

Love Me Or Leave Me

#Chapter 231 - Read Love Me Or Leave Me Chapter 231

Chapter 231

"I just woke up!" answered Lillian.

"Yeah. Me too!" Kevin exclaimed.

Stacey pinched their cheeks with a smile and said, "The day is starting to break. Go wash up so we can head downstairs for breakfast." Lillian and Kevin were still too young to take care of themselves completely, but Stacey did not completely deprive them of their ability to be hands-on. She patiently taught them how to brush their teeth and use toothpaste. Feeling good, Stacey wasn't in a hurry and took her time until Lillian and Kevin were all cleaned up.

Stacey was quite busy over the next few days. She had left on vacation some time ago, so she needed to catch up on company matters to get back on track. There were drafts from the design department that needed to be personally reviewed. It was necessary as the designers might slack off without random checks. Carter's Jewel did not completely prohibit designers from slacking off, but without regular inspections, a lack of oversight could lead to a lazy attitude. Over time, this could degrade the quality of the design drafts and ultimately affect the reputation and quality of the entire Carter's Jewel's designs. During this round of checks, Stacey discovered a serious problem. One of the designers had copied another company's work. Her expression darkened immediately. Fortunately, the plagiarized design had not been officially adopted yet, so no final product based on it had been produced.

Stacey promptly called a meeting for all the designers at Carter's Jewel to address the plagiarism issue. After the meeting, she instructed that the offending designer should settle her wages with the finance department and Carter's Jewel would not hire her again. Stacey's decision was swift, but Nancy Dawson, the employee leaving due to the plagiarism, was discontented. Before leaving, she gave Stacey several hostile glares. Stacey could not shake off Nancy's gaze even after work. She felt a chill running down her spine. Although she was just an employee, Stacey could not afford to be lenient with plagiarism. Carter's Jewel's longstanding reputation could not be compromised by someone like that.

Two weeks passed in the blink of an eye, and it was time for Jeremy to be discharged and return to the country. Moreover, Christmas was approaching, bringing excitement to everyone. To make it even better, Jeremy was not returning to Strico but was coming directly to Hivalis to see Stacey. Hayden mentioned that Jeremy had been eagerly counting the days until his return. Stacey was also excited by the thought of seeing

Jeremy. She immediately cleared her schedule and set aside a day to pick him up from the airport.

They hadn't seen each other for half a month. When Jeremy spotted her, he immediately ran into her arms, brimming with excitement. Lillian and Kevin also adored Jeremy very much. Seeing Jeremy, they also came over. They mimicked how Jeremy hugged Stacey, wrapping their arms around him. As a result, Stacey found herself surrounded by a circle of children. Fortunately, Gwen and Marie arrived shortly and separated Lillian and Kevin, easing the crowding around Stacey. Hayden arrived as well, holding a suitcase and looking pleased.

"How is Jeremy's recovery?" Stacey asked with a smile.

Hayden glanced at Jeremy and nodded with a smile. "Everything went well."

Stacey's face lit up with anticipation. She looked at Jeremy and said eagerly, "So will Jeremy be able to learn to speak in the future?"

Hayden nodded and answered, "Yes."

Stacey mused, 'Oh my god!' Thrilled, she immediately squatted down. Her eyes sparkled with anticipation as she looked at Jeremy. "Jeremy, can you say my name?" Jeremy said nothing.

Hayden chuckled. "Let's practice slowly when we get back. Jeremy isn't quite ready yet."

Hearing this, Stacey nodded in a hurry. "All right." They headed directly to Carter Villa.

On the other hand, after a month of "cooling off," Queenie was still unwilling to give up. Knowing that Jeremy would return home after being

discharged from the hospital, she went to Hoggard Villa and waited for him. Unfortunately, despite waiting all day, she did not see any cars returning. Disappointed and exhausted from standing for hours, Queenie hesitated for a long time before finally deciding to leave.

Unexpectedly, as Queenie

approached her parked car, she noticed her cousin Edith's car parked next to it, with Edith sitting inside. Edith's gaze was filled with unwillingness and hatred, and she made no effort to conceal her emotions. "Queenie, how shameless can you be? He clearly does not want you anymore, yet you are still hanging around his house. If word gets out, won't the Leavey family become a laughingstock in high society?" Edith mocked in a harsh tone. She couldn't understand why her grandparents favored Queenie so much. Edith thought, 'Is it because Queenie is the first-born granddaughter of the Leavey

family? She's such a fool and a hopeless romantic. How could someone like her inherit the Leavey family's

assets?'

Queenie's expression turned grim, and she fixed her cold, unyielding gaze on Edith. A glint of anger sparkled in her gaze. "Get lost!"

Edith chuckled derisively and said sarcastically, "Queenie, your fury is truly laughable."

Edith stared into her eyes and uttered word by word seriously, "Queenie, someone like you does not deserve to inherit the Leavey family's assets. If you did, the Leavey family would be doomed." After finishing her harsh words, Edith ignored the fuming Queenie and drove away quickly.

"You!" Queenie trembled with rage.

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Queenie stood still, and her anger smoldered fiercely. She left Hoggard Villa and returned to her mansion, feeling completely exhausted as she stepped through the door. Opening the refrigerator, Queenie grabbed a bottle of beer and collapsed onto the couch. As she drank, her mind wandered aimlessly. Despite her foggy mind, memories from the past Kept resurfacing. The times she spent with Elden during high school and university were so sweet that even now, they brought a smile to her face. However, as cherished as those memories were, the thought of Elden's infidelity only deepened her heartache. She was consumed with rage, thinking, 'Why is Elden like this? Why did I fall for someone like him?'

Anger dominated her thoughts. After finishing the beer, Queenie threw the bottle against the floor, shattering it into pieces. A bit drunk, she stumbled to her feet and accidentally stepped on shards of broken glass. The sharp, searing pain made her cry out, instantly clearing her mind. Queenie came to a stark realization that she could not give up. She had to remarry Hayden and ensure that Elden regretted his actions.

