

Love Me Or Leave Me

#Chapter 181 - Read Love Me Or Leave Me Chapter 181

Hearing this. Debra was stunned. Then, she said in surprise, "Yeah, it might work!"

Stacey thought, then added, 'But I can't believe what Gifford said. Let's re-investigate this matter to see what's going on.'

Debra nodded repeatedly. "Yes. We should investigate. As Debra spoke, she looked at Stacey with mixed emotions and relief. After Stacey adjusted her mindset, she became much more clear-headed and alert.

"When your dad comes back from work, you can talk to him and see how to investigate this matter, Debra reminded Stacey.

Stacey nodded and agreed, "Okay"

After Stacey agreed with Debra, she sent a message to Adrian and Bryce. She knew that they would know more about the investigation than she did. Both Adrian and Bryce were shocked and worried when they received a text from Stacey. If Jenny was that kind of person, she might end Lillian's and Kevin's lives in the future.

Becky was right. They couldn't be on guard all the time. A child still had a long way to go, and there might be times when they were negligent. If one day they were not careful, something would happen. It would be better to find out the cause of this matter and how Jeffrey's child died. If the child's death had nothing to do with Jenny, it meant that Gifford spread the rumors. They didn't need to worry about it. If Jenny planned the death of that child, then Jenny was dangerous.

Adrian texted: [I have a few lawyer friends in Menterra, and they know some people. I'll ask them to help with the investigation. Don't worry too much.

Stacey was stunned when she received the message from Adrian. She didn't expect that he could directly send someone to investigate. Stacey didn't want to bother others, but when it came to this kind of thing, Adrian's friends certainly knew more about it than she did. It would be more reliable for them to investigate it than her.

Stacey texted Adrian: [Okay, thank you.]

Adrian texted: [I told you. You can drop the formalities.]

Stacey couldn't help laughing. She texted: [Okay.]

After chatting with Adrian, Stacey hurriedly told Bryce about what Adrian would do. She didn't want Bryce to worry. Bryce was relieved when he heard that Adrian had someone over there who could help with the investigation. He didn't believe others, but Adrian was trustworthy.

Bryce texted Stacey: [Okay, let Adrian deal with this. There should be no problem. In the meantime, protect Lily and Kev well. Don't let anything happen to them and don't think about anything else.]

Stacey hurriedly texted: [Okay. Thank you]

Bryce texted Stacey a happy emoticon

She thought it was difficult to solve the problem, but she didn't expect that all she needed to do was to text Adrian and Bryce. Basically, she didn't need to worry about it. As she relaxed, she was somewhat stunned before she started to giggle. She thought, 'It feels good to be loved by the whole family. Thinking of this, Stacey felt motivated. She also wanted to strive to become tough, so she could help with the worries of her family.

Adrian, Bryce, and Charlie had their favorite things to do, and they had their areas of expertise. The only thing they probably didn't want to do was to manage the company. It seemed that everyone in Stacey's family had their dreams and were trying to live the dream. Even Patrick wanted to find an end soon so that he could retire and travel with Debra

Stacey finally knew the direction of her future and responsibilities. She wanted to work harder to manage the company well, so Adrian, Bryce, and Charlie could do what they wanted. Patrick could retire with peace of mind and take Debra to travel. Stacey's dream was to protect her loving family so that everyone could pursue their dreams at ease without being confined by family business.

That afternoon, Stacey returned to the company. She sorted out the previous information and began to work. She was

familiar with the company's operations because she had just entered the company, so there weren't many tasks assigned to Patrick. She was mainly responsible for jewelry design for the time being.

The Carter family business had always been stable, but that stability might be affected after a month because the contract of their top designer, Thomas, was about to end. A few days ago, when Stacey was in the company, she overheard some employees chatting. They said that Thomas had received an invitation letter from Eklonna. He would immediately join them after his contract with Carter's Jewel ended.

Stacey had secretly looked into the information about Eklonna, She didn't know anything about them until she looked into it. Once she did, she was shocked. Eklonna was a famous brand in Daprein. Their target customers were somewhat similar to the Hoggard family. Eklonna catered to the world's top elites, and they specialized in designing various pieces of jewelry for Epean royal families.

After finding out about Eklonna, Stacey knew that it was almost impossible for her to ask Thomas to renew the contract with Carter's Jewel and continue to stay at Carter's Jewel. She also talked to Patrick about this matter in private, and his attitude was very calm. He told her not to dwell on it and to just go with the flow.

People naturally sought to improve their status, while things tended to follow their natural course. Those who master a skill to the highest level had their dreams. They wouldn't be held back by the same company forever. Not only Thomas but also the other two top designers, Linda and Bernard, who worked for the Carter family were the same. When their contracts ended, if they could find better opportunities, they would leave

What they needed to do was to train people and help them grow, so they could become the top designers of Carter's Jewel. They could also find other top designers to join Carter's Jewel.

Stacey had been paying attention to the work of ordinary designers these days, but there was a huge gap between them and the top designers. It wasn't because the ordinary designers' designs weren't good. It was just that their designs were far from top-notch.

Stacey thought for a while and somehow wanted to go to Daprein. She wanted to see how beautiful the design of Eklonna was. As soon as this idea came out, Stacey couldn't help but search for information about Eklonna. Unfortunately, she didn't find much useful information after a whole afternoon.

Eklonna's online information was somewhat similar to Hoggard Group. It was so brief that there was almost no information about them. There was only news about Eklonna's products when it involved the Epean royal families, such as some princesses attending a certain event and wearing the products designed by Eklonna's designer.

Stacey spent the whole afternoon thinking about it. When she got off work that evening, she told her father she wanted to go on a business trip to Daprein.

When Patrick heard that, he was surprised, but only for a moment. He quickly agreed and said, "Sure, bring your mom with you. She'd love to shop at Eklonna."

Stacey felt relieved and nodded before saying, "Okay."

Soon, it was time to leave work. She and Patrick left work together and went home.

When Stacey returned home, she told her mother she would take a business trip to Daprein to inspect Eklonna. As expected, Debra's eyes lit up. She immediately expressed her desire to accompany Stacey, who readily agreed with a smile, remembering Patrick's suggestion earlier that evening to invite Debra along. When Debra heard Stacey's words, she turned to look at Patrick, unable to hide the happiness in her 'cyes.

Stacey spent a week preparing and organizing things at the company. Then she took her assistant, Debra, Lillian, Kevin, Gwen, and Marie, abroad together. Lillian and Kevin were still very young, but Debra insisted they should have been taken out more often to look around and broaden their horizons. Even Patrick allowed the little ones to come along. Stacey finally agreed after—careful consideration. When they eventually went abroad with such a large group, it didn't seem like they were on a business trip, more like a vacation.

However, Patrick said it was better to disguise as a regular visitor when inspecting a competitor's company. Otherwise, they might get kicked out if they were recognized as industry peers. His comments took Stacey aback, but she soon realized her father was right.

