for a while longer and see whether there's any unusual reaction. Maybe it was a problem with the distilled water."

Colby couldn't shake off the feeling that something was amiss. Nonetheless, he steeled himself and returned to his place at the counter. His entire body tense, he stared at the flask that was still in the midst of reacting.

Shortly after, the same gas as that day gradually filled the flask.

For a moment, Colby's breath caught. He gaped at the gas in the flask before glancing at the distilled water at the side, his eyes brimming with disbelief.

How could this be? I personally placed the distilled water there. How could there be gas? Could it be that... someone switched the liquid inside?

As panic inundated him, Lucian's voice split the air hauntingly. "Does this bottle really contain distilled water, Dr. Galloway?"

Stiffly turning around, Colby trained his gaze on Roxanne beside him.

In her eyes, he could see the reflection of himself that appeared all tense and guilty.

Behind him, Lucian's scorching gaze bore into him as though wishing to see through him.

Abruptly shuddering, he whirled around and took off without an ounce of hesitation.

It wasn't until Roxanne had witnessed that scene that she truly believed Colby was the culprit behind everything.

Casting her mind back to the events that day after learning the truth, she realized that the man was all too suspicious.

It was after he had taken over the experiment the other day that a great amount of gas materialized. That aside, when we were going to check on the flask, he deftly hid behind us...

In that instant, turmoil brewed within her.

Verily, the fact that a partner who had worked with her for so long had almost killed her was a bitter pill for her to swallow.

"I've caught him, Mr. Farwell."

While she was wallowing in self-doubt, Cayden's voice drifted into her ear.

Promptly snapping back to her senses, Roxanne swung her gaze over, only to see Colby restrained by Cayden, his head hung so low that it almost touched his chest.

Colby initially wanted to flee. Unexpectedly, he ran right into Cayden, who had been keeping guard, just when he reached the gates of the research institute.

Even with his head lowered, he could sense Roxanne's questioning gaze on him.

His gaze grim, Lucian threw a look at the woman beside him. Aware that she couldn't accept the truth of the matter, he stepped forward and blocked her from seeing Colby.

"It was just an experiment, Dr. Galloway. Why did you leave in such a hurry?"

He fixated an icy gaze on the man restrained by Cayden, his voice dripping with sarcasm.

Chapter 1268

Colby kept his head bowed, his pupils darting around incessantly.

Now that things have come to this, I won't be able to keep the truth under wraps no matter what I say. Besides, Lucian has already discovered there's a problem with that bottle of distilled water. Does he have other evidence in hand?

As his brain whirled, Lucian's voice rang out once more. "Did you think you could get away with it by privately asking the purchasing staff to help you sneak the medicine in?"

The instant those words fell, Colby snapped his eyes up and gaped at the man in shock.

He knows! He really knows everything!

Lucian held his gaze expressionlessly. "Are you still planning to deny it at this point? Or are you only going to confess to your crimes when the police have arrived?"

Behind him, Roxanne had stepped out at some point in time and regarded Colby blankly.

When Colby met her gaze, his lips twitched. An intense struggle transpired within him.

A long time passed before he ultimately admitted, "Indeed, it was me. Everything was my doing!"

The very moment Roxanne heard his confession with her own ears, her legs went weak.

She instinctively shot her hand out and grabbed onto Lucian's arm, digging her nails into her palm to retain her composure. With her eyes pinned on Colby, she questioned, "Why did you do such a thing? I don't think I've wronged you in any way in all the years we've worked together. Even this project is a collaborative effort between us both."

I still remember how pleasant it was to collaborate with him while abroad. Likewise, it's still vivid in my mind that I only gained a foothold in the research institute because of him back when I first returned to the country.

But turning her gaze back to the man with a blank expression in front of her, she inevitably wondered whether the Colby she knew had ever existed.

Colby stared at her fixedly, the self-deprecation in his eyes intensifying. "Why did I do so? Do you really not know? Roxanne, do you know that your reaction now makes me feel that everything I've done has been nothing but a joke?"

Roxanne's brows knitted together, bafflement written clear in her eyes.

A feverish light came into Colby's eyes, and he revealed the entirety of the thoughts hidden deep within him.

"If you want a reason, blame it on the fact that you're too outstanding and eye-catching. Why must you be so striking? It makes me look like a rat in the drain, only worthy of looking up at you all day long. But what about you? You weren't even willing to look down and spare me a glance! Am I that contemptible to you? Admittedly, Jack, Jonathan, and Lucian are far more impressive than me. However, have any of them been by your side as long as I have? What gives? You just couldn't see me!"

Hearing that, Roxanne was stunned, and her expression turned panicked.

Huh, he likes me? When did this start? Indeed, I've never noticed his feelings for me. Looking back, we first got acquainted when I went abroad to lick my wounds after being hurt by Lucian. At that time, not only was I pregnant, but I was still in love with Lucian. I hadn't the presence of mind to take note of other men. Moreover, the only impression I have of him is merely that of a lab partner who was very much in sync with me. After returning to the country, I was wholly focused on the research institute. When everything at the research institute had finally gotten on track, Lucian reappeared in my life. At the end of the day, the space in my heart belongs to Lucian when he's there and remains empty when he's absent. I've never thought of allowing another man in...

Chapter 1269

From Roxanne's expression, Colby understood everything. He chuckled bitterly in a self-deprecating manner.

Roxanne lifted her eyes to him. "And so, you came up with this idea?"

Even then, she wasn't willing to believe that the gentle and elegant man who had helped her tremendously would do such a thing.

Alas, her skepticism when things had come to that merely made Colby feel all the more insulted. "If I hadn't done all this, would you have noticed me? Do you know how much I've given up all these years just to have you see me? Do you think I'm really only capable of being your second, considering my capabilities?"

Every single word out of his mouth hit Roxanne squarely in the chest.

Only then did she realize how much she had overlooked all these years.

I'm already the top traditional medicine practitioner in Chanaea, and he's about on par with me. In fact, Professor Lambert even praised him once. He has the capability of branching out and handling things on his own. Yet, he has always been my partner. I always thought that Professor Lambert specifically arranged for us to be together because he trusted us. Never had I imagined such a reason behind it all.

"Do you think this incident is the only thing I did?" Colby's voice rang out once more.

Shocked, Roxanne swung her gaze to him.

Meeting her gaze in derision, Colby suddenly burst into laughter. "Haha! It turns out that you don't even know what I've done! You only investigated the incident this time because Lucian told you about his suspicions, huh? Sure enough, you never notice me, no matter what I do!"

"No, that's not it! I just... I just trusted you too much," Roxanne explained on reflex.

No sooner had she said that than Colby interjected coldly, "I'd rather you don't trust me so much! I don't want you to look at me with the same expression all the time. You smile at them and cry because of them, but when it comes to me, you're forever acting professionally. Am I not even worthy of being your friend? Do you look down on me that much, Roxanne?"

A frown marred Roxanne's countenance. For a moment, she didn't quite know how to respond to his accusations.

Some time passed before she awkwardly asked, "Other than this, what else did you do?"

By then, Colby had already put away all expression from his face.

At that question, his lips turned up. "I'm not going to tell you that. Anyway, I'm going to leave this place soon. You've never seen me all these years, so this time, I've got to leave you thinking about me. Go and investigate yourself!"

Roxanne balled her fists, her expression as grim as ever. “Don’t do this, Dr. Galloway—”

Before she had finished speaking, Colby cut her off sharply. “Don’t call me Dr. Galloway! I almost killed you! Aren’t you the least bit angry? Why must you still address me so formally?”

Frowning, Roxanne went silent for a long time before murmuring, “Why must you do this, Colby? You could’ve just talked to me directly. Why did you have to use such a method?”

When Colby heard that she had finally changed her address toward him, his expression eased for a second. Yet in the next heartbeat, he had steeled himself again.

Thereafter, he no longer responded no matter what Roxanne said.

“Colby Galloway, you should never have made a move against her!”

Seeing that Roxanne had ceased speaking, Lucian stalked over to Colby.

Before Colby even knew what was happening, a hard punch had landed on his stomach.

“I’m only giving you one punch because you’ve taken care of Roxanne for such a long time. If you dare do anything dumb again when you get out, I don’t mind sending you to meet your maker!”

Lucian’s voice was frightfully chilly.

Soon, the police arrived.

Colby was then escorted into the police car by the police.

Before leaving, he glanced back over his shoulder and took a long look at Roxanne.

Roxanne merely held his gaze for a second before she promptly averted her eyes.

Truth be told, she didn’t quite know how to face the man.

At the sight of her avoiding his gaze, Colby gave a bitter chuckle that dripped with self-deprecation. He cooperatively got into the police car.

Thereafter, the police car sped away.

Cayden also departed after taking his leave from Lucian.

Following that, Roxanne and Lucian were the only ones left at the entrance of the research institute.

Lucian regarded the woman beside him in concern.

“What are you thinking? Are you still unwilling to believe that Colby would do such a thing?”

Lifting her eyes, Roxanne met his gaze. She said nothing, but the look in her eyes spoke volumes.

Indeed, overturning one’s long-time perception toward someone wasn’t something that could be accomplished overnight, at least not for her.

Casting a gaze in the direction where the police car had left, she asked, “What will happen to him?”

Immediately, a frown marred Lucian’s countenance. “Even now, you still care about him?”

Roxanne’s expression turned rueful. “You don’t understand. Ultimately, he worked with me for many years. Besides, I can’t shake off the feeling that I was part of the reason for everything he did.”

If it weren’t because I was dense in matters of the heart, and if I had realized his feelings for me earlier, perhaps all this wouldn’t have happened. My thinking was too simple. He’s an outstanding doctor, but he’s been my deputy all these years. Yet, I took it as a matter of course.

As she was wallowing in guilt, a pair of arms gathered her into a cool embrace without warning.

A massive hand stroked her head.

On the heels of that, Lucian’s baritone voice drifted into her ears. “This isn’t your fault. He was the one who strayed from the path. No one expresses their love in such a manner.”

Roxanne’s heart skipped a bit. She stared at his profile blankly, hoping to hear more from him.

“If he really loves you, he wouldn’t be able to bring himself to hurt you. He did many things to sabotage you, so he only has himself to blame for the consequences he’s bearing today. Pushing all the blame on you was merely his way of justifying himself.”

Well, I reckon Colby realized his mistakes when he was caught. Unfortunately, there was already no turning back for him. Hence, he could only use such a method to console himself that he hadn't done anything wrong.

At Lucian's analysis, the heavy boulder weighing on Roxanne's heart slowly lifted.

"But why exactly did he do all that?"

Still, she couldn't understand Colby's motivations.

She didn't think he was lying about anything he said before he was taken away.

In fact, she believed that he really had feelings for her.

However, she couldn't figure out his reason for hurting her.