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The whole family was buzzing with excitement ever since Hayden and Jeremy arrived at Carter Villa. Everyone gathered around Jeremy, eagerly trying to teach him how to speak. Jeremy could now make some sounds, though his speech was still somewhat awkward and unclear. The usually brave Jeremy felt a little shy after speaking too much. He occasionally spoke a few words, and his ears turned bright red. Embarrassed by the attention, he eventually sought refuge behind Becky, falling completely silent.

Hayden secretly filmed a video and shared it in the Hoggard family's group chat. At Hoggard Manor, Jason was the first to see the video sent by Hayden, and he

immediately got excited. He hurriedly called his wife over to watch the video of Jeremy speaking. Excitedly, Jason replayed it again and again.

Meanwhile, Hayden's parents, Jack and Audrey, also saw the video and felt a complex mix of emotions. They were overjoyed that Jeremy could finally speak and were relieved to know that his vocal cords were functioning normally. However, beneath their joy, they couldn't help but feel a pang of jealousy. Jeremy had been clamoring to visit Becky at Carter Villa immediately after being discharged from the hospital instead of going to see them. This made them feel a bit sad. Despite their feelings, Jack and Audrey found themselves watching the video of Jeremy talking over and over again. No matter how many times they watched it, they never grew tired of it. In fact, it even gave them extra motivation at work.

The group chat for the Hoggard family was unusually quiet. Everyone kept replaying the video but chose not to message Hayden, wanting to avoid disturbing him. They had already been in touch with him during Jeremy's hospitalization and were well aware of Jeremy's successful surgery and positive recovery progress. The family's primary concern now was Hayden and Becky's relationship. Although they felt a twinge of jealousy over Jeremy's eagerness to visit Becky, they also felt genuinely happy. The Hoggard family had no concerns about Becky's family background. Based on their interactions, it was clear that Becky was very dependable. Both families would be thrilled to see them come together as soon as possible. After sending the video, Hayden didn't check the Hoggard family's group chat again. Jeremy had finally regained the ability to speak. Even though Hayden didn't display much emotion on his face, inside he was overjoyed. Despite Jeremy being very close to Hayden and depending on him for almost everything, he consistently refused to speak when Hayden asked him to. In contrast, only Becky and the Carter family seemed to be able to coax Jeremy into talking regularly.

Stacey noticed that Jeremy was growing increasingly shy and trying to hide from everyone. Although she was overjoyed by his progress, she could see that he was feeling overwhelmed. Stacey stepped in to shield him from additional pressure. "All right, everyone. Let's not rush Jeremy to speak right away. He's just beginning his recovery and needs time to adjust. It's important that we allow him to take things at his own pace and learn gradually." Jeremy, hiding behind Becky, nodded repeatedly.

While the adults complied, the children were a different story. Lillian and Kevin's eyes were sparkling with excitement. They watched Jeremy's mouth with fascination, captivated by his ability to speak. "Jeremy, you can talk now!" Lillian exclaimed eagerly.

"Yeah. That's amazing!" Kevin added.

Jeremy would feel shy and embarrassed when facing the adults. However, when he looked at Lillian and Kevin, who were younger than him, he instantly assumed an older sibling role. Jeremy's shyness disappeared as he regarded them with a serious

expression and nodded, saying, "Yes!" "Yes" was fairly simple to pronounce, so Jeremy quickly picked up the word and could now use it easily.

Stacey quickly reminded Lillian and Kevin, saying, "Lily, Kev, Jeremy just had surgery and is still recovering. Let him rest and try not to disturb him too much." Children could be quite bothersome, and Jeremy needed to rest right now. She had to remind them of this. When they heard this, Lillian and Kevin's eyes widened as they nodded quickly. Although they stopped talking to Jeremy, they continued to watch him with curiosity. It was a bit inconvenient, but fortunately, Jeremy liked Lillian and Kevin a lot and did not feel uncomfortable under their gaze.

Carter Villa had numerous guest rooms, and the one Hayden had used before was still set up the same way and ready for use. Since Hayden and Jeremy came over again, they could move in directly without needing to clean up intensively. After a long and tiring day, Hayden, who had brought Jeremy back, was exhausted. Stacey quickly noticed this and promptly took them upstairs, helping to tidy up the room for them.

As Jeremy watched Becky and Hayden clean up the room together, he couldn't help but keep his gaze fixed on Becky. He did not want to stay in the guest room. Instead, he wished to stay in the same room with Becky. Jeremy pondered, 'How do I say this?' He wanted to express something but found it difficult to articulate. Feeling a bit nervous, he hesitated to speak. Habitually, Jeremy reached for his writing tablet, only to realize it was not by his side. Since his discharge from the hospital, Hayden had taken away his writing tablet to encourage him to practice vocalization and speaking slowly rather than relying on it constantly. Jeremy struggled and ultimately remained silent.

Stacey cleaned the room

meticulously and only felt at ease

once she was certain it was

spotless. After a moment of thought, she said, "Well, just let me know if

you need anything else, and I make arrangements."

"Okay," Hayden said with a smile, nodding at her. Jeremy also beamed in response.

"Why don't you and Jeremy go get some rest first?" Stacey asked.

Hayden looked at her and inquired, "Do you have work today?"

Stacey shook her head. Knowing that Hayden would bring Jeremy here today, Patrick had given her the day off to pick them up. Stacey thought of the upcoming entertainment ceremony and

hurriedly added, "By the way, the

annual entertainment ceremony in Zentscape is just a few days away, and I promised Charlie I would attend." Stacey knew that Hayden and Jeremy had come to see her, so she wanted to explain the situation clearly. She was concerned that Hayden might be upset if she had to

leave for an event in a few days.