Even though Stacey had planned everything, she had not expected to run into Hayden. When Lillian and Kevin saw Hayden, their eyes lit up with excitement. At that time, Kevin's reaction was even faster than Lillian's. Before Stacey could react, the boy was like a cannonball, waddling over to Hayden and quickly hugging his leg. Kevin lifted his head, looked at Hayden, and said happily, "Daddy!"

Lillian quickly ran over, hugging Hayden's other leg, and shouted excitedly, "Daddy, why are you here?"

Stacey was taken aback. Startled, she quickly regained her composure and followed after them. She hurriedly said, "My apologies, Lily and Kev are quite young. They might not realize the difference..."

As Stacey spoke, a Dapreinian looked at Lillian and Kevin in surprise and excitedly said a few words to Hayden in Dapreinish. Stacey Carter had not learned Dapreinish and could not understand what was being said. More importantly, the person was clearly Hayden's friend, and Stacey felt awkward asking her assistant to translate, so she was quite confused.

After listening to the man, Hayden seemed to be in a pleasant mood. He nodded and spoke to him in Dapreinish. After a while, Hayden bent down and carried Lillian and Kevin in his arms. Stacey was startled and instinctively reached out to support the children in case Hayden could not hold them properly, and they could fall. Unaware of any danger, Lillian and Kevin were thrilled to be carried up by Hayden. They both reached out to hug Hayden on either side.

When the Dapreinian looked at the children, he was curious and reached out to hold them. Lillian wasn't afraid of strangers. When she looked at the stranger, she was especially fascinated by his golden hair, which caught her eye because she loved pretty things. Lillian extended her arms. She was on the verge of throwing herself into the blond man's arms. The man's eyes lit up when he saw Lillian about to run into his arms. He quickly reached out to catch her and was excited to hold her in his arms.

Stacey was finally less worried when a child was taken from Hayden. An adult should have only held one child. Hayden adjusted his posture, holding Kevin in his arms. He smiled at Stacey and asked, "Why are you in Daprein?"

Stacey thought it over and told Hayden the truth. He was surprised to hear Stacey's explanation and quickly said, "Eklonna? We're actually here for Eklonna's new product exhibition. Becky Mrs. Carter, would you like to join us?" He looked at Stacey and Debra with courtesy and respect.

Debra was delighted as she asked, "Eklonna's new product show?"

"Yes," Hayden replied and nodded.

Stacey was also excited. They came to Daprein specifically to see Eklonna, so visiting their new product exhibition would be even better. Anyway....

"But we don't have an invitation," Debra said.

Hayden smiled and said, "Leave it to me. I'll let them know. It shouldn't be a problem."

"Thank you so much, Hay." Debra quickly thanked him..

Stacey also realized Hayden had helped her, so she quickly thanked him. "Thank you. If there's a chance next time, I'll buy you a meal."

Hayden looked at Stacey and nodded with a smile. "Okay, he replied,

"Daddy, what are you doing here?" Kevin asked as he hugged Hayden while the adults were talking. Hayden heard Kevin's words and lowered his head to answer Kevin's question seriously. Unfortunately, he was too young to understand what an exhibition was.

"Where are you staying? Have you booked your rooms? Shall I take you upstairs?" Hayden asked Stacey and Debra while coaxing Kevin.

Stacey glanced at the golden-haired man and shook her head quickly, refusing, "We're staying at the hotel. We can go there ourselves. You have other things to do, right? Go ahead and don't worry about us."

Hayden noticed her glance and looked at the man, smiling as he said, "This is Hugo Eastman, my friend. We're close friends. No need to be formal with him."

Hugo was excited to hear Hayden introduce him to a girl he cared about. So, he turned around, extended his hand to Stacey, and introduced himself in a slightly awkward Zentiscapian, "Hi, I'm Hugo, Hayden's friend. Nice to meet you."

Stacey quickly reached out Hugo's hands and introduced herself "Hello, I'm Stacey Carter."

"Stay-see?" Hugo asked with some confusion. His pronunciation was slightly strange.

When Stacey heard his language, the corners of her mouth twitched slightly as she explained earnestly, "It's Stacey, derived from the word 'Eustace, which means fruitful or productive."

After struggling with the topic of name pronunciation for a few seconds, Stacey found that she couldn't correct it at all. Her name's pronunciation was too hard for Hugo. In the end, she and Hugo gave up. The pronunciation wasn't too important as long as they could understand each other.

After Hugo left, Hayden sent Stacey and the others to their rooms to settle down. Lillian and Kevin were thrilled. As they entered the hotel room, they ran around, eager to explore every corner.

"Where is Jeremy?" Stacey gestured for Hayden to sit down on the couch and smiled as she asked.

"He's in kindergarten, replied Hayden.

Stacey was a little concerned. "Is he home alone? Will he be afraid?"

Hayden shook his head and said, "No, my grandparents came to Strico, and they are currently taking care of him. He enjoys being with them a lot."

"Mr. and Mrs. Hoggard?" Stacey was surprised.

Hayden nodded and hummed in reply. He thought for a moment and then explained, Jeremy will undergo another surgery in a few days. He has been undergoing treatment for his speech issue. Everyone is afraid that he will be scared. So, before each surgery adjustment, my grandparents would come a month in advance to accompany him. This way, Jeremy won't be as afraid.

Mentioning this, Stacey also expressed her concern. She asked with some worry, "Can Jeremy's issue be cured?"

Hayden nodded. "We started treatment early, so there is still hope. However, it is a complicated process that requires multiple surgeries and gradual adjustments. But from one year old until now, we have made significant progress. After this upcoming surgery, Jeremy should be able to try to speak.

Stacey's eyes lit up immediately, and she asked excitedly. "Really

Hayden looked at her shining eyes and knew that she genuinely cared about Jeremy. He couldn't help but feel happy, so he nodded and said, "Yes, it's true."

"That's great! When is he scheduled for the surgery? Where will it take place? How about I accompany him when the time comes?" Stacey offered. Jeremy liked her. Stacey thought that if she went along, he would be very happy and wouldn't be so scared during the surgery.

"Are we going to find Jeremy? I want to go too!" Kevin, upon hearing her mother's words, immediately hopped over and said. Stacey, amused by his words, pulled the boy into her arms and playfully squeezed his chubby cheek.

Lillian also ran over and said excitedly, "I want to play with Jereray, too!"

Hayden lifted Lillian into his arms, smiling as he asked, "Do you like Jeremy, Lily?"

"Yes, I do!" Lillian answered without thinking.

"I like Jeremy, too!" Kevin was not to be outdone and said loudly

Hayden was in a good mood. Even the three children were so close to each other. It seemed like he and Becky were meant for each other. After sitting in their room for a while, Hayden got up to take his leave. It was not that he didn't want to stay, but Stacey, Debra, and others had just arrived in Daprein.