As Lucian said, if he really likes me, he wouldn't be able to stand hurting me...

The scene Lucian saw in the surveillance footage popped into his mind, and his gaze darkened a shade.

When the gas was produced, Colby was actually calling out to Jack.

In other words, Jack was his real target, but Roxanne ruined his plan by accident.

However, if he had stopped the latter at that time, Jack would have definitely noticed something amiss. As such, he could only watch as Roxanne placed herself in the path of danger.

Nonetheless, Lucian didn't plan on telling Roxanne about it.

After all, she seemed to have been greatly moved by Colby's words, and he didn't want another man to take up space in her heart.

In any case, Roxanne hadn't expected to obtain an answer either.

When the man remained silent, she muttered, "Also, he said this wasn't the only thing he did. What else did he do?"

Lucian stroked her hair in comfort. "I'll investigate. Don't dwell upon it anymore. You've just recovered, so rest more."

Chapter 1271

Since Colby had been arrested, the research institute would end up without a leader at the helm if Roxanne were to leave.

Thus, she could only stay for the time being and seek out another trustworthy researcher. She told him about the subsequent project arrangements and had him take Colby's place temporarily.

Worried, Lucian kept watch beside her.

By the time Roxanne was done giving her instructions, it was already evening, time for everyone to get off work.

Getting to her feet, she left with Lucian.

No sooner had they reached the entrance of the research institute than a Rolls-Royce suddenly screeched to a stop before them with great fanfare.

Roxanne found the car in front of her a tad familiar, but she couldn't remember whose vehicle it was at that very moment.

Before she could figure out the answer, the driver's door had already swung open. Jack alighted from the car with a concerned expression on his face.

"Mr. Damaris?"

At the sight of him, a myriad of emotions brewed within Roxanne.

Prior to Colby's detention, she had little trust in Jack. Therefore, she hadn't contacted him recently.

Seeing him right then, she felt both apologetic and surprised.

Beside her, Lucian expressionlessly inclined his head at Jack in greeting.

On the contrary, Jack grinned at the man amicably. "Thank you for intervening in this matter and clearing up my name, Mr. Farwell!"

When Lucian heard that, his expression darkened a shade.

Meanwhile, puzzlement inundated Roxanne. "You already know about it?"

How did he catch wind of it so fast? It's only been half a day since Colby was taken into custody.

In response, Jack chortled. "Don't forget that your research institute is pretty well-known in Horington. Furthermore, it has a collaboration with Damaris Group. After the arrest in the morning, news of it circulated in the afternoon."

After saying that, he pinned a meaningful look on Lucian before adding, "Of course, someone in particular also played a pivotal role in that."

Following his gaze, Roxanne looked at the man beside her. Surprise showed in her eyes.

He has been with me all this time, yet I have no inkling when he spread the news!

"Anyway, I'm really curious about one thing. How did you manage to catch him, Mr. Farwell?" Jack asked sincerely.

Ever since the day Roxanne was poisoned, he had harbored suspicions against Colby.

Alas, there was no substantial evidence. He wanted to seek Roxanne out for help, but Lucian stood in his way.

Lucian suspected him to a great extent, so there was no way the former would lend him a hand.

As such, he could only investigate by himself. Regretfully, he didn't find any evidence even after delving into the incident for days.

In the face of Jack's question, Lucian acted as though he didn't hear it, saying nary a word.

At the side, Roxanne sensed that the atmosphere between them was somewhat tense, so she interjected with the narration of events that morning.

Jack quirked a brow after hearing about Lucian's tactic. "I didn't expect you to be so ingenious, Mr. Farwell. On top of that, it sounds as though it didn't require much effort. I'm truly impressed!"

Despite the compliment, there wasn't a hint of admiration in Jack's eyes.

Discerning the implication behind his remark, Roxanne threw Lucian a look in exasperation.

Upon noticing that he had no intention of speaking, she had no choice but to apologize on his behalf. "Sorry for misunderstanding you previously. Please don't take any offense, Mr. Damaris."

Jack cast Lucian an unfathomable glance before turning his gaze back to her. "It's only natural that you suspected me. After all, Dr. Galloway and I were the only ones around you back then. But I never expected you to stop contacting me for such a long time, Ms. Jarvis. I was exceedingly worried about your condition."

Chapter 1272

Following Jack's words, even greater guilt swamped Roxanne.

"I'm sorry. I've been so busy investigating the incident that day that I forgot to contact you."

Biting the bullet, she apologized to the man.

Fortunately, Jack didn't continue pursuing the matter. He merely looked her up and down with a smile, seemingly to ascertain that she had recovered.

"I've recovered fully now. Sorry for worrying you these past few days, Mr. Damaris," Roxanne murmured.

"I'm glad to hear that. I went to the hospital to visit you the night you passed out, but Mr. Farwell said I'd disrupt your rest and didn't allow me in," Jack commented in what appeared to be an offhanded manner.

Hearing that, Roxanne turned to the man beside her.

Lucian met her gaze calmly. "I told you about it. It was indeed late at that time. Mr. Damaris must have had the same concerns as me, for he didn't insist on going in."

That was to say, he had already told Roxanne about the matter.

Jack's expression changed drastically.

Considering his personality, I thought he wouldn't tell her that I'd been over to visit her. Unexpectedly, he'd informed her about it. Moreover... her reaction isn't what I'd anticipated.

He studied Roxanne's expression, but there was nothing else other than contrition toward him.

There wasn't a hint of censure toward Lucian.

At that, he retracted his gaze in slight chagrin, only to collide with Lucian's scrutinizing look.

As their eyes held, the tension between them grew by leaps and bounds.

Perceptively sensing something off with the atmosphere between them, Roxanne furtively tugged at the hem of Lucian's shirt, signaling for him to put his hostility away.

When all was said and done, Jack didn't do anything wrong. They were the ones who misunderstood him in the first place.

"I was discharged from the hospital the next morning, and Mr. Farwell told me about it. Thank you for giving me first-aid treatment at the research institute, Mr. Damaris. Otherwise, I might not have recovered so quickly. I apologize for not contacting you timely after being discharged."

She gazed at the man in front of her with all the sincerity in the world while putting in a good word for Lucian surreptitiously, hoping that the tension between them would ease.

Regretfully, neither of them seemed to appreciate it.

Lucian snorted disdainfully.

Jack, on the other hand, glanced at Lucian before shifting his gaze to Roxanne with helplessness written all over his face. "It looks like Mr. Farwell still has some misunderstanding toward me."

Roxanne's brows knitted together imperceptibly, and she threw a look at the man beside her, wishing that he would say something.

After all, Jack was a crucial collaboration partner at the current stage. Hence, she would inevitably have to face him on a daily basis in the near future.

If she were to really get together with Lucian, the man would need to try accepting this collaboration partner of hers.

She didn't want her work to be affected again because of his jealousy after they had made their relationship official.

Sensing her gaze on him, Lucian merely spared Jack an indifferent look.

At his attitude, a pounding headache assailed Roxanne.

Oh God, I can already foresee their interaction in the future!

"I came over to inquire about Dr. Galloway's matter and ascertain your recovery. Now that things have been made clear, I won't tarry any further. I've still got something to handle at Damaris Group, so I'll be leaving first."

Subsequently, Jack excused himself.

Jolted out of her thoughts, Roxanne nodded smilingly. "See you, Mr. Damaris. I can continue doing research in two days. I'll contact you then."

Jack acquiesced noncommittally before speeding away.

Roxanne watched as his car disappeared from her line of sight before turning to the man beside her with exasperation etched across her features.

Chapter 1273

Mild disgruntlement stained Lucian's face. "Why did he come?"

"The experiment Dr. Galloway tampered with was under Damaris Group's project. Naturally, Mr. Damaris needed to come over and check on the situation," Roxanne explained patiently.

Right after saying that, she frowned and chided, "Your attitude was horrible. Not only did you misunderstand him for such a long time previously, but you were even hostile with him earlier. Shouldn't you have apologized to him?"

Lucian's expression darkened frightfully, but in her presence, he still kept a leash on his temper. "That's impossible."

Jack must have some other motive to have come over. It was certainly not as simple as checking on the situation. It'd be more apt to say that he came to provoke me!

Roxanne was entirely oblivious to the silent battle that had ensued between the two men's gazes earlier. Consequently, she found his resolute refusal pretty unreasonable.

"Where exactly did your hostility toward Mr. Damaris come from? Back at the hospital, it was because you suspected him of being the culprit who tampered with the experiment. But now, it has been proven that the matter had nothing to do with him. In fact, he was also a victim. Why do you still have such prejudice toward him now?"

When she had finished saying that, something abruptly occurred to her, and she added, "Even if you were rivals with him in the past, it has all ended now. That aside, you won. Why—"

Without waiting for her to complete her sentence, Lucian interrupted with a frown, "It has nothing to do with that matter."

Words eluded Roxanne, and she was wholly perplexed.

She racked her brain relentlessly, but there seemed to be only one possible answer.

Could it be that... he's still jealous?

At that thought, she eyed the grim-faced man beside her in disbelief.

Lucian's brows were scrunched together deeply, and he didn't appear inclined to explain things.

"You think that Mr. Damaris has feelings for me?" Roxanne ventured.

Lucian met her gaze without answering that, but the look in his eyes affirmed her conjecture.

Unbidden, panic flooded Roxanne. "How could that be? Mr. Damaris and I are only collaboration partners. If he truly has designs on me—"

"Didn't you fail to perceive Colby's interest in you?" Lucian was displeased by her adamant defense of Jack.

Speaking of that, Roxanne couldn't help feeling guilty.

Indeed, it'd never crossed my mind at first that Colby would have romantic feelings toward me. But Jack... Well, I can't think of any reason he'd take a fancy to me.

Glimpsing her skepticism, Lucian elaborated solemnly, "He treated you to meals and even gave you flowers. Additionally, he tried to win Archie and Benny over."

He methodically recounted everything Jack had done.

All that left Roxanne without a retort.

Indeed, Jack did all that. But then, they can be justified.

Still, she tried to convince herself otherwise.

Unfortunately, Lucian gave her no chance of doing so, continuing, "If I remember correctly, you accepted all the flowers he gave you."

When his words drifted into Roxanne's ears, she hadn't yet dispelled all her doubts. A sense of guilt inexplicably rose within her.

Lucian didn't stop there, his voice persisting. "Contrarily, you were exceedingly reluctant to accept the flowers I gave you. Was it because you didn't like them?"

At his repeated questioning, Roxanne could only bite the bullet and nod in response, pretending that she disliked roses.

She relented because the man seemingly wanted to speak further, and she was afraid that he would give her flowers every day as before.

“Never mind if you don’t want to apologize to Mr. Damaris. There’s nothing between us, so don’t overthink things.”

Only then did Lucian cease talking about that subject.

Roxanne secretly breathed a sigh of relief.