Hayden nodded. "It's fine. Jeremy and I have no plans. We'll accompany you then."

"Huh?" Stacey was stunned.

Hayden chuckled. "Why? Do you not want me and Jeremy to go?"

Stacey shook her head quickly. "No, no. I am... just a bit concerned that it might be too troublesome."

Hayden chuckled and said, "It's no trouble. I'm on vacation, and it's good for Jeremy to get out."

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Stacey was still a bit perplexed after leaving the guest room, but she couldn't help feeling delightful. With a cheerful expression, she went downstairs. Debra inquired with a smile, "Are they resting in their room?"

Stacey nodded. "Yes."

Debra noticed her cheerful expression and knew Stacey was fond of Hayden. She pondered, 'At this rate, Becky and Hay should be able to get together.' Debra smiled and felt that she and Patrick shouldn't stay at home as third wheels. She thought, 'We should give them some space and let the two spend time alone together, especially since Hay has deliberately put down time to come here and be with Becky.'

Debra's thoughts drifted to the situation with Adrian. Feeling somewhat restless, she considered temporarily relocating to the house Adrian had bought rather than staying here as a third wheel. Although pretending to be an ordinary person might be a bit challenging, Debra would have the opportunity to see Isabella and Damian more frequently and help care for Damian. With this plan in mind, Debra immediately pulled out her phone and messaged Adrian.

Adrian was in the market with Damian, following behind Isabella. He was caught off guard by her text, replying worriedly: [Are you sure you guys won't get exposed?] Adrian wasn't overly concerned about Patrick. His main focus was Debra. Luckily, he had

previously depicted her as a pampered and indulged woman spoiled by Patrick, so it wasn't too strange if she occasionally behaved in a delicate or unusual manner.

Debra, seeing his response, quickly responded: [Of course not! How could we possibly get exposed? Adrian, since your father and I have already met Isabella and her child, we should make an effort to visit them more often. Otherwise, it might appear unwelcoming. You can consider this. If the future in-laws and grandparents of the child show no concern after learning their son has a child, wouldn't that be concerning? They might question our character for not caring about the child, don't you think?]

Adrian was somewhat speechless. He texted: [Are you certain you won't get exposed?]

Debra assured him: [I won't ruin things for you. I promise I'll be very careful.]

Adrian replied: [I don't really believe it.]

Debra texted: [You troublesome child. Do you really have such little trust in me?]

Adrian replied: [I trust you with other things. But pretending to be an ordinary person? My trust level is at negative 100.]

Stacey had just poured herself a glass of water and was about to take a sip when she saw Debra typing on her phone. As Debra continued to text, her expression suddenly grew quite fierce. Stacey was left puzzled, wondering, 'Why does Mom look so intense? Who is she texting?'

Debra looked up in exasperation. She complained, saying, "Becky, can you believe Adrian? Isn't it just pretending to be an ordinary person? It's a bit challenging for me, but I'll be careful. Everything will be fine. Why doesn't he trust me at all? It's so frustrating!"

Stacey was stunned, and she quickly came to her senses. "Were you texting Adrian just now?"

Debra nodded angrily. "Yes! Look at the messages Adrian sent me. He's trying to drive me crazy." Stacey glanced at the chat log and found Adrian's concerns quite reasonable. "Becky?" Debra's voice jolted her back to reality.

Stacey came back to her senses and asked, "Huh?"

Debra eyed her warily and asked, "What were you just thinking?" Stacey was at a loss for words. Debra, feeling aggrieved, continued, "Even you don't believe in me? Do you also think I can't pull off pretending to be an ordinary person?"

Stacey explained with a touch of helplessness "It's not that we don't trust you, Mom. It's just that your temperament is quite different from an ordinary person's." Debra was momentarily at a loss for words. Stacey thought about it and added, "But you're right."

Since we know about Isabella and Damian, it would seem cold-hearted not to visit them."

Debra nodded hurriedly. "Exactly! I think so too."

"Why don't you practice being an ordinary person at home first? It's similar to how used to practice acting. Once you're more comfortable with it, then you can go visit Isabella and Damian," Stacey suggested. Debra was initially puzzled but soon saw the merit in the idea and went to get ready right away. Lillian and Kevin, eager to see what was happening, trailed behind her. Stacey, curious by the idea of Debra dressing up as an ordinary person, also went upstairs with her.

After Hayden had successfully put Jeremy to sleep, he came out to see Debra's new look. He was clearly taken aback and somewhat confused. Stacey, seeing Hayden, smiled and quietly explained the situation regarding Isabella and Damian. Hayden, upon hearing this, couldn't help but be amused as well.

Debra, having practiced at home for a while, eventually pulled Patrick to practice with her. Patrick, eager to participate, quickly changed his clothes. The two of them practiced together for a bit before finally packing up their things and leaving with the suitcase. Meanwhile, Stacey and Hayden were left feeling confused.

Hayden, quick on the uptake, soon grasped the reason for their departure and found it amusing. Stacey, concerned that Hayden might think her parents were being unwelcoming, hurriedly explained, "Well... my parents are also concerned about Adrian and Isabella. They didn't mean to neglect you, so please don't take it personally."

Hayden shook his head. "It's fine." It was true that Becky's parents were concerned about Adrian, but they were also making space for him and Becky. They deliberately avoided being a third wheel to allow the two of them to have more time together. "It's getting late. How about we go to the supermarket and get some groceries? Why don't I cook dinner tonight?" Hayden suggested.

Hearing this, Stacey was stunned again. She asked in surprise, "You'll cook?"

Hayden nodded. "Yes." Gazing at Stacey, he said warmly, "Sometimes, living as an ordinary person can be quite enjoyable."

Stacey immediately remembered Debra and Patrick's attempts at acting like ordinary people just now. She grinned and nodded. "Yes. It can be quite nice."