They were tired for sure after a long flight and in need of rest, so he couldn't linger and interrupt their reg. Moreover, the launch event of Eklonna's new product was about to begin Tomorrow. He also needed to ask the organizer for more invitations so that he could take Becky and others to attend the event tomorrow.

After Hayden left, Lilliam—and Kevin continued their persistent questioning, like a broken record. They asked repeatedly. "Where is Daddy going? Why does Daddy have to leave? Why can't Daddy stay and play with us?"

Stacey felt a headache, pulled Kevin and Lillian close to her, and explained seriously, "Lily, Kev, that's Mr. Hoggard, not Daddy. Next time, when you see him, please call him Mr. Hoggard, okay?"

However, her explanation received a strong protest from the two kids. They refused loudly, saying they wanted Hayden to be their daddy. They insisted that he was great and that they liked him.

Seeing the situation, Debra couldn't help but protect the children and said, "Becky, let's not correct them for now. I like Hay, too. If you don't like him, I will discuss with him whether he can be Lily and Kev's godfather. And since Jeremy likes you so much, you can also be his godmother. That way, all the children will have parents, which would be good for them."

'The most important thing is that if the children call Hay by Mr. Hoggard, it creates distance, whereas calling them 'mom and dad' feels more intimate. Becky's children call Hay "Daddy, while Hay's son call Becky "Mommy". Who knows, as they keep calling each other like this, it might become real in the future. When you separate things too clearly, it can actually create distance, and it might truly end up being a complete separation, Debra thought.

Although Debra told herself to respect her daughter's thoughts, she felt that Stacey had feelings for Hayden after seeing how they got along these days. Otherwise, Stacey would have long felt annoyed by Hayden and Jeremy's approach and wouldn't be friends like this. Debra was afraid that Stacey had not completely come out of the shadow of the last divorce, so she couldn't see her true feelings clearly. If she missed the right person, she would regret it later.

Stacey was also confused after hearing her mother's words. She wondered, 'Can we do this? But... It's not impossible, is it?' She thought of Jeremy, Kevin, and Lillian. The three kids were so adorable and well-behaved. Most importantly, she knew Jeremy really liked her. She could feel it. And Lillian and Kevin needed a father, or even if it was just a godfather.

Seeing Becky's expression, Debra knew that she was considering it. Debra felt relieved and said with a smile, "There will be) no problem. After all, our families have been friends for so many years. If your grandmother were still alive, she would surely be delighted too."

Mentioning her grandmother, Stacey thought of the relationship between the two families. She was too young when she got lost, and there were hardly any images of her grandmother in her memory. However, during her last visit to the Hoggard Manor, even though she spent just one day with Jason and Sharon, she could sense that the bond between Sharon and her grandmother was genuine and deep. She thought, 'Hayden and being godparents to each other's children, the eldest in our families should also be supportive, right?'

"Well, if you don't have any objections, I will mention it to Hay next time. What do you think?" Debra observed her daughter's expression quietly for a while and couldn't help smiling in her heart.

"I want Mr. Hoggard to be my father!" Lillian didn't quite understand what the adult was talking about, but she vaguely knew that Debra and Stacey were discussing how to let Hayden be their father.

"I want Mr. Hoggard to be my father, too! He's a good man!" Kevin said loudly.

CHAPTER 184

"If you have no objection, I'll talk to Hay about it next time, Debra said happily.

Stacey's heart clenched, and she hurriedly stopped her. "Mom! Don't..."

She felt nervous as she spoke but didn't know why. Regardless, she was a little afraid to tell Hayden about this.

"Why don't we wait a little longer and talk about it later. Stacey hesitated the more she thought.

Debra could tell Stacey was hesitant. So, she smiled and didn't push too hard, lest Stacey become anxious and make things worse instead. Debra smilingly said, "Okay, there's no rush."

At the airport, Queenie came out with her suitcase and hailed a taxi to Sanders Hotel. Her parents had found out that Hayden was in Daprein these days to attend Eklonna's new product launch and was staying at Sanders Hotel. Queenie wasn't familiar with Daprein, but fortunately, it was convenient to hail a taxi. She just needed to stop a taxi and ask the driver to take her directly to the hotel.

Hayden didn't expect to actually meet Queenie in the hotel lobby on his way back from getting Becky and Debra Eklonna's

invitations.

He instantly frowned. "What's Queenie doing here?"

The smile he had at the thought of seeing Becky soon disappeared as he thought of Queenie's recent entanglement with him. His expression darkened, and he walked toward the elevator without even looking at her.

After getting her keycard, Queenie turned around and saw a familiar figure. Her eyes lit up, and she hurriedly chased after him with her suitcase in tow. Queenie nervously called, "Hog... Mr. Hoggard,"

Although they were married before, Queenie and Hayden weren't very familiar with each other. They seldom spoke, and when they did, they spoke in a distant yet polite tone.

So, even now, Queenie didn't know how to address Hayden. "Mr. Hoggard" was what she used to call Hayden. It was distant and polite, just like their marriage.

Hayden frowned and was unhappy. "What's the matter?"

Queenie was rendered speechless. She took a deep breath and said, "Mr. Hoggard, I—I heard you're here for Eklonna's new product launch. I—I'd like to go too."

Eklonna's products were mainly designed for the royal families of Epean countries. Ordinary people could hardly afford them. Plus, Eklonna rarely sold them to ordinary people, except for a handful of those who had a very good relationship with Eklonna and were recognized by them.

According to Hayden's understanding, the Leavey family wasn't eligible to attend Eklonna's new product launch. However, that had nothing to do with him. It was her own business if Queenie managed to obtain an invitation for Eklonna's new product launch. He just had to do his own thing-

The elevator door opened. Hayden directly stepped in, turned around, and pressed the button for the 24th floor.

Queenie also hurriedly followed him in, but she looked at her own keycard and realized her room was on the seventh floor. She nervously asked, "Are you staying on the 24th floor?"

Hearing this, Hayden paused and asked, "Are you concerned about my situation?"

Queenie was rendered speechless.

Hayden looked at Queenie, thought for a while, and finally said, "I'll have a new girlfriend soon, and Jeremy likes her very

much. She's also here for the launch. I just went to get some invitations for them. If possible...

Hayden looked at Queenie seriously. "If possible, I hope you can remember that we're divorced. Don't do anything in front of my future girlfriend that may easily cause her to misunderstand."

Queenie's expression changed drastically when she heard this. She anxiously asked, "Is it Becky?"

Hayden's expression instantly turned cold as he asked, "How much information have you looked up?"

However, Queenie couldn't hear him anymore. She anxiously said, "Mr. Hoggard... I- I don't think she's suitable for you. Becky was married before and has two children. It's not suitable for you to be with her. If the family is blended, she'll definitely treat her own children better. She'll never treat Jeremy well."

"Queenie, you wanted to abort Jeremy for your own selfish reasons when you were seven months pregnant. What qualifications do you have to say that others will treat him badly? Clear anger clouded Hayden's face when she mentioned treating Jeremy well.