Chapter 1274

Meanwhile, Aubree recuperated at the hospital for two whole days before the condition of her arm finally took a turn for the better.

Learning that her daughter had been injured, Gina rushed to the hospital early in the morning.

“What’s going on here? How’s your injury? Are you feeling better? And why didn’t you tell me earlier?”

At the sight of Aubree in a hospital gown, anguish marred Gina’s features.

Aubree shook her head woodenly, her voice hoarse. “I’m fine. My injury has already healed, so it wouldn’t do me any good to tell you.”

In the past two days, she had been helpless to do anything because of her injured arm. When she was awake, she spent most of the time in tears.

It was precisely for that reason that she didn’t want her parents to come over.

Only when Gina heard her voice did she notice that her daughter had seemingly been crying. On a closer look, she saw that Aubree’s face was horribly puffy.

In a flash, her heart sank. “What happened? Why did you cry so much? And who picked on you?”

At the mention of that, tears inexorably welled up in Aubree’s eyes once more.

Before her mother, the grievances within her surged to the forefront.

“Hey, what happened that you can’t tell me? Don’t bottle it up!”

Gina anxiously sat down beside the hospital bed.

At long last, Aubree snapped and threw herself into her mother’s arms, wailing, “Mom, Lucian... Lucian wants to call off our engagement!”

The instant Gina heard that, her expression froze. She gaped at her daughter in her arms. "What did you just say?"

In a choked voice, Aubree repeated her utterance.

It wasn't until then that Gina believed her ears. Sheer shock deluged her.

Huh, Lucian wants to call off the engagement? That makes no sense! No matter how opposed he is to this marriage agreement, it still lasted for six whole years! Why would he cancel it at this juncture?

All of a sudden, a light bulb went off in her head. She stared down at Aubree. "Answer me honestly. How exactly did you get injured? Did you go and pick trouble with Roxanne again?"

Aubree merely sobbed without saying anything.

However, Gina had already gotten the answer. Her brows creased at once. "How foolish of you!"

Lucian had already permitted her to take care of Essie, and she was only a step away from being the mistress of the Farwell family! Why couldn't she put up with that woman? She just had to go and pick trouble with her at this time!

"She's a total b*tch! Lucian stayed at the hospital the whole night to take care of her. That aside, he even sent Essie over to her place again! If I hadn't gone over to seek her out, he might have just married her behind our backs!"

Aubree's voice brimmed with recrimination.

Following that revelation, another wave of shock crashed over Gina.

What? He actually hasn't given up on that woman?

In her arms, Aubree continued crying her heart out.

Ultimately, Gina couldn't bear to lecture her. Patting her on the back, she coaxed, "Don't cry anymore. As long as news of it hasn't yet spread, there's still hope."

Upon hearing that, Aubree lifted her head with tears pouring down her face, a glimmer of hope in her eyes. "But... you didn't see Lucian's attitude. What else can I do?"

Gina gritted her teeth. "If all else fails, seek Mrs. Farwell out while they're not together yet! If she were to learn about it, she'd undoubtedly stop them!"

At her suggestion, Aubree's eyes flickered. In all honesty, she wasn't willing to believe in Sonya anymore.

I've sought her out countless times, but in the end, Lucian still wants to break off our engagement!

"Even if she can't change Lucian's mind, she can help us get rid of Roxanne at the very least!" Gina added softly when she glimpsed her daughter's hesitation.

A long while later, Aubree's eyes glinted coldly, and her tears gradually ceased.

Chapter 1275

On that very night, Aubree went to the Farwell main residence in her injured state.

Right then, Sonya had just finished dinner and was taking a stroll in the back garden. She was all smiles when she saw that Aubree had come to visit her. "You're here, Aubree? What has been keeping you so busy these few days that you haven't been over to keep me company?"

Aubree merely pursed her lips and lowered her head without answering the woman.

Seeing that, Sonya walked over to her in puzzlement. "What's wrong? Did Lucian pick on you again?"

Aubree bobbed her head before shaking it in the next second, sniffing softly.

As soon as Sonya heard the sniffles, her heart sank. Taking Aubree's arm, she led the younger woman into the living room and ordered the butler to serve coffee.

"Elias isn't here tonight. What happened? Feel free to tell me everything!"

This time, Aubree lifted her head and glanced at the woman.

Earlier, it was dark outside, and she had been keeping her head hung low, so Sonya hadn't seen her face.

Now that Aubree had raised her head, Sonya noticed that her face seemed slightly puffy, making it evident that she had been crying and badly at that.

"Why did you cry so much? Did Lucian bully you? Tell me, and I'll seek justice for you!"

Sitting down beside her in distress, Sonya wrapped an arm around her and pulled her close. Her voice brimmed with vexation as she continued, "This is too much! How could he bully you to such a degree when he's going to marry you soon? Isn't it only going to

be worse after you've married into the family? Don't worry. I'll definitely help you lecture him!"

When the subject of marriage came up, grief swamped Aubree. The tears pouring down her face became genuine. "Mrs. Farwell... there's no need to go to such trouble..."

Frowning, Sonya regarded her in mystification.

Aubree buried her head in the crook of Sonya's neck, weeping so violently that she trembled all over. Even her voice shook. "Lucian has already... He has already called off our engagement! Just pretend that the entire matter never existed! Even if I can't become your daughter-in-law, I'll still take good care of you in the future!"

In a heartbeat, Sonya's face went as black as thunder. "Don't cry anymore! Tell me what exactly happened! How could he make an arbitrary decision when it's such a major issue?"

The marriage agreement between the Farwell and Pearson families has persisted for many years. On top of that, I've repeatedly made my stance clear that Aubree is my approved daughter-in-law. How could he cancel the engagement without asking for my opinion? Does he really think that this matter is his business alone?

In a stammering voice, Aubree recounted the series of events that happened yesterday.

"I only wanted to go and pick Essie up, but Ms. Jarvis adamantly refused to let me do so. She even called me a shrew. Naturally, I lost my temper."

At that point, she cautiously lifted her eyes and stole a peek at Sonya's expression.

Only when she ascertained that the latter didn't suspect anything that she continued, "A minor conflict broke out between us. Admittedly, I might have been a bit harsh in my speech, but she was the one who started insulting me first. Worse still, she hit me. Look, I still can't exert strength on my arm even now."

Sonya glanced at Aubree's arm, her eyes blazing with fury.

She once injured her arm while saving me. The previous time, her arm was also hurt for the second time because of Roxanne! And now, the woman actually dared to make a move against her again! This isn't just a matter of getting physical with Aubree. Instead, she's also challenging me!

As her thoughts developed in that direction, her expression turned icy. "What audacity! Is Roxanne trying to walk all over me?"

After roaring that, she fixed a firm look on Aubree. "Don't worry, for I'll certainly seek justice for you!"

Chapter 1276

Immediately, Sonya whipped out her phone and gave Lucian a call.

At that very moment, Lucian had just left Roxanne's house after dinner.

The instant he saw that it was a call from his mother, his heart sank. The tenderness on his face was all but gone, replaced by a layer of frost.

"Where are you right now? Make a trip back to the Farwell main residence this instant! I have something to say to you!"

As soon as the call was connected, Sonya's voice blasted out before Lucian could even utter a single word.

His brows knitted together, and he glanced back at Roxanne's house, which was brightly lit. It was as though he could still hear the sounds of her playing with Archie and Benny.

Snapping back to reality, he agreed somberly, "Got it. I'll come over at once."

In truth, he could more or less guess the purpose of his mother's call.

Well, she must have learned about my decision to call off the engagement and wants to speak up for Aubree. This time, I'm not going to give in to her anymore. No matter what, I'll stay firm and sever all ties with Aubree!

With that in mind, he drove off in the dark night and headed toward the Farwell main residence.

Meanwhile, Aubree watched tearfully as Sonya hung up the phone, a forlorn look on her face.

"You don't have to do this, Mrs. Farwell. Lucian has already made up his mind, and I respect his decision. I only came over and sought you out because I was feeling too heartbroken and wanted to have a good cry. You don't need to bother about me."

At the sight of her sniveling, Sonya was both irate and anguished. "What are you saying? I've said that you're the only person worthy to be the mistress of the Farwell family! When Lucian arrives, I'll definitely teach him a lesson on your behalf!"

Aubree had her head lowered as she sniffled, a fleeting gleam of ruthlessness flashing across her eyes.

She was all too aware that her tactic was despicable beyond words.

However, she didn't mind using the same method time and again as long as it was effective.

Lucian is mine, and no one can steal him away!

Almost a whole hour passed before there was movement at the gates of the mansion.

At the same time, all the consolation on Sonya's face disappeared into thin air. Instead, rage contorted her features.

Aubree, on the other hand, sat at the side with her head hung low in guilt.

Soon, footsteps sounded at the door. On the heels of that, Lucian's figure appeared in both their lines of sight.

"Where were you just now?"

The look in Sonya's eyes was recriminatory.

Meeting her gaze, Lucian countered placidly, "Is there a need to ask when you already know the answer?"

Regardless of whether it was from the Farwell residence or Farwell Group, it wouldn't have taken that long to get to the Farwell main residence.

As Lucian had expected, Aubree was there.

Therefore, he had no doubt that his mother had learned about his decision to break off the engagement and his relationship with Roxanne.

She merely called him over that day to use it as a pretext to kick up a fuss.

The stark contrast between his unfazed attitude and Aubree, who was sobbing at the side, spiked Sonya's temper.

"What kind of attitude is this? How dare you cancel the engagement with the Pearson family behind your father and my backs to mess around with Roxanne? Who allowed you to do that?"

In her wrath, she slammed the cup in her hand on the coffee table, her ladylike temperament all but gone.

Aubree, who had her head hung low, jumped in fright. A few seconds passed before she snapped back to her senses and continued sobbing woefully.

Unfortunately for them, Lucian remained unmoved. "I'm the one who has a marriage agreement with the Pearson family. Why would I need both of your approvals to cancel it?"

After he had said that, something occurred to him, and he scowled at his mother. "Furthermore, Dad has never intervened in this matter. From the very beginning, it has been your doing alone! There's no need to drag him into this anymore. Even if he were to return today, my stance would remain the same!"

Chapter 1277

Sonya was promptly stunned by Lucian's resolute demurral.

When she registered the meaning of his words, her fury blazed even hotter. "Your attitude is a blatant disregard of Aubree waiting for you for the past six years! Instead, you're getting together with that woman who abandoned her husband and daughter! Have you ever considered Essie's feelings? And have you ever given any thought to the Farwell family's reputation? If news were to get out that the CEO of Farwell Group married a woman with two kids, how would others perceive the Farwell family? And if they were to learn that Roxanne is the mistress of the Farwell family who left without a word six years ago, what would they think of us?"

All the while, she shot daggers at her son.