"Let's go, then. It won't take long to get groceries," Hayden stated.

Stacey thought it was a good idea, so she nodded and said, "All right. I'll go upstairs and grab my bag."

Hayden agreed, saying, "All right." Stacey hurriedly turned to head upstairs, but as she did, both she and Hayden saw Jeremy standing at the top of the stairs. Hayden was stunned, thinking, 'I just spent so long soothing him to sleep, and now he's awake so quickly?' Jeremy then came running down and clung to their side.

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"Jeremy, why are you awake? Aren't you going to sleep?" Stacey asked with a smile.

Jeremy shook his head, replying in an unnatural tone, "No."

Stacey crouched down to look into his eyes, and her smile was gentle. "I'm going to the supermarket with your dad. Do you want to come along?" Jeremy's eyes lit up, and he nodded eagerly. Stacey beamed and looked at Hayden, saying, "Let's go together then."

"Okay," Hayden replied with a light chuckle. Stacey smiled too, then turned and went upstairs. She hurried to her room, grabbed her bag, and touched up her lipstick in front of the vanity. After making sure she looked fine, she went downstairs.

Hayden stood with Jeremy, while Lillian and Kevin watched them with eyes shining with anticipation. The whole family was excited about going on this supermarket trip. Stacey looked at all the expectant eyes and felt a little amused. She thought, 'It's just a grocery run, and we're all going together. Isn't that a bit much?' Still, Stacey wasn't comfortable leaving the kids at home, even with Gwen and Marie there to take care of them. After all, they weren't family. Stacey remembered the incident from her own childhood and didn't want the same thing to happen to her children or Hayden's child. Although it was a bit more troublesome, taking all the kids out together could be seen as a chance to go for a walk and get some fresh air. It was a good thing.

They soon set out. Lillian and Kevin took out the toddler leash and obediently put them on themselves. "Why doesn't Jeremy have a leash?" Lillian asked curiously, noticing Jeremy wasn't wearing one.

Hayden looked down at Jeremy and answered, "Jeremy has one too, but I forgot to bring it. We'll buy one at the supermarket."

Jeremy immediately frowned in displeasure. "I..." He wanted to object, but he struggled to find the right words. He thought, 'I don't need a toddler leash. I'm a big kid now and very well-behaved. I wouldn't run around like Lily and Kev.' Hayden glanced down slightly, and his dark eyes fixed intently on Jeremy. Jeremy felt an unspoken warning in Hayden's gaze, making it clear that he was expected to wear the toddler leash without any complaints.

Stacey also looked at Jeremy with a serious expression. "Even though you're three years old, you're still a child. You shouldn't run around recklessly. What if someone with

ill intentions targets you?" At the mention of this, Stacey thought of her childhood experience. She sighed softly and said, "I got lost when I was three years old. If only when I was young..." She gazed at Jeremy and said gently, "Jeremy, it's important to always be aware of your safety. You can't take it lightly just because you're three years old and think you're a big kid. You need to listen to your dad."

Hayden thought about Becky getting lost at three years old, feeling a pang of sympathy as he looked at her. He knew, however, that the past couldn't be changed. "Let's go," Hayden said, changing the subject.

At first, Jeremy was unconvinced. However, he stopped being angry with Hayden after listening to Becky's words. Despite his young age, Jeremy understood that Becky had been taken by a bad person when she was three. He had known about Becky's disappearance from her family for as long as he could remember. Sharon had often mentioned that if Becky hadn't been taken away and lost from her family, she might have married Hayden and been with him. Thinking of this, Jeremy stayed quiet. When he arrived at the supermarket, he took a toddler leash and put it in the shopping cart without being told by Hayden. Stacey and Hayden noticed his actions and couldn't help but smile.

Stacey reached out her hand to Jeremy. Jeremy looked at her hand. He tilted his head slightly and was a little confused. Stacey explained, "I will hold your hand so you won't get lost."

Jeremy's eyes lit up, and he joyfully placed his hand in hers, nodding firmly. "Yes!" He had become increasingly adept at saying "Yes," and his delivery had grown more fluent and natural. Stacey felt a warm glow inside. She eagerly anticipated the day when Jeremy could use more words like other kids and communicate.

"I want to hold hands too!" Kevin saw this and immediately ran over. He raised his hand to hold Stacey's hand. Stacey was a bit exasperated. It was manageable to hold Jeremy's hand, given that he was three and much taller. Lillian and Kevin were only one year old and too short. She would have to constantly bend over to hold their hands.

Lillian also exclaimed, "I want to hold hands too!"

Stacey stated, "What should I do? It is both sweet and troublesome having too many children."

Hayden chuckled and told Gwen and

Marie, saying, "Please go get two shopping carts." Stacey's eyes brightened at the mention. The supermarket's shopping carts all had child seats. While Jeremy, being three, was a bit too big for them, they would be perfect for Lillian and Kevin. Gwen and Marie also

understood what Hayden meant, so they immediately brought two shopping carts over.

Hayden bent down and placed Lillian and Kevin into the shopping carts. Since they had never been in a shopping cart before, their curiosity was piqued. They quickly forgot about asking Stacey to hold their hands. Jeremy was relieved to see that Lillian and Kevin were attracted by the shopping carts. He didn't care for the carts, as he preferred being with Becky.

With the kids settled, Hayden pushed one cart, while Gwen pushed another. Stacey held Jeremy's hand as they shopped. Stacey looked down and said to Jeremy, "Jeremy, is there anything you want? Just tell me, and we'll get it."

"Yes." Jeremy nodded eagerly. The

word "Yes" was something Jeremy

used often, which amused Stacey. As he had just begun to speak, it was one of the simplest words for him to say. As they walked, Jeremy observed curiously but didn't reach for anything. In contrast, Lillian and Kevin, seated in the shopping carts behind, were captivated by everything they saw. They eagerly stretched out their hands when they passed colorful packages and grabbed everything. Hayden and Gwen didn't stop them. Instead, after Lillian and Kevin placed items in the shopping cart, they quietly turned around and put all the unnecessary things back. They were busy but found it amusing.