Queenie's face paled in an instant. After a long moment, she said seriously. "It was my fault before, but now I know I was wrong.. Mr. Hoggard, believe me. I'll definitely treat Jeremy well in the future and never let him get hurt again."

"No thanks," Hayden said unhappily.

The elevator was approaching the seventh floor, and Hayden reminded, "Ms. Leavey, if your floor has arrived, please get out. I'm going to find my girlfriend. Please don't follow me and humiliate yourself."

Hayden helped her press the button to the seventh floor. The elevator door opened, and he waited for Queenie to go out.

Queenie held her suitcase close and refused to leave.

Hayden was speechless.

Hayden looked grim as he watched the elevator door close and continue to rise slowly to the 24th floor. He ignored Queenie, went directly to Stacey's room, and knocked on the door.

The door quickly opened, and it was Becky. The ice on Hayden's face melted instantly. He looked at Becky with a gentle smile on his face.

Stacey subconsciously smiled too when she saw Hayden. But soon, she saw the woman following behind him. She was stunned and found it weird.

In the room, Lillian and Kevin noticed the movement at the door and were instantly happy. They ran over like small cannonballs and pounced on Hayden once they saw him

Kevin exclaimed, "Daddy!"

Lillian called, "Daddy!"

Lillian and Kevin called out one after the other. The two kids were already skilled and hugged each of Hayden's thighs

Behind Hayden, Queenie's expression instantly darkened. 'Becky's children are already calling Hayden 'Daddy?'" she thought.

Hayden took out the invitation and handed it to Becky. "Becky, this is Eklonna's invitation. We'll go together tomorrow."

Stacey's eyes lit up when she saw the invitation. She happily said Thank you so much."

"May I come in?" Hayden asked Stacey

Stacey came to her senses and quickly invited Hayden in.

Hayden led Lillian and Kevig into the room.

Stacey subconsciously wanted to invite the woman next to Haj his hand to close the door, locking the woman outside.

Stacey was speechless. She belatedly realized, "That woman... I

Aug

Hayden led Lillian and Kevip into the room.

Stacey subconsciously wanted to invite the woman next to Hayden. However, before she could say anything. Hayden raised his hand to close the door, locking the woman outside.

Stacey w

was speechless. She belatedly realized, "That woman... Is he Hayden's ex-wife? Is she Jeremy's birth mother?

CHAPTER 185

"Just ignore her," Hayden said, turning to Stacey. Stacey was taken aback but nodded in agreement.

Queenie stood at the door, gripping her bag tightly, tears streaming down her face. She had never felt so humiliated in her life. 'How could Hayden treat me like this?' she thought. Finally, unable to hold back any longer, she fled the scene. She headed back to the seventh floor, found her room, and opened the door with her key card.

As soon as she stepped inside, she broke down, sobbing uncontrollably. The pain felt overwhelming, and soon, she was crying so hard that she began to hiccup.

Then, her phone buzzed in her bag With a tear–streaked face, Queenie took it out. The caller ID showed “Mom.” Seeing her mother’s name made her feel even more upset, and she cried even harder, but she answered anyway.

“Queenie?” Her mother. Florine, spoke gently from the other end.

“Mom...” Queenie could barely contain her tears as she listened to her mother’s voice.

“Queenie, what’s wrong? Why are you crying? Florine asked, her voice filled with concern.

Queenie wanted to explain but couldn’t form the words; all she could do was cry.

“Please, don’t cry. Tell Mom what happened. Did you find Hayden?” Florine urged.

Hearing Hayden’s name somehow made Queenie feel even more hurt, and her sobs intensified.

Florine felt helpless, wanting to comfort her daughter. After several long moments, Queenie finally calmed down a bit. Her mother, patient as always, asked what had happened.

After Queenie recounted her day, Florine’s expression darkened She couldn’t believe her daughter would be replaced after only several years

The thought of losing a good son–in–law like Hayden made Florine anxious. “Queenie, remember, Hayden hasn’t married Becky yet. There’s still a chance for you,” Florine encouraged. “Don’t give up.”

Queenie understood what her mother meant. Deep down, she didn’t want to give up, but the thought of Hayden loving someone else, just like her ex–boyfriend Elden Lindsey, was too much. ‘Why does my life have to be so hard? Every man I met seemed to treat me poorly, she thought.

“Queenie? Did you hear me?” Florine asked, noticing her daughter had gone quiet.

Queenie nodded, her eyes still glistening with tears. “Yeah.”

Florine took a deep breath and continued, “You have a child with Hayden. Use that to help get back into the Hoggard family’s good graces. They all adore the child. As his mother, you have every right to be involved in his life. If the Hoggard family really cares about the child, they might forgive you.”

Queenie bit her lip, still silent.

“Listen, now’s the time to change. Show them you’re committed to being a good partner and mom. You’ve made mistakes, but we all have. If they truly care about what’s best for the child, they’ll come around,” Florine said, trying to encourage her daughter. As she spoke, she found that her daughter was absent-minded again. She asked, “Queenie?”

Hearing her mother’s words snapped Queenie back to reality. She nodded slowly, “Okay, Mom. I get it,”

Meanwhile, on the twenty-fourth floor, Hayden walked in to find Lillian and Kevin clinging to him, chanting “Daddy!” They

absolutely adored him

Hayden didn’t look in a rush to leave. Instead, he seemed perfectly at home, playing with the kids as if they were his own. Stacey had no choice but to stay and keep him company.

Then, Hayden’s phone rang. It was Jeremy. Stacey was surprised.

Hayden flashed a smile at her before picking up the call. As the video chat connected, Jeremy’s face appeared on the screen. Hayden turned the camera so Stacey could join in.

At their home in Hivalis, Jeremy was having a daily check-in with his dad to update him on his activities. He kept a serious expression until he spotted Becky on the screen. His eyes widened in shock.

Realizing Hayden wanted her on camera, Stacey smiled and waved. “Hi, Jeremy!”

Jeremy quickly grabbed his pad and wrote. [Hello, Becky.]

Hayden passed the phone to Stacey. She was hesitant but took it, and for the next half hour, Stacey chatted away with Jeremy. Their connection felt just like a mother-son bond, even though they weren’t related by blood.

On Jeremy’s side, his grandparents soon discovered that Becky was on the call with their grandson. Delighted, they crowded around to see the interaction.

Stacey found herself chatting with Hayden’s grandparents for a while longer. Then, Jeremy, wanting to remind everyone he was there too, lifted the tablet to get their attention.

Seeing how happy Jeremy was to talk to Becky, Jason and Sharon quickly stepped out of view, allowing their grandson to continue his chat.

Jeremy took back the phone, beaming with excitement as he chatted with Becky over the video call. They had a great connection, and he clearly enjoyed their time together.