I'll never allow the Farwell family to have such a scandal!

When Lucian heard his mother insulting Roxanne, a flash of displeasure flitted across his eyes.

Yet, in consideration of the fact that the woman in front of him was his own mother, he kept his temper in check and merely retorted coldly, "I don't care!"

Sonya was so livid that the veins at her temples throbbed. "How could you say that? You're messing with the reputation of the Farwell family!"

At that accusation, Lucian quirked a brow.

So what if I am? I can afford to risk it. Even if the Farwell family were affected by this matter, I've got the confidence to fix everything! But then, there's no need to tell her that. Judging from her worked-up state right now, she'll probably keel over upon hearing that.

As he listened to his mother's nagging, he chillingly swept a gaze over Aubree at the side.

I wonder what else this woman has said to her.

Seemingly noticing that he had glanced at Aubree, Sonya finally turned the subject back to the latter.

“Aubree merely went to pick Essie up out of the kindness of her heart. What did she do wrong? Her arm was injured in the past, yet Roxanne showed her no mercy!”

She was so incensed that she even wanted to rush forward and grab Aubree’s arm unceremoniously to show Lucian the latter’s injury.

Nonetheless, the last shred of her sanity remained, and she curbed that impulse. She continued questioning her son, demanding, “Have you forgotten how she got injured?”

By then, a trace of impatience colored Lucian’s voice. “I haven’t forgotten.”

Hearing that, Sonya wanted to carry on along those lines, but his subsequent remark stopped her short.

“However, I’m still investigating that matter. The reason for her injury still needs to be verified. She might not necessarily have sustained it from saving you.”

Lucian’s gaze fell on Aubree once again, his gaze scrutinizing.

Aubree sensed his eyes on her, and her heart abruptly clenched. She dug her nails into her palms hard to keep her tears flowing.

Meanwhile, Sonya gaped at her son incredulously. “How could it be fake when I witnessed it with my own eyes? Don’t ever say such a thing again!”

“Why can’t it be fake? Can you guarantee that every single word she says to you is true?” Lucian riposted impassively.

The moment his words rang out, both Sonya’s and Aubree’s expressions changed.

Sonya went silent for a few seconds, her gaze flickering for a fleeting second.

At the end of the day, she didn’t trust Aubree completely.

As such, she couldn’t answer her son in the affirmative.

In the end, she forcefully changed the subject. “If you insist on calling off the engagement with Aubree, give me a reason I can accept! Otherwise, I’ll never agree to it!”

As Aubree heard the wavering in her voice, she lifted her eyes and cast her gaze over, stunned. Tears stained her face, rendering her utterly pitiful.

Chapter 1278

Lucian found it downright ironic that Sonya and Aubree both trusted yet doubted each other.

Since she wants a reason, I don't mind giving her one.

"Aubree isn't suitable to be Essie's mother. I've already given her six years and allowed her to take care of Essie recently. However, Essie is still unwilling to accept her. In fact, Essie's condition is showing signs of recurrence under her care. I won't risk Essie's well-being."

Frowning deeply, Sonya dipped her head and directed her gaze at Aubree.

Indeed, she knew nothing about Estella's condition.

Before that day, she thought that Aubree and Essie were already getting along smashingly well.

She had never expected the reality to be such.

Even then, she would never accept Roxanne, who had abandoned Estella back then.

"Aubree merely needs some time. Give her more time. She'll be able to resolve it!" Sonya insisted stubbornly.

The impatience on Lucian's face grew even more blatant. "If I were to allow her to continue interacting with Essie, Essie's condition would only worsen."

At that statement, a conflicted look entered Sonya's eyes, and her voice was no longer as firm as before. "How would you know without trying? Is she not better than Roxanne, who abandoned Essie?"

Verily, Lucian wasn't in the mood to argue with her further. "Indeed, she's not."

After saying that, he spun on his heel to leave. Before doing so, he stated, "I've already made up my mind regarding the engagement. No matter what you say, it'll never change my decision. Next time, please disclose your reason for calling me over when you phone me. If it's about this, don't bother anymore."

Never having expected him to leave like that, Sonya was enraged and tried stopping him. "Stop right there!"

Alas, Lucian's footsteps didn't falter in the slightest.

When Aubree saw that, her heart instantly lodged in her throat.

She knew that if she were to really allow the man to leave then, there would be no more salvaging their engagement.

Casting all caution to the wind, she shot to her feet and sprinted toward Lucian's back. Then, she hugged him from behind.

"You can't do this to me, Lucian! I've waited for you for six years! How much longer is left of my youth?"

Lucian lowered his eyes and glanced at her hands around his waist, repulsion brimming in his eyes. "I never asked you to wait. It was all wishful thinking on your part."

In the past six years, I told her countless times that I'd like to break off the engagement, but she brushed me off with various excuses. Now that we've put up the act for so long, I no longer want to play along with her.

While he spoke, he mercilessly pried her fingers off him, one by one. He subsequently warned, "I'm furious because you sought Roxanne out and kicked up a fuss. If you don't want to bear my wrath, it's best that you don't continue hounding her."

Aubree exerted all the strength within her to resist him, but ultimately, she wasn't his match. Pain shot through her fingers, and she was even callously shoved back.

At the sudden push, she lost her balance and stumbled a few steps before she fell onto the ground in a disheveled mess.

However, Lucian strode out without even sparing her a single glance.

"Lucian!" Aubree stared at his retreating back through red-rimmed eyes.

Turning a deaf ear to her, Lucian climbed into the car without a backward glance.

Aubree started wailing at the top of her lungs.

It was the first time Sonya had ever seen her in such a hysterical state. For a moment, she felt as though she was staring at a veritable stranger.

She hesitated for a long while before hesitantly dragging her feet over and helping Aubree up.

Chapter 1279

As Lucian drove back to the Farwell residence, he was still in a foul mood.

Mom really trusts Aubree too much! It's so bad that she belittled Roxanne in such a manner!

Even until he arrived back at the manor, his expression remained as black as thunder.

Roxanne's message came in when he alighted from the car.

The moment he saw her name on the screen, his expression eased. He tapped on the notification and took a look at the message.

It read: The kids are clamoring to go to the amusement park to have fun. When are you free?

Through the words alone, Lucian could sense her reluctance when she sent that message.

She probably only sent it because the kids were pestering her, and she had no other choice.

Even so, his mood improved by leaps and bounds. He was even gripped by the urge to tease her.

Lifting his hand, he tapped the screen a few times and replied: Does this count as you asking me out?

Right then, Roxanne was surrounded by Archie, Benny, and Estella.

"Has Mr. Farwell said anything yet, Mommy?"

"Is Mr. Farwell going to the amusement park with us? We want to go with him!"

Archie and Benny gazed at her earnestly.

Estella, on the other hand, had climbed onto the couch. Clinging onto Roxanne's shoulders, she fixed her eyes on the phone screen in curiosity.

Meanwhile, Roxanne wore a conflicted expression on her face.

Gah! I've got no idea what they were thinking to suddenly make a fuss about going to the amusement park. On top of that, they kept saying that they wanted to go with Lucian and bugged me to ask the man. Worse still, they refused to sleep before receiving an answer from him!

Left with no other recourse, she could only text Lucian.

That was the first time she took the initiative to do so after they parted ways on a sour note.

For a moment, she felt very much uneasy, and anxiety lingered within her.

They waited for an indeterminate time before her phone finally lit up with a reply from Lucian.

All three children's eyes likewise lit up. They all crowded over to have a look at the message.

Without giving it much thought, Roxanne tapped on the chat interface.

The instant she saw Lucian's reply, her face flushed bright red even as she frantically locked her phone screen.

The children were distinctly disappointed that they didn't get to read their father's answer.

"What did Mr. Farwell say, Mommy? Why can't we have a look?" Benny couldn't resist asking.

Roxanne guiltily flashed them all a smile. "It's nothing..."

"Is Daddy going with us, then?" Estella pressed in a sweet voice.

Roxanne mulled over Lucian's reply, the blush on her face intensifying. "He... Well, I'll ask him again."

After saying that, she turned away from the children and texted the man where they couldn't see: The kids had me ask you that! Are you going or not?

At her reply, Lucian arched a brow and chuckled. He sent her a voice message. "If you're asking me out, I naturally won't decline."

Seeing that it was a voice message, Roxanne felt the onset of a headache as she glanced at the children surrounding her.

A while later, she carefully converted it into text. Skimming her eyes over his reply, she nodded at the children. "He said okay."

Immediately, all three children jumped for joy.

Forcibly feigning calmness, Roxanne ordered them upstairs to rest while she returned to her room helplessly.

She proceeded to stare at the voice message. In the end, she couldn't help playing it.

With a tap from the tip of her finger, Lucian's deep voice rang out in the room.

She merely listened to it once before she tossed her phone to the side, her face flaming.

I've already told him that it was the kids' request! How could he be so shameless?

Chapter 1280

Soon, the weekend arrived. Roxanne was woken up by the sound of the kids knocking at her door.

The moment she opened the door, she saw the three little ones all dressed up and looking at her excitedly.

As Roxanne was still half asleep, she could not remember their plan for the day and was puzzled as to what was going on.

"Mommy, we are going to the amusement park today!" Benny reminded in his childish voice, noticing that his mother was in a daze.

Only then did Roxanne finally snap out of her trance. Feeling slightly frustrated with herself, she asked, "What time is it now?"

Benny looked at his smartwatch and answered, "It's already seven in the morning. Mr. Farwell told us that he will be reaching soon!"

When Roxanne heard that, she looked down at her nightgown, and with a look of exasperation on her face, she instructed Archie and Benny, "I'm going to wash up now. Can the two of you prepare breakfast?"

The boys smiled at their mother and replied, "Mr. Farwell is taking us out for breakfast!"

Roxanne was speechless for a moment. Then, she hurried back to her room to get ready.

Perhaps it was because of what Lucian said the other day about this being a date, but Roxanne spent a long time putting on her makeup. Unfortunately, she was still not able to get her desired look.

In the end, she decided to go with a lightly made-up face before changing into a lace blouse and faded jeans, making sure that they were comfortable enough for her to move around in.

After she was ready, the woman headed downstairs and saw that Lucian had already arrived. He and the little ones were sitting on the couch together while discussing the day's itinerary.

"Cream puffs! I want to eat cream puffs!" Benny's eyes lit up.

Roxanne heard the boy exclaiming happily as she descended the stairs. My son is indeed a glutton...

Just then, Estella's sweet voice sounded. "Ms. Jarvis!"

Following that, everyone turned to look at Roxanne.

The woman stiffened when she met their eyes and instinctively looked toward Lucian.

"Hey, gorgeous," Lucian said, staring intently into Roxanne's eyes.

When Roxanne heard the man's compliment, a blush spread across her cheeks.