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The supermarket was big, and they unknowingly shopped for over an hour. When they returned home, it was nearly dark. Grace seemed at a loss seeing them with groceries. Smiling, Hayden told her to take a rest. She wondered to herself, 'Will my job be at risk now that my employer has a son-in-law?' Despite her unease, Grace left the kitchen.

Hayden skillfully began preparing the ingredients, while Stacey followed closely and diligently learned. Even Jeremy, Lillian, and Kevin gathered around, eager to watch the process. An hour and a half later, the dinner was ready. The meal was beautifully presented, leaving Grace astonished by Hayden's skill. She pondered, 'Mr. Hoggard is an exceptional cook. Am I really at risk of losing my job? Perhaps I should start practicing more and refine my plating skills.' Her anxiety grew as she considered this. The job with the Carter family was well-compensated and involved less work, with the added benefit of having a kind employer. Having been with them for many years, she had always been treated well. Grace knew she couldn't afford to lose such a desirable position easily.

When Lillian and Kevin saw the delicious food prepared by Hayden, they gasped in awe, having never seen anything like it before. "How pretty!" "The food Daddy made looks amazing!" Lillian and Kevin each said a sentence, praising Hayden.

Jeremy stood to the side, listening. He nodded enthusiastically, saying, "Yes!" He agreed with Lillian and Kevin's praise and took pride in the fact that Hayden's food was both appealing and delicious. Jeremy thought that Becky, Lillian, and Kevin would surely like them even more after seeing this. "Let's all take our seats and eat," Stacey stated with a smile. Turning to Hayden, she added thoughtfully, "Thank you for all your hard work." Hayden chuckled lightly. "You've worked hard too."

After everyone had finished eating, Stacey left the dirty dishes to Grace. She asked Gwen and Marie to quickly tidy up the three children, then took them to the living room to watch cartoons with Hayden. Unfortunately, Lillian and Kevin had different tastes in cartoons and soon began to argue over which one to watch. Stacey, her head throbbing from the commotion, glanced at the well-behaved Jeremy before heading upstairs. She retrieved a piece of paper from her study and made it into three slips. Returning downstairs, she suggested, "Lily, Kev, and Jeremy, let's draw lots. The one who picks the slip with the dot will choose what we watch tonight."

Lillian and Kevin, who were on the verge of fighting, immediately turned their attention to Stacey. Jeremy also watched with curiosity. Stacey pulled out a slip of paper, unfolded it, and showed it to them. "This slip has a dot. The person who draws it gets to choose what we watch tonight."

Lillian and Kevin didn't fully grasp what this meant, but Stacey wasn't worried. Children picked things up quickly. After playing the game a few times, they would soon grasp the concept. Stacey combined all the slips and mixed them up, then had the three of them draw lots together. Jeremy, being three years old, was familiar with the rules of drawing lots. He looked at Becky as he reached for a slip of paper. Lillian and Kevin hurriedly stretched out their hands to take one each. Moments later, they opened their slips. Kevin had drawn the winning slip with the dot. "I won!" Kevin immediately shouted, thrilled.

Hayden chuckled and stated, "Yes. Kev won, so the remote control belongs to him tonight."

Lillian and Kevin did not fully grasp the meaning of winning the draw initially, but they were starting to understand it slowly. Lillian wanted to play shameless, and she said with a hint of defiance, "No, I want to change the channel. I want to watch 'The Fairy Princess'!"

"No. I want to watch 'The Ugly

Duckling!" Kevin shouted back. Stacey firmly handed the remote to

Kevin. She then turned to Lillian and patiently explained the rules once more, emphasizing that the outcome of the draw determined who would pick the show. Despite Stacey's efforts, Lillian didn't listen to her explanation. A moment later, she pouted and burst out crying. Jeremy, seeing Lillian's distress, became flustered. He

stood up, hands at his sides, wanting to comfort Lillian but unsure how to help. Hayden, though initially taken aback, understood that it was

normal for young children to cry and fuss. He had encountered similar situations with Jeremy himself. There had been times when Jeremy had misbehaved, leading to him being hit and crying out loudly.

Kevin's hand holding the remote suddenly wavered. After a moment of hesitation, he approached Lillian, still clutching the remote, and was about to hand it over to her. Stacey promptly stopped Kevin, resolutely placing the remote back in his hand. She understood that it was normal for young children to quarrel and fuss. However, Stacey was aware that giving in to a child's tantrums could lead to undesirable behavior. It would only spoil them, teaching them that they could get whatever they wanted simply by crying. Lillian continued to struggle, trying to grab the remote. Stacey immediately held Lillian and explained, "Lily, we have discussed this before. You, Jeremy, and Kev all drew lots together. The one who wins the draw gets to choose their favorite TV show. Remember?"

"I don't want to! I want to watch 'The Fairy Princess'!" Lillian cried heart-wrenchingly.

"But there is only one TV," Stacey

stated. It was not that the Carter family could not afford to buy another TV or that they could not use other devices like tablets or

smartphones to show Lillian "Theet

was

Fairy Princess." The real issue not about which channel Lillian should watch but about teaching her to respect rules. Once rules were

established, it was important to follow them. This didn't only apply to

Lillian. If Lillian won next time, Stacey wouldn't indulge Kevin if he threw a tantrum next time. Every

child needed to learn to respect the rules they had all agreed upon.

"Let me talk to her," Hayden uttered, seeing Stacey struggle to calm Lillian. Stacey was slightly surprised and turned to look at him. Hayden reached out and gently picked up Lillian. "Stacey, you stay with Jeremy and Kev downstairs. I will take Lily upstairs to talk."