After a long conversation, Hayden finally walked over and reclaimed the phone. “Jeremy, go play with Grandma and Grandpa for a while. Don’t keep Becky too long,” he said as Jeremy reluctantly hung up.

As the call ended, Hayden noticed the sun setting, signaling it was getting late. He turned to Stacey and Debra, smiling brightly. “Hey, Becky, Debra, it’s almost dinner time. Are you hungry? How about we step out and have dinner together?”

CHAPTER 186

Debra’s eyes lit up at the idea. She eagerly asked. “So, what are some special dishes here in Daprein?”

Hayden smiled and replied, “There are a few great restaurants. We should check them out.”

“I really want to try the food here! I don’t come to Daprein often so I haven’t eaten much,” Debra said happily.

“What kind of food?” Lillian chimed in, clearly curious.

“It’s delicious!” Kevin said, not knowing much but eager to join in.

Looking at Lillian and Kevin, Stacey felt helpless. They didn’t know anything about the food, but they were good at joining the chat. Let’s go together!” she suggested with a bright smile.

Stacey went inside, grabbed some toddler leashes, and helped Lillian and Kevin strap them on to keep the kids from wandering off. After packing her bag, she led them outside.

Lillian and Kevin were thrilled. They rushed ahead, their little legs moving as fast as they could. Without the toddler leashes, they surely would have sprinted away. They took the elevator down, left the hotel, and hopped in the car for a food adventure.

The ingredients here were different from what they were used to back home in Zentscape, and the restaurant decor was a whole new experience. Lillian and Kevin explored the place, checking everything out with wide-eyed curiosity.

Stacey handed the toddler leashes to the maids, Gwen and Marie, so they could keep a watchful eye on the kids while Stacey could take a little breather.

“How long are you all staying in Daprein?” Hayden asked with a smile. There’s a famous amusement park in Nostralis. If you’re interested, you could take Lillian and Kevin there.”

Debra nodded vigorously. “Yes! I looked it up before we came. Everyone says you have to take the kids to that amusement park in Nostralis. They won’t regret it!”

“Absolutely,” Hayden agreed, grinning.

“Have you brought Jeremy here before?” Stacey asked, curious about their past experiences.

Hayden nodded. “Yes, I have. I actually have a lot of photos from our trip. Want to see?” He smiled, excited to share. Debra’s eyes sparkled with excitement. “Yes! Show me! Jeremy must have been adorable.”

Hayden pulled out his phone, opened the album, and found all the photos from his trip to the amusement park with Jeremy.

Lillian and Kevin, noticing the excitement, scampered back and climbed onto the sofa, their tiny hands flailing in excitement.

Marie and Gwen quickly hoisted the kids up so they could see better on the sofa.

“Grandma, I want to see too!” Lillian whined, trying to peek around Debra, who was blocking her view.

Kevin, feeling the same urgency, tugged at Stacey to get closer.

Both Debra and Stacey turned at the same time, each scooping up a little one, organizing them so all four could enjoy the photos of Jeremy at the amusement park

“Look, it’s Jeremy!” Kevin shouted with glee when he saw Jeremy in one of the photos.

Stacey squeezed Kevin’s hand and smiled. “Yes, that’s right.”

“Wow, this place looks amazing!” Lillian marveled, her eyes wide

“What’s that?” Kevin asked, pointing at a photo featuring Jeremy by the Ferris wheel.

“I know! That’s the Ferris wheel!” Lillian responded excitedly. Tve seen it on TV before. It looks beautiful!”

As they waited for their food, the kids were glued to Jeremy’s photos, gasping and giggling at every new sight.

“Do you both like the amusement park?” Hayden asked the kids with a warm smile.

“Yes!” Kevin shouted, bouncing in his seat.

“Me too!”—Lillian added, her face lighting up.

Debra smiled at the kids enthusiasm. “If you like it, we can go there tomorrow! Or maybe the day after tomorrow!”

“Wow, I can’t wait!” Lillian exclaimed.

“Me neither!” Kevin shouted eagerly.

Just then, the waiter brought out the food along with child seats for the kids. Stacey carefully placed them into the seats.

The moment they settled, Lillian and Kevin grabbed their spoons and dove into the feast. They attempted to serve their food to Hayden as if they were little waiters.

Hayden was taken aback, surprised by their eagerness to share. He quickly grabbed his bowl and pushed it towards the two

Stacey hesitated, ready to stop the children from making a mess. But seeing them serve Hayden, she held back and smiled instead.

“Thank you, Lillian. Thank you, Kevin,” Hayden said, grateful for their gesture.

Lillian said, “You’re welcome.”

Kevin shouted too, “Well, you’re welcome!”

Hayden smiled and said, “They’re well-mannered and polite.”

Stacey chuckled at the kids’ antics and added, “They learned how to share food from Jeremy. He’s well-educated, smart, and polite too.”

Hayden was pleasantly surprised. He hadn’t realized that Lillian and Kevin would learn from Jeremy. “It sounds like they have a great bond,” he noted. The thought made Hayden smile—if the three kids got along well, they’d be happier together.

Debra agreed, saying, “Definitely, When Lillian and Kevin play together, they often bicker. But with Jeremy around, it’s different. They really like him and tend to listen to what he says!

In playful tones, Lillian and Kevin cheered. “Jeremy is awesome!

Seeing their excitement for Jeremy made Hayden feel good. This trip was starting to feel less like a business trip and more

like a mini vacation.

Hayden suggested with a smile, "We should let the three of them play together more often. Jeremy is older, so he can help teach them how to write."

Debra's eyes lit up at the idea. "That's a great thought! How did you teach Jeremy to read? It's amazing that he can write so well at just three years old."

CHAPTER 187

After an enjoyable dinner, everyone had some spare time to explore. Nostralis sparkled beautifully under the night sky. Hayden suggested a stroll to soak in the evening scenery, and Lillian and Kevin eagerly jumped on board with enthusiasm. Debra was also excited about the idea.

With everyone eager to go, Stacey decided to join in. So, they stepped out into the enchanting streets of Nostralis.

Daprein was a vibrant country, and its capital, Nostralis, was one of the largest cities in the world. At night, the commercial district came alive, showcasing its beauty. Lillian and Kevin were overjoyed, running ahead and peering curiously at every new sight.

Luckily, Gwen and Marie were with them, keeping an eye on the kids. Without their help, Stacey and Debra would have been worn out trying to catch up. The kids' happiness was contagious, especially when they found something interesting. They rushed back to share their discoveries.

"Mom, Dad, there's a bird over there!" Lillian squealed as she spotted a bird in a cage outside a shop. She dashed over, her eyes sparkling with excitement as she looked up at Stacey and Hayden.

Meanwhile, Kevin had sprinted to the cage, gazing at the bird with wide, curious eyes. The parrot jumped from one perch to another, tilting its head at the treats. Suddenly, it chirped something in Dapreinish.

Hayden chuckled and translated for the kids. "It's saying hello."