While sizing the man up curiously, she noticed that his hair was not styled in its usual slicked-back manner. There were a few loose strands of hair covering his forehead, giving him a more youthful look. Attire-wise, he was wearing a dark green windbreaker that looked casual yet elegant at the same time.

As Roxanne had never seen Lucian appearing so casual before, she got lost in her thoughts for a moment.

"How do I look today?"

Noticing that the woman was checking him out, Lucian stood up from the couch and walked toward her to give her a full view of his body.

Roxanne had almost reached the bottom of the stairs and was standing at eye level with Lucian.

The woman only realized what she had done when both of them locked eyes. She felt her cheeks burning and jerked back slightly before shifting her gaze away.

Lucian, who was determined to hear Roxanne's reply, did not budge and stood at the bottom of the stairs with a smile on his face.

Having no other choice, Roxanne lowered her eyes and said, "You haven't changed much."

To her, he was still as mesmerizing as he was six years ago.

Lucian's eyes dimmed slightly when he heard her answer. In an ambiguous tone, he said, "My looks might not have changed, but I did change in other ways that you can't see."

After saying that, he held Roxanne's hand in front of the kids.

Hearing the man's words, Roxanne felt a surge of emotion in her heart, but before she could react, Lucian had already grabbed her hand.

Feeling conscious of the children's presence, she instinctively tried to shake off Lucian's hand, but his grip was so tight that it was impossible for her to do so.

Chapter 1281

The kids saw the intimate gesture between the two adults and exchanged cheeky glances with each other.

However, when the couple was walking toward them, they pretended not to notice and continued talking about the rides that they were going to take at the amusement park later.

A while later, everyone got into the car, looking forward to the rest of the day.

Lucian took them to a diner for breakfast before heading to the amusement park.

As they had arrived during peak hour, the amusement park was extremely crowded.

While navigating their way past the other patrons, Roxanne could not help but be reminded of their previous trip to the hot spring resort, where Benny got lost. Suddenly, she was filled with apprehension.

Sensing the woman's unease, Lucian squeezed her hand and said, "If you are worried, I can get them to clear the area."

Upon hearing that, Roxanne returned to her senses and shook her head. With a faint smile on her face, she replied, "It's okay. The kids won't have as much fun if you do that."

Benny knew that his mother was worried about him and lifted his arm to show her the smartwatch on his wrist.

"Mommy, it's all right. We are all wearing smartwatches. If you can't find us, you can always give us a call!"

Archie and Estella chimed in and said, "Yup! We will stick close to you."

Roxanne smiled after hearing the kids' assurances. Stroking their heads affectionately, she said, "I just want you guys to have fun."

With that, the little ones headed to their first attraction.

Roxanne accompanied them on a few kiddy rides, but the kids were still not satisfied.

"Mommy, let's take the roller coaster!" Benny's eyes sparkled with anticipation as he watched the roller coaster whizz past him.

Roxanne hesitated before replying, "You are too young to be on a roller coaster. Let's go for something else instead."

After she finished saying that, Lucian reminded in a deep voice, "I saw a roller coaster for children just now. They can try that."

Just as Roxanne was about to agree, Benny rejected that proposition. "That's not exciting at all! We want to try this one!"

Roxanne was at a loss as to what to do.

The children were indeed below the age limit for roller coaster rides.

Even if Lucian somehow managed to get them on, Roxanne would still be worried.

While she was pondering over a way to convince the kids to give up the idea, Archie suddenly spoke.

"Mommy, if we are not allowed to take the ride, can you and Mr. Farwell go for it on our behalf instead? Then we can treat it as we have already tried it!"

Benny and Estella nodded in agreement.

Hearing that, Roxanne subconsciously glanced at the man beside her.

She did not mind doing that if it would make the kids happy, but... Lucian did not seem like the sort of person who would be interested in amusement park rides.

In fact, she was unable to imagine him on a roller coaster.

"Mr. Farwell!"

"Daddy!"

The little ones started coaxing the man when they realized that their target should be Lucian instead.

Roxanne did not want to put Lucian in a tight spot and was about to reject the suggestion on his behalf when Lucian suddenly said to the kids with a serious expression, "No problem. But the three of you have to be good and wait here. Don't run about or go off with strangers, okay?"

Hearing the man's positive reply, the children jumped for joy and replied sweetly, "We will wait here patiently!"

Then, they started urging Roxanne and Lucian to join the line for the ride.

Since Lucian had already agreed, Roxanne could only keep quiet and allow Lucian to take her hand and lead her toward the queue.

Chapter 1282

"If you're reluctant to do it, I'll help you explain it to the kids," Roxanne said worriedly.

They were stuck in a crowd, and she could see that Lucian was uncomfortable.

Lucian turned to look at the three children waiting for them close by, and his gaze softened. "It's all right. As long as they like it."

His gaze then shifted toward Roxanne. "As for you, remember to hold tight onto me if you get scared later."

Roxanne was startled when her eyes met with his mischievous ones. She lowered her head as mixed feelings surged within her heart.

Throughout the years, she had brought Archie and Benny to an amusement park many times.

The two children had mentioned wanting to go on a roller coaster countless times but were never able to.

Before that day, they had never mentioned wanting her to represent them to go on the roller coaster either.

Perhaps they thought that I would be afraid.

It was not until today, with Lucian's appearance, that they dared to ask her such a request. They had looked at her with anticipation too, not a hint of worry in their eyes.

Maybe they thought Lucian would protect me on their behalf.

Even I myself think so too.

Roxanne looked up and flashed Lucian a grin. "Thanks."

As she said that, a gust of wind blew and messed up her hair. Lucian reached out to smooth the messy locks and said, "I should be the one to thank you for giving me another chance."

The two stood out because of their good looks and impressive aura. The people around them subconsciously kept a distance but could not help stealing glances at them.

Upon witnessing that scene, someone could not control their impulsiveness and took a photo of them. However, that person had forgotten to turn off the flash of their phone.

The bright light flashed Roxanne in the eyes and snapped her back to her senses. She then turned in the direction of the person taking their photo.

That woman smiled awkwardly and said, "Sorry. The two of you looked so cute together. Can I please save this picture? That is if you don't mind..."

Roxanne could not bear to reject the woman's request after hearing how sincere she was, but she was not the only one in the picture.

She turned to Lucian, seeking his opinion on the matter.

In response, Lucian turned to glance at the woman who took their photo.

That woman was facing Roxanne, so she could only see Lucian's side profile.

When Lucian looked over, she was amazed by his handsomeness. In the next second, she was also overwhelmed by his aura and got so nervous that she almost wanted to delete the photo.

"Send me a copy of it."

Lucian took out his phone and added the woman on WhatsApp.

Both the person who took the photo and Roxanne were dumbfounded.

The woman was stunned momentarily before she returned to her senses. Her hands were shaking in excitement as she handed her phone to Lucian.

Who would've thought I could add this handsome man on WhatsApp because I secretly took a photo?

After adding each other on WhatsApp, the woman followed Lucian's instructions and sent the photo to him.

Lucian opened the photo to take a look and seemed to be satisfied with it. He then tapped on his phone a few more times.

Soon, that woman received a new message. She had just received a bank transfer of ten thousand.

“Um... You don't need to pay me. I only took the photo on a whim. It wasn't a good shot either.”

The woman who took the photo felt uneasy.

Lucian said, “Your photography skills are not bad. You can delete the photo in your phone now.”

He put away his phone after saying that.

The woman had no choice but to turn to Roxanne for help.

She felt uneasy as she could not accept the money she felt she did not deserve.

Roxanne felt her head ache as she said, “Take it and delete the photo on your phone. Treat it as us buying the photo from you.”

Chapter 1283

In the end, the woman accepted the money under Roxanne's reassurance. She also deleted Lucian's WhatsApp in front of Roxanne.

Lucian raised his eyebrows but kept quiet.

It was not until they got on the roller coaster that Roxanne realized the woman was afraid Roxanne would mind it if she did not delete Lucian's WhatsApp.

Just as she was lost in her thoughts, the staff had helped them with their seatbelts and done a double check.

The roller coaster then started to move.

“Good luck, Mommy!”

“Good luck, Ms. Jarvis!”

The three children's shouts of good luck could be heard outside the fence.

Roxanne turned to smile at the children as she slowly relaxed.

As the roller coaster gained speed, it went higher up the slope. It was only then that Roxanne started to feel scared.

They were also seated in the first row.

The people behind them were shouting their lungs out. Roxanne felt her throat tighten in fear, and her breath caught in her throat.

Just as she felt she was about to suffocate, Lucian reached over and gripped her hand tightly.

Roxanne slowly relaxed as soon as she felt his presence and breathed in and out at a steady pace.

She instinctively turned to look at the person beside her.

People behind them screamed, and some were even cursing, yet Lucian remained calm and expressionless. If it weren't for the rise and fall of his chest, Roxanne would have thought the person beside her was not real.

Roxanne could not help but laugh after seeing his calm demeanor. She felt herself relax and started to scream alongside the people behind her at the thrill of the ride.

Lucian loosened his grip on her hand. A smile slowly made its way onto his lips as he heard her scream without holding back.

As the roller coaster came to a stop, Roxanne felt breathless from all the screaming. When she stood up, her vision turned black momentarily, and she almost fell forward.

Luckily, Lucian was able to reach out and grab her in time before she made a fool out of herself.

He held onto her as they walked out of the fenced area and made their way toward the three children waiting at the ride's exit.

The kids hurried over when they saw Lucian and Roxanne come out.

Noticing Roxanne's condition, they were worried. "Mommy, are you okay?"

Roxanne slowly caught her breath and smiled before nodding. "I'm fine."

She then turned to look at the expressionless person beside her and could not help but chuckle. "I want to go on it a few more times!"

The children did not know what Roxanne was laughing about and assumed that the roller coaster was very enjoyable.

Benny balled his hands into fists. "When I grow up, I'll go on the roller coaster many times!"

Archie held onto Benny's hand and said, "I'll go with you!"

Estella joined in on the fun. "I want to go too!"

Archie and Benny replied in unison, "Sure, but you have to sit at the back!"

The children could not stop chattering among themselves. A smile appeared on Roxanne's lips at how innocent they were.

Lucian glanced at the three children before shifting his gaze to Roxanne.

Although Roxanne had said she was fine, her physiological reactions betrayed her as she still looked pale and uncomfortable.

"I'll go get us something to drink. Don't go anywhere," Lucian said in a deep voice.

The children nodded obediently at him in response.

Roxanne also subconsciously nodded.

It was not until Lucian had left that she realized he was treating her like a kid.

She could not help but laugh at the realization.

Although the children did not understand why Roxanne was smiling, they followed suit and grinned.

They smiled and laughed together as they talked about the roller coaster.

Chapter 1284

Lucian returned from buying some water to see the children laughing and surrounding a smiling Roxanne.

Lucian's expression softened at the scene.