Stacey was stunned and then nodded. "Okay."

Hayden nodded and carried Lillian upstairs. She was still crying, and when she realized he was taking her out of the living room, she resisted. Lillian pushed and kicked, struggling to get down from his arms. She thought, 'I want to go back to the living room to watch 'The Fairy Princess'!'

"Lily," Hayden called her name softly in a doting tone.

When Lillian heard him calling her, she paused slightly. She looked at Hayden, feeling aggrieved, and her tears flowed even faster. She sobbed. "Daddy, I want to watch 'The Fairy Princess'! I want to watch 'The Fairy Princess'!"

Hayden kissed her forehead gently and said, "Yes. Lily, you're a good girl. Of course, you can watch 'The Fairy Princess,' but it's not right now." Lillian's crying subsided somewhat after Hayden praised her for being a good girl and told her she could watch "The Fairy Princess." She mused, 'But Daddy said not right now?' Lillian looked at him in confusion and asked, "When can I watch it then?"

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Hayden carried Lillian back to the children's room upstairs before gently setting her down. "Daddy, when can I see 'The Fairy Princess'?" Lillian's eyes were still glistening with tears, but she could not hide her anticipation.

Hayden took out a tissue and gently wiped away her tears. "Next time we draw lots, if you win, you can watch it," he said warmly.

Lillian looked at Hayden. "If I win next time, I can watch it?" she asked seriously.

Hayden nodded. "Yes, that's right."

"Then I want to draw lots again. I am sure I will win this time!" Lillian declared confidently, trying to dash down the stairs, bypassing Hayden.

Hayden chuckled softly and gently pulled her back. "Not today."

Confusion flickered across Lillian's face. Hayden tried to explain gently, kneeling to her level. "Do you remember what your mom said before we drew lots? You, Kevin, and Jeremy all drew lots together, and whoever won gets to watch their favorite show tonight."

He continued, "So, according to our agreement, tonight's draw is valid for the entire evening. You will have to wait until tonight is over. Then, when your mom lets you draw lots again next time, you can try for it again."

Lillian's eyes widened as she tried to process Hayden's explanation. Despite his patient tone, the rules were a bit complex for her young mind to fully grasp. After all, she was

just over one year old, not even two yet. Hayden did not expect her to grasp all these rules immediately. Patience was key when taking care of kids, and fortunately, he had plenty of it.

He picked her up again and carried her to the bathroom. He wet her towel and began gently wiping her face. "Don't cry so easily, okay? Crying too much will make your face dirty, and it won't look as pretty."

Lillian remained silent.

Meanwhile, downstairs, Jeremy had been sitting quietly on the couch, but curiosity got the better of him. He glanced at Becky and then trotted upstairs to check on Lillian. He was worried about her.

Stacey noticed Jeremy's departure and considered following him upstairs. However, she decided against it, reasoning that Hayden had likely taken Lillian upstairs for a private discussion or lesson. Going up now might interfere with the moment and be counterproductive. Even Kevin, intrigued by the commotion, craned his neck to see what was happening upstairs before glancing back at Stacey.

Stacey adjusted Kevin's collar and said, "Just stay here and watch cartoons. There's no need to worry about them right now." Stacey trusted Hayden's ability to educate kids. After all, Jeremy had turned out so well.

Upstairs, as Jeremy reached the top, he heard Hayden telling Lillian a story. Curious, he stood at the door but did not go in. This was Lillian's room, and without her permission, Jeremy felt he should not enter.

Inside, both Hayden and Lillian noticed the movement at the door and looked over. When Lillian saw Jeremy, her eyes lit up, and she exclaimed happily, "Jeremy!" Jeremy's eyes lit up too, and he smiled.

"Lily, can Jeremy come into your room?" Hayden, understanding Jeremy well, asked for him. He knew that Jeremy was not very good at speaking yet.

Lillian was surprised but quickly nodded. "Of course! Jeremy, come in," she said. Jeremy's smile grew wider as he ran into the room.

"Daddy, let's continue the story," Lillian urged Hayden as soon as Jeremy came in. Hayden glanced at Jeremy, then continued the story for Lillian. This story was one Hayden made up on the spot. It was about a group of fairies living in the Fairy Forest. The beautiful Fairy Queen had a little princess and two little princes, named Lillian, Kyle, and Dylan.

When Lillian heard that the fairy princess in the story shared her name, she was overjoyed and immediately loved the story. She even forgot about her favorite movie,

"The Fairy Princess." Now, all she wanted was to hear more about the fairy princess named Lillian.

"One day, the Fairy Queen went out and brought back a beautiful flower crown to give to her children. But there was only one crown, and she had three children. Who should she give it to?" Hayden looked at Lillian, his voice gentle as he continued the story.

"To Princess Lillian!" Lillian shouted eagerly.

Hayden smiled and nodded. "Yes, the Fairy Queen wanted to give the crown to the adorable Princess Lillian."

Lillian's eyes sparkled with excitement as she responded, "Yes! That is so amazing."

Hayden laughed and continued, "But the Fairy Queen also loved Prince Kyle and Prince Dylan very much. If she only gave the crown to Princess Lillian, Prince Kyle and Prince Dylan would be sad too."

"What should she do?" Lillian frowned, both worried and frustrated. She was deeply involved in the story and wanted the best outcome for everyone.

Hayden chuckled. "Exactly, what

should she do? The Fairy Queen

thought and thought, trying to come up with a solution. She finally decided to seek the wisdom of the royal wizard, who was known for his clever ideas. The Fairy Queen summoned him to help with the dilemma. The wizard thought for a long time and finally came up with a brilliant idea - drawing lots."

Lillian's eyes lit up when she heard this. "I know about drawing lots! Mommy plays that game with us. We just played it earlier."