Curious, Lillian exclaimed, looking at the bird, "It can talk!"

Kevin turned to his "dad", his face filled with admiration. "Dad, you can understand bird talk!"

With a smile, Hayden picked up Kevin so he could get a better look at the parrot.

Seeing her younger brother being lifted by their “dad” made Lillen a bit jealous. She reached out, wanting some attention

100. 100.

Stacey quickly bent down and picked Lillian up, allowing her to join in on the fun of watching the bird.

They were in a craft shop, artistically decorated, and the kind shopkeeper stepped out to greet them with a warm smile, attracted by the adorable children. She started sharing information with Dapreinjsh language, but Stacey didn’t quite catch

On

Hayden hugged Kevin while chatting with the old lady, a cozy atmosphere surrounding them as they discussed.

Just before they left, the old lady handed them two small gifts—one for Lillian and one for Kevin. Hayden and Stacey both rushed to pay for the gifts, but the old lady smiled and declined, explaining that she simply adored Lillian and Kevin and felt it was meant to be.

After bidding farewell to the old lady, they continued their shopping adventure. However, after being held for a while, Lillian and Kevin soon grew restless. They kicked their little legs, eager to get down.

“Daddy” and mommy walked too slowly, and adults didn’t go where they wanted to go. The two babies couldn’t wait any longer, so they were anxious to explore the world with their own feet.

Stacey had no choice but to put the baby down and give the toddler leash to the maid. Hayden also put down Kevin and let

the maid run after him with a leash.

The two kids zoomed around the street attracting the attention of passersby. Many stopped to watch the adorable dua,

09:03” FM, Aug 2

-N

□

MIT JUS

Lillian, the social butterfly, would stop and beam up at anyone who caught her eye, especially beautiful girls. Kevin, a bit shy, preferred the toy store just ahead and was ready to sprint toward it.

Stacey gently pulled Lillian away from the beautiful girl's reach, and everyone followed Kevin into the toy store.

Upon stepping inside, Lillian was mesmerized by the array of beautiful dolls lining the shelves.

Debra, fully embracing the moment, happily bought everything Lillian admired. A considerable haul of dolls were bought, much to the delight of the toy store owners.

Seeing Lillian's new treasures, Kevin, with childlike excitement, asked for his own. Debra, ever generous, decided to duplicate everything she had bought for Lillian for Kevin as well.

They roamed the night market for a while longer, immersing themselves in the festive atmosphere before returning to the hotel late at night. Everyone still wore bright smiles, but those quickly faded as they stepped into the hotel lobby and were greeted by Queenie, who'd been anxiously waiting.

Seeing them come back, Queenie rushed over to Hayden with a hint of worry on her face.

Hayden, still holding Kevin, tried to sidestep her, but Queenie reached out to grab his arm. He hugged Kevin close and dodged her grasp.

Stacey and Debra remained silent, following Hayden toward the elevator.

While they waited for the doors to open, Queenie glanced nervously at Stacey several times. Her gaze eventually landed on Hayden and the child he held. This wasn't Jeremy, and a nagging worry crept into her mind.

"Why is Hayden showing such warmth toward another woman's child? is he really moving on with Becky?" she thought.

"Hayden... can we talk in private?" Queenie asked when the elevator door opened, her voice a blend of urgency and desperation.

Hayden frowned, clearly annoyed. "I don't think there's anything left to discuss," he replied coldly.

Queenie felt a rush of anxiety. Not wanting to delve into sensitive topics in front of Stacey and Debra, she hesitated but finally

blurted out, "It's about Jeremy. I'm his biological mother, and I want what's best for him. Can we talk alone?"

Hayden remained silent, waiting until they dropped Stacey and the others off at their rooms on the twenty-fourth floor. Then, he turned to Queenie, his expression stern. "Let's talk in the lobby."

He wasn't interested in a private conversation. The bustling environment of the lobby provided a layer of protection against any misunderstandings, especially with Becky. He couldn't afford for her to think he still had anything going on with Queenie.

CHAPTER 188

As Hayden led Queenie out into the lobby, Stacey and Debra, still lingering by the door, caught the tail end of their conversation, Stacey, feeling like an outsider, had no interest in intruding further, so she gently closed the door behind her.

Debra, picking up on the atmosphere, turned to her daughter with a knowing look. "It's getting late. Let's take a shower and prepare for tomorrow's new product launch event."

The mention of Eklonna's new product launch event sparked immediate excitement in Stacey. "Yes! Let's do that!" she exclaimed, her earlier worries casing away.

Gwen and Marie took the kids to bathe, while Stacey headed to her own room to wash up. They had booked several rooms, each equipped with convenient bathrooms, making it easy for everyone to get ready.

Once Gwen and Marie finished bathing Lillian and Kevin, the two kids emerged in adorable, fluffy nightgowns, running happily toward their mother's room.

Despite having hired maternity matrons, Stacey believed it was important to be actively involved in her children's lives. She felt it was crucial for Lillian and Kevin to experience their mother's warmth as they grew, which was why she often chose to sleep with them at night.

After her shower, Debra joined Stacey and the kids. Seeing her daughter surrounded by the two little ones made her heart swell. After saying goodnight, Debra left with a smile, having embraced the innocent joy radiating from her grandchildren.

Stacey and the kids also said goodnight to Debra. At this moment, they looked cute with almost the same expression.

Once alone, Lillian and Kevin turned to their mother with eager eyes, practically bouncing with excitement. "Mom, tell us a story!" Lillian chimed.

"I want to hear stories too!" Kevin added, his eyes sparkling with anticipation.

Lillian and Kevin adored their mom's bedtime stories more than anything else.

With a smile, Stacey invited them under the quilt, settled down alongside them, and retrieved the well-loved storybook.

As she read, Stacey felt the calming effect of her voice wash over the children. They cozied up, their eyelids growing heavy), until they were both sound asleep, lulled by the magic of the tales.

Stacey continued softly, her voice gradually fading with their breaths. Eventually, she closed the book and placed it on the bedside table, scooting down to rest herself.

Just as she began to drift off, Kevin bolted upright, his sleepy eyes wide open.

Stacey was startled and sat up. "Kevin?" she said, bewildered.

Kevin's little lips curled in a frown. He glanced at the storybook. "Mom, your story hasn't been finished yet."

Stacey internally sighed, caught between exhaustion and responsibility. She gently coaxed Kevin back down, reaching for the storybook once more and promising to finish the tale.

As she read, her own eyelids fought against sleep, dropping heavier with each word. But Kevin's eager gaze kept her going. and after what felt like an eternity, she finally finished the short story. With a relieved exhale, she tucked the book away. "All done!" she announced, looking at Kevin expectantly.

"Okay," he responded, snuggling deeper into the blankets.

Stacey meticulously arranged the quilt around him, turning off the bedside lamp to invite the soothing darkness. Just as she lay down again, Kevin's voice broke through the silence once more. "Mom, I can't sleep"

Stacey's patience was waning,

"I want to hear another story, Kevin insisted, his eyes sparkling.