The children happily waved their hands to beckon Lucian over when they saw him return.

Lucian hurried toward them and handed the drinks he had just bought to each of them as he listened to Roxanne and the children talk.

"Were you scared just now?" Roxanne suddenly turned to look at him and asked.

The children's gazes also fell onto him.

Lucian shrugged and raised his eyebrows. "I went parachuting before. That was scarier than the roller coaster."

Surprise flashed across Roxanne's eyes upon hearing that.

With Lucian's personality, I thought he would never do something thrilling like that.

Archie's and Benny's eyes lit up in excitement as they enthusiastically grabbed onto the hem of Lucian's shirt. "Mr. Farwell, bring us along the next time you go!"

Lucian lowered his gaze and smiled at Archie and Benny. He agreed without any hesitation, "All right. I'll take you when you're of suitable age."

Upon hearing that, the two boys cheered.

Roxanne felt emotional as she watched Archie and Benny interact with Lucian.

Indeed, the kids need their father.

She had always known Archie and Benny were bold and liked to try different activities.

However, the two had always taken her feelings into account and were afraid that she might be scared, so they had never voiced these kinds of requests.

Yet they were able to let themselves loose in front of Lucian.

Perhaps they will grow up happier with Lucian around.

Just as she felt her emotions overwhelm her, a small hand tugged on the hem of her blouse.

Roxanne snapped back to her senses and looked down.

Estella was looking up and staring unblinkingly at Roxanne with her big round eyes.

"Essie, what's wrong?" Roxanne asked as she bent down.

Estella wrapped her arms around Roxanne's neck endearingly and softly whispered in her ear, "Ms. Jarvis, can I call you Mommy?"

Her voice was soft and timid because her request had been rejected before.

Upon hearing the question, Roxanne instinctively turned to look at Lucian, who was talking with Archie and Benny.

The three of them did not seem to notice what was happening.

Estella hurried to explain when she saw Roxanne was silent. "I just think that we look like a family! Besides, Ms. Jarvis, didn't you already agree to let Daddy pursue you? We'll definitely be a family in the future!"

Hope and anticipation was written all over her face.

Roxanne was touched by Estella's words.

She had indeed accepted Lucian's pursuit.

However, she could not be too sure about the future.

If I agree to Essie's request, I don't know how I'll face her if I disappoint her in the future.

Roxanne was hesitant as she pondered over it.

"Ms. Jarvis..." Estella thought she was going to be rejected again. Her eyes grew red, and it looked like she was about to cry.

Roxanne could not bear to reject the young girl when she heard the latter's broken voice. Hence, she tried to persuade Estella to call her a different name. "Your daddy and I..."

She wanted to say they were not married yet but realized that it was easy to cause misunderstandings if she did say that. Hesitating for a moment, she decided to skip the explanation. "If you really want to call me a different name, how about you call me Aunt Roxanne?"

Estella pouted. She did not seem too willing to call Roxanne that.

However, when she realized this was Roxanne's compromise, she could only nod and say, "Okay."

Chapter 1285

Lucian, Roxanne, and the three children had fun at the amusement park for the rest of the day.

For dinner, Lucian brought them to a nearby high-end restaurant.

"I want to sit with Aunt Roxanne!"

When they were about to be seated, Estella held onto Roxanne's blouse tightly while wearing a prideful expression.

Upon hearing how Estella addressed Roxanne, Lucian, Archie, and Benny were taken aback and instinctively glanced at Roxanne.

Roxanne was hesitant to meet Lucian's gaze as she said, "Essie wanted to call me that, so I agreed to it. If you don't like it, then—"

Before she could finish her sentence, Lucian cut in with raised eyebrows, "Personally, I feel there's a much closer term of address, but if that's what you want, let her address you that way for now."

Lucian then ushered Archie and Benny to their seats.

Since Estella wanted to sit with Roxanne, Archie and Benny expressed through their actions that they wanted to sit with Lucian.

In the end, Roxanne and Lucian sat opposite each other, with the children by their sides.

The three children were happy with the arrangement. Lucian glanced up and felt satisfied when he noticed that he could look at Roxanne with this seating.

Lucian had called ahead to order their meal, which consisted of the restaurant's signature dishes.

In a thoughtful gesture, he even ordered ice cream for the children.

The design of the ice cream was unique. The waiter did a little magic, and the ice cream turned different in a blink of an eye.

The children clapped their hands in surprise and excitement.

It was a habit for Roxanne to put the children's plates in front of her and cut their steaks into bite-sized pieces.

Unexpectedly, when she looked up, she saw Lucian was already doing that job for her.

Lucian's head was bowed as he cut the steaks. There was no sign of impatience written on his face.

As though sensing her looking at him, he met her gaze. "Do you need me to help you too?"

With that, he shifted his gaze to the untouched steak on her plate.

Roxanne was stunned momentarily. She then shook her head in embarrassment and said, "I can do it myself."

Without saying anything further, Lucian returned to cutting the steaks before placing them back onto the children's plates.

Dinner was a heartwarming affair.

In a corner they did not pay attention to, Sonya stared intently at the five of them harmoniously interacting with one another, and her expression darkened.

Even if she had known earlier that Lucian and Roxanne would get back together, she did not expect their relationship to have progressed that far.

Any stranger would think that the five of them were a family.

Sonya huffed in anger when she saw Lucian personally cut steak for the two bastards.

I raised him until he became an adult, yet he's never cut steak for me! How dare he go and serve someone else's sons? Just what in the world is he thinking? That Roxanne doesn't look like a good person and already has two bastards, so why is my son dead set on being with her?

As Sonya watched the five of them get ready to leave after finishing dinner, she frowned and looked away, trying hard to suppress her anger.

Although her seat was close to the door, no one paid much attention to her table since it was hidden by many houseplants.

It was so hidden that Roxanne and the others did not notice her even though they passed by her to get to the door.

"Thank you, Aunt Roxanne!" Estella thanked Roxanne after the latter gave her candy when they were at the door.

Behind the houseplants, Sonya almost rushed out impulsively when she heard how Estella addressed Roxanne.

Chapter 1286

They got in the car after walking out of the restaurant. Lucian sat idly in the car for some time without starting the engine.

Roxanne gave him a puzzled look.

The moment she raised her head to look at him, she made eye contact with him.

Roxanne was momentarily stunned. For some strange reason, she felt slightly nervous.

After a moment, disappointment showed on Lucian's face. "If only it's pouring rain right now."

His words took Roxanne by surprise.

The children looked at Lucian curiously. "But we won't be able to go home if there's a rainstorm!"

Lucian smiled in response. He didn't say anything else and started the car.

The kids were still perplexed because their father didn't give them a response.

Roxanne, on the other hand, immediately understood Lucian's intentions after the children mentioned this.

In other words, he was telling her that he didn't want to go home that night.

Her face flushed crimson, and she didn't dare to look at him. "It's getting late. Let's go back now. The kids must be tired."

The children blinked in confusion upon hearing Roxanne's words. They could feel that the adults were insinuating something they couldn't understand. Nevertheless, they didn't say anything.

On the way home, Roxanne couldn't fathom if Lucian was deliberately driving slowly in an effort to put the kids to sleep.

Roxanne lowered her head and stared into space blankly as she was also slightly tired.

By the time she snapped back to reality, they had arrived at her house.

Roxanne turned back to wake Archie and Benny so that they could get out of the car.

"Aunt Roxanne."

Estella would be going home with Lucian now, so she was slightly reluctant to part with Roxanne.

Roxanne gave her head a reassuring pat and uttered, "You have stayed here for a long period. It's time to go home."

Estella was still a little unwilling.

At the thought of something, Roxanne looked at Lucian hesitantly.

Before she could say anything, Lucian's voice rang out. "I have let Cayden handle the transfer procedures for Essie. She will return to her previous kindergarten from next week onward."

Everyone's eyes lit up when they heard his words.

Archie and Benny hugged Estella excitedly. "That's amazing! We can go to the kindergarten together again!"

A smile spread across Estella's face too.

Roxanne felt as if a weight had been lifted from her shoulders. She smiled at Estella and said, "You can meet Archie and Benny in the kindergarten from now on. If you want to, you can come here occasionally and live with me for a few days."

The delight of transferring kindergartens replaced Estella's reluctance of leaving Roxanne. She nodded her head obediently after hearing Roxanne's words. "Then, you have to go fetch Archie and Benny from the kindergarten, Aunt Roxanne!"

Roxanne assented with a laugh.

Lucian started the car engine.

"Bye, Mr. Farwell." The two boys waved at him.

Lucian nodded and turned to look at Roxanne, waiting for her to say something.

Roxanne still felt shy because of what he had said earlier.

Meeting his eyes and with a blush, she mumbled, "Goodbye."

Lucian lifted his brow. He was obviously displeased.

Roxanne frowned in embarrassment and hesitated for a moment before saying, "See you on Monday."

If she wasn't mistaken, they would have to meet as they would be picking up their kids on Monday.

Lucian smiled in satisfaction. "See you on Monday."

With that, he hit the gas and drove toward the Farwell residence.

Only after Lucian had driven far away did Roxanne turn around and return to the mansion with Archie and Benny.

Chapter 1287

Roxanne wanted to send them upstairs to rest when the doorbell suddenly rang.

Archie and Benny thought it was Lucian returning with Estella. They ran to open the door excitedly despite Roxanne stopping them.

When they saw the person standing before them at the door, they were taken aback.

“Where’s Roxanne?”

Sonya glanced at the children in disdain.

Archie and Benny were disappointed when they were suddenly met with their grandmother’s overt dislike after just having a great time with Lucian. The smile on their faces gradually faded, replaced by a wary expression.

Sonya didn’t expect them to reply. She turned to look at the living room after asking the question and immediately saw Roxanne, who was walking over.

As soon as Roxanne heard Sonya’s voice inside the house, she hurried outside out of concern for her children.

“Mrs. Farwell, it’s late. Is something the matter?”

She proceeded to shield the kids behind her back calmly before meeting Sonya’s eyes coolly.

Sonya sized her up. “Let’s go in and talk.”

A crease appeared between Roxanne’s brows. After a moment of hesitation, she stood aside for Sonya to come in.

It’s just Sonya by herself. She will, at most, utter a few unpleasant words.

If she were to be with Lucian, she would have to face Sonya sooner or later.

When the kids saw that Roxanne had let Sonya in, they felt slightly nervous and worried that Sonya would bully her, just like Aubree and Frieda had.

Roxanne watched Sonya sit on the couch and squatted down to look at Archie and Benny. “You guys head on upstairs and get some rest. I have some words to say to her.”

Archie grabbed his mother’s hand with concern. “We want to accompany you!”

Benny nodded fervently.