Hayden smiled as he continued the

story. "The Fairy Queen was puzzled and asked, 'What is drawing lots?' The wizard explained the rules to her in detail. After listening carefully a long time, the Fairy Queen

understood and thought it was not

a

wonderful idea. So, she decided to use this method. She called Princess Lillian, Prince Kyle, and Prince Dylan and prepared three lots. She told them that whoever drew the marked lot would be given the beautiful flower crown she had brought back."

Lillian, listening intently, nervously clutched at her clothes. Hayden noticed her anxiousness and continued, his voice soothing and encouraging, "Princess Lillian, Prince Kyle and Prince Dylan each drew one of the lots. Can you guess who ended up with the marked one?"

Lillian's brow furrowed with uncertainty, and she shook her head slowly, her face reflecting her hesitation. Her eyes were wide as she tried to figure out the outcome, clearly caught up in the suspense of the story.

Hayden smiled warmly and leaned in a bit, adding to the dramatic effect, "Princess Lillian drew the marked lot."

Lillian's face lit up with pure joy as she clapped her hands and shouted excitedly, "Yeah!"

"But Prince Kyle and Prince Dylan did not agree. They changed their minds and no longer wanted to honor the agreement. They wanted the flower crown and did not want the Fairy Queen to give it to Princess Lillian," Hayden continued.

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"No way!" Lillian said urgently. "They can't do that. It was Princess Lillian who drew the lot. The flower crown belongs to her!"

Hayden smiled, trying to ease her upset. "Yes, Princess Lillian drew the lot, so the flower crown should be hers. Prince Kyle and Prince Dylan need to keep their promise and not take it from her."

Lillian nodded vigorously. "Yes."

Jeremy, who had been observing from a short distance, looked at Lillian and then turned to Hayden. He looked at Hayden with a look only a father and son would understand. When Jeremy was little, Hayden often used stories and situations like this to teach him important lessons. Now, he was employing the same approach with Lillian. Hayden noticed Jeremy almost rolling his eyes, but he maintained his composure as he continued his gentle teaching with Lillian. "Do you think it is important to keep promises?"

"Yes," Lillian responded with a serious nod, her little face earnest and intent. "They can't break their promise. It was decided by drawing lots that... that Princess Lillian won, so the... the flower crown should go to her." Although she spoke slowly, her determination shone through.

Hayden's smile widened as he saw her understanding take shape. "That's right. So, when you play games, you should be a child who keeps promises too, okay?"

Jeremy gave Hayden a knowing look. Hayden felt discomfort at the intensity of Jeremy's gaze but held steady. Jeremy quickly looked away, focusing once more on Lillian. Despite his reservations about Hayden's somewhat sneaky methods, Jeremy could not argue with the importance of the lesson being taught. Keeping promises was crucial, and honoring commitments was a value they all needed to uphold.

Lillian, now connecting the dots, thought to herself, 'Is Daddy talking about me?' She realized that her recent attempts to back out after losing the draw had been untrustworthy. Hayden's explanation made her feel less upset, and she saw the sense in it. "Next time I win the lot drawing, Kev has to keep his promise and not take it from me," she stated firmly.

Hayden nodded in agreement, his smile reassuring. "Of course, Kev has to keep his promise too. Everyone should keep their promises."

"Okay," Lillian said with a resolute nod. It took some time, but she finally calmed down and grasped the importance of keeping promises. How long she would remember this lesson was uncertain, as children often forgot things quickly. Today, they might be soothed and make promises, but by tomorrow, they could easily renege. It often required repeated teaching, using various methods and approaches, just like with Jeremy when he was little.

The first time, he cried. The second time, he wailed. The third time, he threw a tantrum. By the fourth time, he was grounded, and the fifth time involved more serious discipline. Repetition had been key in his learning process.

Stacey had waited downstairs for a long time before she could not resist sneaking upstairs to check on things. When Kevin saw Stacey sneaking upstairs, he jumped off the couch and followed her. Stacey felt even more reassured that Kevin was willing to come with her. "Let's go quietly so we don't disturb them," she whispered to him.

"Okay." Kevin nodded, and they tiptoed upstairs together.

When they reached the second floor, they saw Lillian and Jeremy coming out of the room, with Hayden following behind. Jeremy's eyes brightened at the sight of Becky, and he eagerly rushed to her side. Stacey paused momentarily, her gaze settling on Lillian. Despite her red eyes, Lillian no longer appeared upset or on the verge of tears. Stacey thought to herself, 'Did Hayden really calm her down? Hayden is incredible!' She did not realize she was looking at Hayden with the same admiration that Jeremy often directed toward her.

Hayden's soft laugh broke the silence, and he suggested, "It is all right now. How about we go for a walk outside?"

"Yes!" Lillian shouted eagerly. Stacey noticed the newfound closeness between Lillian and Hayden, a bond strengthened by their earlier conversation. "I want to go too," Kevin chimed in eagerly.

Turning to Jeremy, Stacey gave him a warm smile. "Jeremy, do you want to come along?"

Jeremy looked at Becky, his lips

moving in an attempt to form words,

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but his nerves got the best of him. His ears flushed a deep red as he struggled to speak. Stacey knelt beside him, her voice gentle and encouraging as she said, "It's okay, Jeremy. Try saying, 'I want.'"

Jeremy glanced nervously at Becky's lips, his small fists clenching at his sides. Stacey encouraged him with a smile, "Don't be afraid. Just say it out loud. It is perfectly fine if you make a mistake. No one will laugh at you."

Hayden also watched Jeremy with a hopeful expression. Jeremy pursed his lips, holding his breath, and finally managed to whisper, "Wa."

"Want," Hayden corrected softly. Jeremy looked up at Hayden, meeting Hayden's serious gaze.

With a determined breath, Jeremy tried again. "Want!" This time, he pronounced it correctly.