Stacey wanted to protest; she was too tired for more storytelling But looking into his earnest gaze, she relented. With at heavy heart, she pushed herself up again, retrieved the beloved storybook, and started another tale.

After three stories in quick succession, Stacey felt a surge of accomplishment. Kevin finally seemed to embrace the idea of sleep, and she switched off the light, only to fall asleep within seconds.

But peace was short-lived, for Lillian was up soon after, crying out, “Mom, I wanna peel”

After Stacey was woken up, she quickly came back to her senses and hurriedly took Lillian to the bathroom.

The next morning. Stacey woke with dark circles under her eyes. Gwen and Marie arrived shortly thereafter, eager to help with the kids. Having extra hands around felt like a blessing.

Once Lillian and Kevin had completed their morning routines, Stacey ventured to freshen up herself. The soft sounds of excited chatter from the living room told her the twins had already run off to see their grandma.

In the next room, the twins knocked eagerly on Debra’s door. Startled, she blinked awake and opened the door like a reluctant dawn.

Grandma, it’s time to get up!” Lillian announced, her eyes wide and determined. Looking at her grandmother in pajamas and sleepy face, Lillian knew that she hadn’t gotten up yet.

Kevin observed his grandmother, still in her pajamas, and earnestly declared, “It’s good to go to bed early and get up early!”

Debra chuckled, finding humor in his statement. She reached down to pinch Kevin’s cheek. “You’re quite the little teacher, aren’t you?”

Not wanting to drag the morning out further, Debra slipped away to get dressed while Lillian and Kevin embarked on another day of discovery, exploring their grandma’s room like little adventurers.j

Their excitement led them back to Stacey’s room, where they searched for Stacey but found only silence. Then, hearing noise coming from the bathroom, they rushed to the door, knocking and demanding. “Mom, what are you doing?”

Stacey, caught mid-task, could only chuckle at their curiosity.

Kevin, brows furrowed in concentration, pushed against the door, eager for answers.

“Lillian, Kevin, don’t push the door. Mom is doing something and will be out soon, she called, trying to maintain some semblance of order.

“What is Mom doing?” came Kevin’s innocent inquiry.

Stacey felt at a loss for words, not wanting to answer.

‘Mom!’ Lillian waited for a while, but before her mother could answer, she immediately shouted louder. Stacey was so startled that she woke up a lot.

Before Stacey could reply. Lillian added with excitement, “Grandma is up!”

19-03” FII, Aug 2

W

N

+96%%%

Stacey paused, momentarily, bewildered before responding, “Yes yes she is.”

“Grandma is still in her pajamas,” Kevin complained. “But she has gone to the fitting room to change her clothes,” Kevin added, looking cute,

CHAPTER 189

Hearing the two kids talking to her at the door, Stacey quickly finished up. Then she washed her hands and stepped outside.

As soon as the bathroom door opened, Lillian and Kevin rushed over and hugged her legs like two small cannonballs.

Stacey had no choice but to bend down and lift the two kids up

“Let’s go. The bathroom stinks.” Stacey reminded them.

Lillian and Kevin stayed close to their mother like two little followers.

The hotel offered customized meal sets, but before placing an order, Stacey felt a bit unsure. ‘Hayden is here. Should I invite him for breakfast? Is he awake? Since we are all there, it wouldn’t be polite not to invite him after he has treated our whole family to dinner yesterday, right?’ she pondered.

“Becky, call Hay and ask him if he wants to join us for breakfast. Since we are here, why don’t we eat together? This meal is

us today,” Debra said with a smile.

Stacey didn’t expect her mom to have already arranged it. She smiled and agreed, “Okay” But before making the call, Stacey checked the time again. She worried a little that calling too early might disturb Hayden’s sleep. ‘It’s after seven o’clock, so it

shouldn't be too early, she thought. After hesitating for a moment, she finally made the call.

On the other side, Hayden was still sleeping in his hotel room. He heard his phone ring and, in a daze, picked it up. When he saw that the caller ID was Becky, his mind became a bit more clear. Hayden answered quickly, "Becky?"

Stacey noticed that there was still a hoarse quality in his voice. She paused for a moment and couldn't help but think, 'Did I wake him up?

"Did I wake you?" Stacey asked.

Hayden quickly gathered himself and replied, "No."

Stacey sighed in relief and continued, "Do you have any plans for breakfast today? My mother wants to invite you."

"I don't have any plans. I'll be ready soon. Just give me a few minutes, and we can go together, Hayden said happily.

Stacey could sense the cheerfulness in his voice and felt reassured that her call hadn't bothered him. She nodded. "Okay." After that, they hung up..

Lillian looked up at her mother with bright eyes and asked hopefully, "Mom, was that Dad?"

Stacey nodded. "Yes."

"I miss Dad, too. Where is Dad?" Kevin asked in a childish voice.

"He's in the other room," Debra said with a smile. "We'll see him soon."

"Why should I wait?" Lillian asked, confused..

Kevin, not understanding, added, "Why?"

Stacey felt helpless and knew she had to patiently entertain the two children, who wanted to find their father but needed to be distracted.

自多496%圖

Fortunately, Hayden didn't keep them waiting long. There was a knock at the door, and before Stacey and Debra could react, Lillian and Kevin dashed over.

Gwen opened the door, and the moment the kids saw Hayden, they hugged his legs tightly.

"Daddy, you're so slow! We've been waiting forever," Lillian exclaimed, looking up at Hayden.

"Yeah, Lillian and I wanted to find Daddy, but Mommy wouldn't let us, Kevin complained seriously. "Mom said we'd disturb

Dad.

Hearing what the twins said, Hayden smiled at Stacey. He bent down and gave each twin a kiss, saying, "Good morning, Lillian! Good morning, Kevin!"

Lillian quickly reacted, standing on tiptoe to hug Hayden's big head with her small hands. She kissed his cheek and said earnestly, "Good morning, Dad."

Seeing that Hayden was finished greeting Lillian, Kevin also reached out to hug his father's head. Hayden leaned down to make it easier for him. Kevin gave his dad a kiss on the cheek, saying, "Good morning, Dad."

Stacey and Debra stood in the room, enjoying the scene at the door and laughing out loud. "Everyone's ready! Let's go found a restaurant last night, and everyone said its breakfast is

delicious. Let's try it." Debra said happily,

now. I

Gwen and Marie came out with toddler leashes for Lillian and Kevin, who were both excited and full of energy. Without needing any encouragement from the adults, they raced outside

Stacey and Debra grabbed their bags, locked the door, and left. Once in the elevator, Lillian couldn't hold back her curiosity. She began to ask, "Grandma, what are we going to eat?"

Debra looked down at Lillian and replied mysteriously. "It's a very delicious food!"

"How delicious is it?" Kevin asked seriously.