Roxanne felt warmth in her heart when she saw how worried the kids were. She gave them reassuring pats on their heads. "Don't worry. We're only talking. Nothing will happen. You guys have played the entire day and must be tired. Go upstairs and wash up."

The two boys were still slightly reluctant.

Feeling helpless, Roxanne turned to glance at Sonya.

Seeing that Sonya was not looking at them, she promised the kids, "Even if we fight, she's no match for me. You guys know that."

The boys recalled Roxanne defending herself against two people and finally nodded.

Before they headed upstairs, the kids greeted Sonya politely, "Good night, Mrs. Farwell."

Sonya snorted and pretended as if she didn't hear or see them.

The kids felt disappointed but didn't say anything. They turned around and headed upstairs.

Roxanne walked into the living room after that. She brewed Sonya and herself a cup of coffee and sat on the couch beside her.

"It's just the two of us now. You don't have to pretend anymore. I'm not falling for it!"

Sonya glanced at the cup of coffee Roxanne had placed in front of her. She had no intention of hiding her disdain for Roxanne.

Roxanne replied calmly, "It's basic courtesy. Even if it's Ms. Pearson here, I'll do the same. If you don't like it, you don't have to drink it."

Sonya trembled with rage upon seeing Roxanne's nonchalant demeanor. She pushed the cup of coffee away and looked at Roxanne coldly. "Tell me, what does it take for you to stay away from my son? Is it money that you're after? No matter the request, I'll satisfy you if I can do it."

Chapter 1288

Roxanne felt a strange sense of familiarity upon hearing Sonya's words.

She found Sonya's actions hilarious when she suddenly thought about how similar the latter's words sounded to those TV dramas and novels.

Unaware of it, Sonya continued, "Six years ago, you were the one who decided to leave Lucian. No one forced you to do so. Do you think the Farwell residence is somewhere you can come and go as you please?"

Roxanne tried to suppress her emotions and thoughts when Sonya brought up what had happened six years ago. "You've got the wrong idea. It's not something I can decide on my own, whether it was my leaving six years ago or how far I have progressed with Lucian now."

Sonya didn't expect Roxanne's retort, and she grew displeased.

Roxanne continued to state matter-of-factly, "Even though you guys were aware of Lucian's feelings for Aubree six years ago, you forced me to stand in the way of their relationship because your family needed a joyous event to bring Lucian's grandfather good luck. I had no choice but to leave after suffering from Lucian's cold treatment for three years."

She was admitting that the reason for her leaving six years ago was because of the Farwell family.

This was what Roxanne had always believed in.

Except for the infant girl who passed away, she didn't feel sorry for anyone for leaving six years ago.

"I was crestfallen when I left six years ago. I only came back for work. It wasn't my intention to progress so far with my relationship with Lucian." Roxanne stared at Sonya. "If you can't accept me, you should tell Lucian. I have no say in this."

Sonya was angered by her words.

"Lucian was with Aubree for six years. You ruined their relationship, yet you don't feel an ounce of guilt. Instead, you're blaming the Farwell family? If you didn't wish for this to happen, why did you come back? Why must you come back to Horington to work? Can't you find a job anywhere else?"

She was being unreasonable.

Roxanne frowned, but she remained calm as she retorted, "This is not up to me either. You can go and ask my professor."

Sonya widened her eyes in anger. "I don't care what you're trying to achieve here! You listen very carefully. As long as I'm alive, I'll never let you become a part of the Farwell family! Also, Lucian is my son! I know him best. You didn't even get him to fall in love with you for three years. Why do you think he will like you after six years? Besides, you have two illegitimate children!"

No matter what Sonya said, Roxanne remained calm and indifferent, as if she wasn't taking Sonya's words seriously.

However, she wouldn't allow Sonya to talk about Archie and Benny like that. Her expression darkened instantly.

"Mrs. Farwell, please consider your age. What's the point of dragging two children around when you're settling adult matters between us adults? You keep saying that you're thinking of the reputation of the Farwell family, but don't you think you have disgraced the family by saying that about two innocent children?"

Sonya noticed Roxanne's change in expression and felt pleased.

She continued to provoke her, "Did I say anything wrong? How old are the two children? I think they're about five to six years old. You gave birth to them for another man after leaving the Farwell family for less than a year. You said you love Lucian! I think you only love his wealth! Now that you're back in the country, you behave as if Lucian did you wrong. Do you think you can trick me?"

Chapter 1289

Sonya thought she had successfully provoked Roxanne. Little did she know that the more she talked, the more ridiculous Roxanne found her.

Sonya is able to overthink so much after I faked Archie's and Benny's ages. If she finds out who Archie and Benny are and recalls what she said today, I wonder how she will react.

Roxanne remained expressionless. "If you think so, then that's exactly it."

Sonya was downright infuriated by her nonchalant response. "If that's the case, leave Lucian and Essie alone! I know of your tactics to get close to Lucian!"

Roxanne gave her a confused look.

I don't even know my tactics.

Sonya bellowed, "You're making use of the fact that Essie likes you! Do you think you can become Essie's mother through this? Don't even think about it. It will never be you! You're only lucky you have two children similar to Essie's age. Once Aubree gives birth in the future, Essie will like her too!"

Sonya thought it was ironic when she heard what Estella called Roxanne at the restaurant. It also reminded her that Roxanne didn't know that Estella was her own daughter.

If Roxanne were to find out, she wouldn't have let Estella call her Aunt Roxanne.

Sonya planned to use this to drive Roxanne away from her son.

"The family will do whatever it takes to find Essie's mother. She will be the next Mrs. Farwell. It will never be you!"

Sonya sounded determined.

Roxanne furrowed her brows in surprise.

No matter what it takes? Does that mean that the Farwell family doesn't know who Essie's mother is? Does Lucian know?

Sonya was furious upon seeing Roxanne lost in thought. She suppressed her anger and enunciated, "While I'm still speaking to you nicely, you'd better be sensible. Take what you want and leave Horington. Otherwise, don't blame me for not considering that you were once my daughter-in-law!"

Roxanne snapped back to reality, and her lips curled into a wry smile. "Since when have you ever cared about that?"

Sonya had never treated her as her daughter-in-law.

It sounded like a joke to Roxanne.

Sonya stiffened, not knowing how to reply to this.

Roxanne took a sip of her coffee. She didn't even cast Sonya a glance as she uttered, "Also, you can't give me what I want. I will pretend as if we didn't have this conversation today. It's getting late. You should head back."

After a long moment, Sonya finally said stiffly, "You should know what's good for you!"

Roxanne opened the door for her calmly. "I won't be seeing you off."

It was so obvious she was chasing Sonya out of the house. It would be awkward if Sonya continued to stay.

After a moment of consideration, Sonya walked out of the mansion with a grim expression.

Roxanne immediately closed the door behind her.

She had wanted to have a proper discussion with Sonya, but she didn't realize that the latter would be this hostile toward her.

She had had no choice but to face her head on.

In fact, Sonya's statement that she was looking for Estella's mother left her with a deep impression.

She did not expect that the Farwell family still didn't know who Estella's mother was.

If the woman is unwilling to reveal herself, does that mean I can truly take care of Essie in her stead?

Chapter 1290

Archie and Benny got up really early on Monday morning.

They had already prepared warm milk and sandwiches by the time Roxanne made her way down the stairs.

She chuckled in amusement when she saw how excited they were.

"Hurry up and eat your breakfast, Mommy! You need to send us to the kindergarten soon!" Benny said while handing her the glass of warm milk.

Roxanne nodded with a smile and joined them for breakfast before getting into the car with them.

Archie and Benny had been somewhat depressed since Estella transferred to another kindergarten.

Now that Estella had returned, Archie and Benny were excited about attending classes again.

Upon arriving at the kindergarten, Roxanne saw Estella standing next to Lucian while he spoke to Pippa and Jeffrey.

"Mr. Farwell! Essie!" Archie and Benny shouted excitedly from the car window.

Roxanne couldn't help but smile as she brought them out of the car.

The boys hurried up to Estella and gave her a big hug from both sides.

"Welcome back, Essie!"

Estella had been a little nervous when she saw Pippa earlier, but the sight of Archie and Benny brought a huge smile to her face.

After saying hi to Estella, Archie and Benny turned around to greet Pippa and Lucian, "Good morning Ms. Ward! Good morning, Mr. Farwell!"

It had been a long time since Pippa had seen them smiling so happily.

Jeffrey, on the other hand, didn't pay the boys much attention. He had read Roxanne's files and knew that she was just a doctor. He couldn't be bothered to try to butter her up.

Lucian patted them on the heads in response. He was about to ask them where Roxanne was when he looked up and saw her standing in front of him.

"Good morning, Ms. Jarvis!" Pippa greeted her warmly.

Roxanne nodded and responded with a smile, "Ms. Ward, Mr. Bauer, good morning."

She then lowered her head and shifted her gaze to Estella.

Ever since Roxanne and Lucian fell apart, she had insisted on driving the boys to and from school herself in hopes of meeting Estella at the front gate, but she had never got a chance to see her.

As such, she was delighted to finally see Estella after so long.

"Aunt Roxanne!" Estella called out to Roxanne in front of Pippa and Jeffrey, causing the two to freeze in shock.

A few seconds later, Pippa regained her composure and glanced at Lucian. After making sure that he wasn't displeased with Estella's form of address, she flashed Roxanne a smile and said, "You and Essie sure are close!"

Noticing the innocent look in Estella's eyes, Roxanne figured it wasn't something worth hiding and gave her a pat on the head. "You need to be a good girl and listen to Ms. Ward, okay? Feel free to talk to Archie and Benny if you need anything."

Estella nodded obediently in response.

"We'll make sure to take good care of Essie! We won't let anyone bully her!" Archie and Benny said in unison.

Even though Roxanne didn't tell them anything, the boys knew that Estella must've been bullied in that new kindergarten. Frustrated that they couldn't get back at the bullies, they decided to do everything in their power to protect her instead.

Having realized how important Roxanne was, Jeffrey was quick to reassure her, "Don't worry, Ms. Jarvis! The environment here at our kindergarten is very good, so you may rest assured that no one will bully her!"

Chapter 1291

Naturally, Roxanne noticed the sudden change in his attitude and knew the reason behind it. "I'm glad to hear that," she replied coldly.

Jeffrey's eyelids twitched slightly when he heard her cold response, but he forced himself to maintain a smile on his face.

"The kids miss Essie a lot, so no one is going to bully her." Pippa quickly stepped in to defuse the tension.

Roxanne flashed her a polite smile in response. "I'll be placing Essie in your care, Ms. Ward."

Since it was time for class to start, Pippa got ready to bring the kids inside.

Right then, Lucian recalled something and called out to her, "By the way, do not let Aubree pick Essie up from school if she shows up. In the event that I am unable to pick Essie up myself, Ms. Jarvis here will do it for me."

He then shot Roxanne a meaningful look after saying that.

