

Chapter 5 Leaving Him and Going Abroad - Lose You to Love Me - Vanilla Luci

At twelve, Zoe first met Barrett, and now she's known him for exactly ten years.

How many decades does one get in a lifetime?

Three years ago, after Barrett's paralyzing car accident, she had spent a year tending to his every need, then married him for another two years. In the end, as a substitute, she lost everything.

She had lost her job, her friends, and then him.

Looking around the empty bedroom, Zoe realized she truly had nothing left. Everything in Willowbrook Villa belonged to Barrett; nothing was hers.

The late Mrs. Smith, who had loved her, passed away a month ago, leaving her 20% of Smith Corporation's shares. But she, without a second thought, had handed them all to Barrett, saying she couldn't manage them.

Staring at her empty palms, she let out a low laugh.

What did she have left? Nothing.

She had once run a design studio in college, had many friends, and even helped Mrs. Smith manage the company. She was competent in many things.

Later, she willingly gave up everything for Barrett, handing over all that Mrs. Smith left for her. She devoted herself to taking care of his daily life.

He was meticulous, and she washed all his clothes by hand.

He enjoyed her cooking, so she took over the kitchen duties.

Gradually, she pampered him in every aspect of his life, making him increasingly demanding.

Eventually, she managed all aspects of his daily routine, becoming virtually the sole servant in his household.

Serving him was like tending to a king—doing laundry and cooking during the day, and warming his bed at night.

When he claimed she tormented Jacey for three years, did he ever consider how she had the time?

Her phone rang, interrupting her thoughts.

It was Cosmo, her twelve-year-old brother. When Zoe had been adopted by the Smith family at twelve, two-year-old Cosmo was adopted by another family. But two years ago, that family, having their own child, started neglecting Cosmo.

Remembering Barrett's recent actions, Zoe feared he might harm Cosmo too.

"Cos, how about I take you abroad for treatment?" Zoe had asked.

From the other end, Cosmo's weak voice had come through: "I'll do whatever you say, sis. But will brother-in-law agree? Is he coming with us?"

Zoe had vaguely reassured him that it was fine and hung up. After quickly packing a few things, she had taken a taxi to the hospital to pick up Cosmo.

Once they had completed Cosmo's discharge process and were heading out of the hospital, they unexpectedly ran into Christopher coming from the inpatient building.

Zoe had initially thought to avoid him, but Christopher had already noticed her.

He quickly approached, looking at Cosmo and the luggage beside Zoe.

Zoe managed a small smile and greeted him.

Christopher appeared surprised: "Your brother's condition hasn't improved yet, and you're discharging him already?"

Zoe nodded: "Dr. Rivers, I've decided to take my brother abroad for treatment, so we won't be staying in the hospital here."

Christopher frowned, questioning her decision: "Why? Don't just believe what others say about foreign doctors being better. The medical care here is top-notch, not to mention your current situation. I'm working on finding a suitable

heart for you. With both of you in this condition, how could you even consider going abroad?"

Zoe lied uncomfortably, "I've already contacted hospitals and doctors overseas."

Christopher blocked her way and said, "Which hospital and which doctor? Tell me."

Zoe was momentarily tongue-tied and fell silent.

Christopher reached out and pulled Cosmo to his side, earnestly saying, "Don't mess around with your sister. Stay in the hospital, focus on your treatment. You're still young, besides getting treated, you also need to study. How convenient would it be if you go abroad?"

Many onlookers turned their attention towards them, making Zoe feel embarrassed as she tried to pull Cosmo back: "Dr. Rivers, I appreciate your concern, but I've really made up my mind."

She reached out to take Cosmo, but Christopher, frowning, was reluctant to let go, leading to a standoff between them.

Finally, Zoe let go, resigned, and pushed the luggage away: "Cosmo, stay here for a while. I'll go home to pack our bags and then come back for you."

As Zoe swiftly left, Christopher, feeling embarrassed under the curious stares of others, finally let go of Cosmo and allowed him to leave.

Just as Zoe stepped out of the hospital building, intending to hail a taxi, a tall figure suddenly appeared before her.

Absorbed in checking flight information on her phone, she was caught off guard by the sudden obstruction and nearly collided with the person.

Cosmo looked up and timidly called him "brother-in-law."

Barrett, ignoring Cosmo, confronted Zoe with a cold stare.

Zoe gripped her luggage, and said, "Mr. Smith, what do you want?"

"Mr. Smith?" Upon hearing this, Barrett scoffed, his gaze growing even colder.

Zoe resisted the urge to step back, afraid of the oppressive feeling as he moved closer.

She tried to calm herself down: "About the divorce, the divorce papers are already signed and in the bedroom at Willowbrook Villa."

He seemed not to hear and coldly interrogated, "When did you start dating him?"

Caught off guard by the abrupt question, Zoe responded with a moment of confusion: "What?"

He sneered, "Taking your brother for a medical visit, and you end up flirting with a doctor. Are you so desperate and cheap?"

Cosmo, with a hostile expression, stepped in front of Shen Yan and declared, "I won't allow you to speak about my sister like that! I've heard it all; you're the one eyeing other cheap women, planning to abandon my sister!"

Barrett's eyes reflected disgust, and he took a step forward, about to confront Cosmo. How dare he call Jacey a "cheap woman"?

Zoe, uneasy, quickly pulled Cosmo behind her: "He's just a kid. If you have a problem, confront me, not a child."

Barrett's face contorted with loathing: "Typical siblings, both so annoying. I bet you're having an affair with that doctor, trying to distance yourself from me. Is that why you sent Jacey back to the country now? Do you really think I'll let you succeed with your lover?"

Zoe clenched her hand tightly and angrily slapped Barrett's face.