"Super delicious!" Debra exaggerated.

Lillian's eyes lit up with excitement. "I want to cat!"

"I want to eat it too!" Kevin chimed in.

Debra gently touched their cheeks and smiled, “Okay, I’ll buy it for you later!” It was rare to come to Daprein, so they should eat, drink, play, and enjoy themselves. After indulging in delicious food and fun, it would be a rewarding trip.

“Daddy also wants to eat!” Lillian shouted. Hearing this, everyone turned to look at her. Lillian paused for a moment and then added, “And Mommy! Grandma! Everyone wants it!” the little one declared earnestly.

Kevin echoed, “Yeah! Mom, Dad, Grandma, and Kevin all want it

“Me too!” Lillian quickly added when she realized her brother hadn’t mentioned her specifically.

In the small elevator, everyone laughed, enjoying the children’s cuteness.

Hayden

hadn’t expected to hold such an important place in the hearts of these two kids—it felt nice.

When the elevator reached the first floor, they all got out. There were still a lot of people around. Debra had arranged several cars, all waiting at the door. As soon as they stepped outside, they could hop right in.

WAN

One car couldn’t hold them all, so Debra called Gwen and Maric to take another car, leaving Stacey and Hayden to share one with their two kids. Hayden recognized that Debra was intentionally making space for him and Stacey to grow closer, which made him smile even more.

0

CHAPTER 190

When Queenie woke up in the morning, it was already seven-thirty. Remembering her intent for this trip to Daprein, she quickly got dressed, washed up, and left her room with her bag.

Without an invitation from Eklonna, her only chance to attend the new product launch event was to accompany Hayden inside. She needed to find him fast.

Last night, she had talked with Hayden, but their conversation had not gone well, and he had warned her to stop pursuing him. Yet, Queenie was determined; she refused to give up. Despite the absence of love, a man like Hayden was the top catch in the

country. She aimed to remarry him and make Elden regret his decision. Queenie was set on proving that she could lead a better life without him.

Having secretly followed Hayden last night, she knew his room number and headed straight for the presidential suite on the thirty-third floor.

Meanwhile, Stacey and the others had already arrived at their destination. As the car doors opened, Stacey and Hayden stepped out, each carrying a baby in their arms.

Debra followed, helping Gwen and Marie attend to Lillian and Kevin, who were bubbling over with excitement. Stacey handed the toddler leash to Gwen, while Hayden passed a toddler leash to Marie.

have

With lively children in tow, they didn't have to run after them; the maids were there for that, allowing the adults to keep an eye on the kids from a distance.

Debra grinned at the breakfast shop ahead. "Let's go in and have a look!" she said excitedly. Stacey and Hayden nodded. while Lillian and Kevin darted ahead to the entrance.

The restaurant was famous in Daprein, bustling with patrons even at 7:30 a.m. Debra had booked a private room on the second floor to escape the crowds. As they entered, Stacey noticed how packed the lobby was.

"I've booked a private room on the second floor. It'll be much quieter," Debra explained.

Hayden smiled in approval, and they quickly made their way inside. With Lillian in her arms, Stacey felt the need to rush, while Marie bent down to scoop up Kevin. But before she could. Hayden had already lifted Kevin onto his shoulders, leaving Marie to step aside.

"Mom, there are so many people here!" Lillian exclaimed, looking around in awe.

"Well, the breakfast here must be delicious!" Stacey replied, trying to match her daughter's enthusiasm.

"Okay!" Lillian nodded eagerly.

Beside them, Kevin clung to Hayden's neck, fascinated by the fancy food displayed in the lobby. His eyes landed on a bird-shaped cake. "I want that!" he pointed out.

Hayden glanced at the cake, then at Kevin, and replied, "Okay, when we get to the private room, Daddy will order it for you. alright?"

Kevin's face lit up with excitement. "Okay!" he cheered.

Stacey felt a moment of hesitation. 'How am going to explain to Hayden that the kids call him Daddy?' she pondered. She had thought about having him be their godfather, as her mother suggested, but now he had accepted the title Daddy.

+ 96:11

Stacey inevitably thought of what Hayden had said before about whether he could be the father of Lillian and Kevin. Her heartbeat somehow accelerated. Not daring to think too much, Stacey hurriedly looked away and didn't look at Hayden.

Hayden, however, noticed her reaction. Seeing her flushed cheeks made him feel good inside.

After settling in on the second floor, Debra wasted no time. She asked for the menu and began ordering as soon as possible. There were many people in the private room. The waiter brought several menus, and each of them had one in their hand. Stacey glanced at the menu and fell silent.

Debra, experienced as she was, pulled out her phone and spoke into it, allowing the system to translate her words into Dapreinish. The waiter appeared shocked and shook his head in response. Debra had asked if there were any Zentiscapian waiters, but sadly, there were none.

"I'll translate, Hayden offered, gathering everyone's attention. So everyone gathered around and listened to Hayden's translation. As he went through the menu, Debra looked at Hayden and Becky who were studying the menu carefully and quietly left.

she

'It wasn't easy for me to find such a restaurant without an electronic menu, she thought. Debra opened some pictures found on the Internet, which were all photos of delicious food in this restaurant. She quietly motioned to the waiter and asked him to serve the dishes in the pictures.

Although she didn't know the language, the pictures represented everything. The waiter quickly understood and immediately wrote down all the dishes Debra ordered.

Even though ordering took longer than expected, everyone remained patient and cheerful, ultimately enjoying a delightful

meal.

Post-breakfast, everyone had to freshen up and get dressed for Eklónna's event. Since Hayden needed to attend to some business friends, he departed first.

Debra took the opportunity to take Stacey and the kids to a styling shop, where they all received beautiful makeovers. Not only were the adults looking sharp, but Lillian and Kevin also stole the show with their adorable outfits. Lillian twinkled in her beautiful princess dress, while Kevin looked dashing in his handsome suit.

However, Kevin couldn't shake off the feeling of envy whenever he saw Lillian wearing her enchanting princess dress. His eyes were glued to that dress, filled with admiration.

Stacey, noticing this longing in her son's gaze, couldn't help but feel a twinge of sympathy for him. But logic quickly took over. She reminded herself that she couldn't allow Kevin to wear a princess dress. What if he becomes accustomed to it? What if he grows up thinking it's okay to wear girls' clothing?" she thought. While she had nothing against men who wore women's clothing, she hoped for Lillian and Kevin to have a clear sense of their genders. Boys could wear suits and girls. could wear pretty dresses.

Kevin, meanwhile, was lost in his thoughts, feeling a little sad about the situation. Sensing his disappointment, Stacey came up with a plan to cheer him up. She headed out and bought two small cakes—one for Lillian and another for Kevin. 'A liule sweetness to lift his spirits!" she thought.

As soon as Kevin spotted the delicious cakes, the sadness melted away. His face lit up with joy, eclipsing any earlier envy.