Of course, Pippa understood what he was implying. She glanced at Roxanne in surprise.

I knew there was something off about the relationship between them, but I didn't think Ms. Jarvis would take Ms. Pearson's place in Mr. Farwell's heart!

Having come to a sudden realization, Pippa began to view Roxanne in a different light.

Roxanne did not expect Lucian to say something like that out of the blue, so she didn't know how to respond at all.

She was still trying to find the words when Estella tugged at the hem of her shirt and asked excitedly, "Is that true, Aunt Roxanne? Will you come to pick me up from now on?"

Everyone shifted their gaze to Roxanne upon hearing that.

Roxanne simply couldn't bring herself to say no when she saw the expectant look in Estella's eyes. "Yeah, that's right. If your daddy can't come to pick you up, then you can play with Archie and Benny instead!" she said with a nod.

All three of the kids cheered happily when they heard that.

"Similarly, if Ms. Jarvis can't make it, I will pick them up for her," Lucian chimed in.

The kids cheered even louder in response.

Unable to turn his offer down, Roxanne could only nod in silence.

Pippa looked at Lucian, then at Roxanne before nodding in acknowledgment.
“Understood. I will be sure to keep that in mind.”

Suddenly, Jeffrey thought of something and asked cautiously, “W-What if someone from your family comes over instead? Mrs. Farwell or Mr. Elias, for example.”

Roxanne couldn’t help but recall the argument between them the other day.

Although she had stood firm in her stance, that encounter still affected her somewhat.

Since Jeffrey had asked Lucian about Sonya, Roxanne got curious as to what Lucian’s answer would be.

“Give me a call if they come to pick her up. Do not let Essie go with them without my permission,” Lucian replied with a frown.

Jeffrey nodded profusely. “U-Understood, Mr. Farwell!”

For some inexplicable reason, Roxanne breathed a sigh of relief after hearing his answer.

While I am glad to hear that Lucian is opposing his mother because she dislikes me, I can’t help but feel that I’m being a little selfish here...

“Class is starting. I’ll be bringing the kids into the classroom now.”

Pippa waved goodbye to them and brought the three kids into the classroom.

Jeffrey, too, excused himself and returned to his office.

By the time Roxanne came back to her senses, Lucian was the only one standing next to her at the kindergarten front gate.

“Why did you tell Ms. Ward and Mr. Bauer that just now?” she asked helplessly while trying her best to remain calm.

If Ms. Ward and Mr. Bauer know about us, then practically everyone in the kindergarten will! We aren’t exactly a couple yet, so I don’t want to attract too much attention!

Chapter 1292

“Did I say anything wrong? I’m more than happy to help pick Archie and Benny up and look after them if you can’t make it. Do you not want my help?” Lucian replied in the most matter-of-fact tone possible.

He then eyed Roxanne from head to toe as he continued, “If you don’t want me to do that, I can have Cayden—”

Roxanne knew just how persistent he could get, so she quickly cut him off, “All right, I’ll pick Essie up if you’re too busy.”

Satisfied with her answer, Lucian nodded slowly in response.

Looking at the time on her watch, Roxanne said, “Anyway, I need to get to work now. See you later in the evening.”

She was worried about the research institute, as it had been without a leader for two days straight.

Roxanne was about to leave when Lucian called out to her with a displeased frown, “That’s it? Are you just going to leave like that?”

She paused in her tracks and let out a helpless sigh in response.

Lucian seemed to have changed completely ever since I agreed to let him court me... For some reason, I just can’t bring myself to say no to him...

Roxanne turned around and asked, “What else do you want me to do?”

Before she even realized what was going on, Lucian had walked up to her and given her a quick peck on the lips.

“That’s more like it.” Lucian gently rubbed her lips as he continued with a mysterious look in his eyes, “Go on, then.”

It took Roxanne a good few seconds to come back to her senses.

Her face burned bright red when she realized he had kissed her in front of a kindergarten.

“You...”

She was about to warn him not to kiss her in public again, but she held her tongue as she didn’t want him to think there would be a next time.

“What is it?” Lucian asked in confusion.

“Please mind your behavior!” Roxanne snapped at him and stormed off.

Although there weren’t a lot of people around when Lucian kissed her, Roxanne refused to stick around in case someone had seen it.

Lucian followed behind her as the two made their way toward their respective cars.

Roxanne started her car and was about to drive to the research institute, but the engine failed a few seconds after she started it up.

With a frown on her face, she tried starting it a few more times, but to no avail.

She gave up on driving and decided to hail a cab instead.

As Lucian had yet to leave, he saw her get out of the car and quickly followed suit.

“What’s wrong? I thought you were going to the research institute?”

“My car broke down. It has been breaking down often ever since it crashed into a tree the other day. I’ll take a cab there. You can head on over to your office,” Roxanne replied in frustration.

She was about to walk past Lucian and hail a passing cab from the street when Lucian said, “Let me take a look at your car. It might be something that I can easily fix.”

Feeling a little relieved, Roxanne turned around and walked back to her car with Lucian.

Unfortunately, Lucian could not find anything wrong with her car even after inspecting it thoroughly. “I think you need to have a mechanic repair it for you.”

“All right. I’ll take a cab there myself. Thanks for trying to help.”

Chapter 1293

“Why would you choose a difficult option when a much easier one is right in front of you?” Lucian asked.

Roxanne paused in her tracks and stared at him in confusion.

“I’m in no rush. How about I give you a ride instead?” Lucian continued with an eyebrow arched while getting out of her car.

Roxanne was a little hesitant when she heard that.

It would be difficult to get a cab at this hour, so Lucian sending me to work would make things a lot easier. But I'm not used to being so close to him just yet, nor am I able to shamelessly accept his help...

As though he had read her mind, Lucian added, "I don't mind charging you a fare if you're that particular about troubling me."

Roxanne tensed up, as she knew Lucian meant something else when he said that.

Sure enough, Lucian continued by saying, "I just need you to go somewhere with me."

"Where to?" Roxanne asked instinctively.

Instead of answering her question, Lucian simply opened the door to the passenger seat and motioned for her to get in.

As the two of them had been standing around for quite some time, they were starting to attract the attention of the people nearby.

Since it was getting late, Roxanne got into the car after a brief moment of hesitation.

Lucian then made his way to the driver's seat and slowly drove out of there.

Cayden let out a huge sigh as he watched Lucian's car disappear into the distance.

Ugh... It sure isn't easy being Mr. Farwell's assistant! Not only did I have to suppress my guilt and sabotage Ms. Jarvis' car in public, but now, I also have to clean up the mess myself and get her car towed to a repair shop...

After making a phone call, Cayden pressed his palms together and prayed that Roxanne wouldn't hold him accountable if she found out about it in the future.

I'm just carrying out the orders given by Mr. Farwell, so she should go after him instead!

Meanwhile, a huge commotion broke out in the classroom when Pippa brought the three kids inside.

"Essie!"

"It really is her!"

All the other kids squealed in excitement as they rushed forward and surrounded the three.

One of them had mentioned earlier that he had seen Estella at the front gate, but they didn't believe him at the time.

It wasn't until they saw Estella enter the classroom that they finally believed it.

They didn't really like Estella before, as she refused to speak to them, which led them to believe she didn't like them.

As Estella gradually opened up with the help of Archie and Benny, however, the kids slowly warmed up to her.

Eventually, they liked her so much that they actually missed her while she was gone.

Having been treated coldly while attending classes at the other kindergarten, Estella wasn't used to receiving such a warm welcome all of a sudden.

She decided to turn toward Archie and Benny for help, only to realize they had blended into the crowd.

As the kids all took turns giving Estella hugs, one of the boys got so excited that he kissed her on the cheek.

Archie and Benny leaped to their feet and yelled angrily, "Hey! Boys aren't allowed to kiss her! Hugs only!"

Estella was still stunned by the sudden kiss, but she instinctively nodded when she heard them defending her.

The boy then walked up to her and apologized, "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to kiss you. I just—"

After Estella snapped out of her dazed state, her lips curled into a smile when she saw the sincere looks on their faces. "It's okay! I've missed you guys too!"

At that, the kids smothered her with hugs again.

Chapter 1294

Pippa chuckled and shook her head when she saw how excited the kids were.

They are rarely this happy, so why not let them have some fun?

She flashed a smile and watched them from the side, lest they get into any accidents.

Another teaching assistant from the same class approached her and whispered, "Ms. Ward, how is Mr. Farwell related to Archie and Benny's mother?"

Pippa froze in surprise. She recalled Lucian's words earlier and how Estella had addressed Roxanne this morning.

It was evident that there was more to their relationship than either of them was letting on although they had not been explicit about it.

In the event that a member of the Farwell family wished to pick up Estella, Lucian would need to be notified by phone, whereas Roxanne could collect her without prior authorization.

It could be said that Roxanne was much more important to Lucian than his family.

However, she wasn't sure if they were ready to go public with their relationship.

Pippa gave the teaching assistant a half-smile instead of answering her question.

The teaching assistant continued, "I saw Mr. Farwell and Ms. Jarvis doing that through the window earlier!"

Pippa shot her a baffled look.

The teaching assistant made a kissing gesture with her hands.

Her gesture elicited a surprised look in Pippa's eyes.

Pippa knew they were dating, but it was still shocking to learn that they had kissed at the kindergarten entrance.

"What about Mr. Farwell and Ms. Pearson's engagement?" the teaching assistant asked curiously.

Fearing that she might dwell on the matter, Pippa promptly clarified, "I suppose they broke up."

She wasn't sure about it, but Lucian had most probably broken up with Aubree judging from how he treated her.

"I previously thought Mr. Farwell and Ms. Pearson didn't seem like a real couple. Ms. Pearson was so rude to us, remember? She doesn't deserve to be with Mr. Farwell." The teaching assistant was pretty upset with Aubree. After learning that Lucian and Aubree were no longer together, she promptly vented her frustrations. "I don't think Essie likes Aubree, too. Did she do something to Essie behind Mr. Farwell's back?"

They both turned to look at Estella.

A long while later, the teaching assistant piped up, "Actually, Essie resembles Ms. Jarvis, doesn't she? She adores Ms. Jarvis. If I didn't know the truth, I'd have assumed she's Ms. Jarvis' daughter."

Pippa observed Estella for a while and nodded in agreement.

However, Estella was Lucian's daughter, and Roxanne had her own children. Naturally, they weren't related to each other by blood.

Pippa sighed softly. "I wish that's true. That way, Essie wouldn't have refused to talk for years."

When Estella started attending kindergarten, Pippa had concerns about her well-being.

Fortunately, Roxanne appeared in the little girl's life.

The teaching assistant agreed, "Yes. Perhaps fate brought Ms. Jarvis to Essie so she could be her savior. Look how happy Essie is now."

Their hearts melted at the adorable sight of Estella playing with her friends.