

The Wife You Buried Is Back from Hell

Chapter 19

The intimidating aura around Alexander made Niki shrink back, lips pressed together as she timidly changed her words. "Thank you, sir..."

Her eyes stung, filled with a sense of injustice.

Still, she bit her lip stubbornly, refusing to let a single tear fall.

She had thought... maybe her father was finally willing to accept her.

Danielle was still shaken by what had just happened. When Niki fell away from her toward the other side, Danielle instinctively reached out, but she was too far away.

Thankfully, her daughter was safe.

Gently scooping Niki into her arms, Danielle offered soft words of comfort. "That must have been scary. Are you hurt anywhere?"

Niki shook her head in silence.

She knew if she tried to speak, she'd burst into tears.

Raffy stood off to the side, watching them, feeling a twist of discomfort in his chest.

His mom used to hug him like that, so gentle and warm.

But his mom hadn't come home in a long time, and it had been ages since he'd felt her embrace.

He missed her deep down.

And when his mom had just said he didn't have one, it stung.

But then he thought, as long as Miss Millie was there when his mom couldn't be, maybe things weren't so bad after all.

He was sure his mom didn't really mean it. She was just upset—she'd never actually leave him.

Danielle didn't spare Alexander so much as a glance. Holding Niki close, she walked away without looking back.

Alexander's brow tensed ever so slightly.

He couldn't pretend not to notice the difference—Danielle, who used to greet him with such warmth, now met him only with icy indifference.

Who knew what childish game she was playing at now?

"Even a child knows how to say thank you. Don't you?" he called after her.

Danielle paused in her tracks and shot him a cold, mocking smile. "You owe her far more than a simple thank you, don't you think?"

With that, she walked away, not bothering to see his reaction.

The remark made no sense—utterly baffling.

Alexander's eyes hardened, his whole presence turning cold as frost.

Was it his imagination, or had Danielle just looked at him with hatred?

Liam let out a dry, sarcastic chuckle. "Is this really the Danielle I know? The one who used to hang on your every word? Since when did she get so cold—trying out a new strategy, playing hard to get now?"

Alexander frowned, catching only one phrase—"playing hard to get."

Maybe that was it.

That would explain a lot.

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After the defense expo ended, Danielle was taking Niki to dinner with her teacher when her phone buzzed. It was Kirsten Delaney, her childhood friend, and the moment she picked up, Kirsten's voice came barreling through. "Danielle! Have you seen the news trending online?!"

Danielle smiled at the familiar tone. "Trending news? Let me guess, one of your brothers is caught in another scandal?"

"You still have the nerve to joke? Your Mr. Davidson—he's been caught cheating!" Kirsten seethed. "Where are you right now? I'm coming to get you and we're going to go show that bastard what's what!"

Danielle paused, lowering her gaze to scroll through her phone. The trending topics were all about the defense expo—people everywhere were bursting with pride about the country's strength.

But wedged between the headlines was a different story.

#TheDavidsons—A Picture-Perfect Family at the Defense Expo#

Just seeing the headline made Danielle's heart clench.

The photo showed Alexander, Millie, and Raffy together, smiling tenderly like the happiest of families.

In this second chance at life, Danielle knew their relationship wasn't as simple as "just friends." Still, seeing it plastered across the internet like this hurt more than she cared to admit.

It made her feel like a fool for raising someone else's child so lovingly for five years.

The cruelest part was that she truly saw Raffy as her own, but now that his birth mother was back, all Raffy could talk about was how wonderful Millie was.

If Millie hadn't returned, if Danielle hadn't seen them together, she'd never have realized how much Raffy resented her as his "mom."

No wonder, in her past life, Raffy had always been distant and irritable around this time of year.

Five years of love and devotion, and for what? All for nothing.

Danielle closed the app, sounding almost detached. "I saw them at the expo."

"And you're this calm?" Kirsten blurted. "Did you lose your mind from anger?"

"Kirsten." Danielle's voice was steady. "I'm divorcing him."

"Divorce?" Kirsten was stunned.

She never imagined Danielle would make that decision.

Only she knew how much Danielle had loved Alexander.

For Danielle to suddenly ask for a divorce, she must have suffered more than anyone could know.

"Did he hurt you?" Kirsten's voice hardened. "If he laid a hand on you, it won't end with a divorce. I'll make sure he regrets it."