Stacey's face lit up with pride as she immediately opened her arms and enveloped Jeremy in a warm hug. "Jeremy, you did it! You are amazing! You learned so quickly," she praised. Jeremy's cheeks flushed brightred. Even though he had only said one word correctly and had made a mistake earlier, the hug and encouragement meant the world to him.

"Let's go for a walk together." Stacey gently patted Jeremy's shoulder and smiled. This time, everyone was happy as they went out. They walked around the neighborhood for a long time and finally stopped at the playground to let Jeremy, Lillian, and Kevin play on their own.

After the children had dashed off to enjoy themselves, Stacey and Hayden fell into silence. The silence between them grew, and Stacey, feeling a bit nervous, began to wonder how to start a conversation.

"Mr. Fraley mentioned he wants to visit Zentscape during Christmas," Hayden finally said, bringing up a topic they had discussed previously. Stacey felt less nervous hearing this. She straightened up a bit, her expression turning more serious as she replied, "I have already drafted the plans. I will send them to you shortly."

"Okay," Hayden said with a smile. He then turned to look at her and sighed. "But if Mr. Fraley comes here for Christmas, will it disrupt your family's celebration?"

Stacey shook her head immediately and smiled. "No, it won't. It is just one more person. It should make the celebrations even livelier." Hayden's smile widened as he nodded in agreement. "True. Speaking of which, will you come to my place then?" he asked, looking at her. Stacey was taken aback, her brows furrowing in confusion as she processed his question. Hayden chuckled and said, "You have to come." Stacey laughed, thinking to herself, 'Was Hayden just teasing me?' She then said, "Well, my parents and I did visit Hoggard Manor once before."

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Hayden was stunned for a time before nodding and replying with a smile, "Yes, my grandparents said so. But I wasn't home last time. Next time, we'll celebrate Christmas together. Come to my house, and I'll extend my welcome."

Hayden's invitation made Stacey's heart race instinctively. After a while, she nodded, saying, "Okay."

Hayden grinned, glowing with excitement when he heard her reply. They conversed in the dark. It was already late before they realized it. He didn't ask her and the children to go home together until about nine o'clock in the evening.

Stacey unknowingly kept pace with Hayden. She couldn't even understand why someone like him knew so much about the trivial stuff in life.

She pondered, 'Don't housekeepers frequently manage the daily lives of wealthy CEOs and scions, as portrayed in TV shows and novels? Apart from work, they take part in a variety of exquisite programs. Ordinary people's lifestyles should be vastly different from theirs, right? Like Mom and Dad, they rarely cook in person. Grace and other housekeepers are usually in charge of these tasks. As a result, they struggle to behave like ordinary people in front of Isabella. Adrian is always concerned that they will be exposed. But...'

Stacey then couldn't help but swivel her head and steal a glance at Hayden, wondering, 'Although he can accomplish many small things in life, it should be difficult for him to play an ordinary individual.' Hayden exuded a noble aura that set him apart from others. As a result, she felt reflexively nervous every time she met him.

Stacey would occasionally remember that he was only two years older than her, making them roughly the same age. Although they were about the same age, she had always thought there was a significant difference between them. Because she thought about it too much, she began to doubt Hayden about what he liked about her and what she possessed that earned his liking. She left the residential area park unwittingly with a chaotic mind, and the bodyguards stationed nearby to protect them secretly also followed them.

At the same time, Jenny slowly emerged from the spot where they had previously rested, unbeknownst to Stacey or the bodyguards. She looked at their backs, her gaze drawn to the three children who were following them. Carrying her purse, She stared at the three children's backs with loathing, her eyes narrowing slightly. She mused, 'Stacey... She certainly keeps her close eyes on the two kids. I don't even have a chance of harming them.' Even though Jenny wasn't fully prepared, she had to give it a try. The documents she stole from Theodore the previous time were phony, causing her and Dorothy's scheme to fail and costing them a lot of money. However, she wouldn't give up so simply and had to get the Edwards family project back because it was important for her and Dorothy's new company. But Theodore was difficult to persuade and even contacted the cops, wanting her arrested. Fortunately, she was a Menterra citizen and could use several legal loopholes in Zentiscape to escape.

However, if Jenny still intended to get that project from Theodore, her previous plan wouldn't work. Some men had always upheld a sense of dignity in front of women. Many women would admire him for his superiority. Occasionally, when a woman approached and lightly flattered them, they trusted everything. But once it was revealed, the man was also the cruelest, never trusting her at all.

Yet, Jenny no longer considered these to be the most important because she didn't want to return to him anymore. For the past two years, she had been miserable trying to please the pompous Theodore every day. She mused, 'He should look at himself in the mirror. What a psychopath. With his attitude, how could he expect many women to be drawn to him and fall for him? Barf!'

From Jenny's observation over the

past years, she had found out about Theodore's weakness, which was Rebecca. Men were scumbags. He didn't appreciate Rebecca's devotion to him and the lovely life they shared When Rebecca was

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heartbroken and left him, he realized how much he loved her and couldn't let her go. Every time he got drunk, Theodore would clamor for Rebecca to remarry him, which was the best proof of his feelings for her.

Therefore, his care for Rebecca had become his weakness.

As long as Jenny could find a way to catch Rebecca, or Lillian and Kevin, and threaten Theodore with the children, he would undoubtedly guarantee that he would let her off the hook for the past and provide her the project she desired.

While Jenny was pondering, her mother, Dorothy, appeared out of the corner and called out, "Jenny."

Looking back at Dorothy, Jenny was surprised and asked, "Mom? Why are you here?"

Dorothy stared at Jenny and lowered her voice, saying, "Jenny, I've asked someone to look into the man with Stacey. His name is Hayden. How about we give up on this project? It'll be the same if we switch to another project."

Frowned, Jenny replied unhappily, "No way. I can't allow failure to happen to me."

Dorothy felt worried and added, "But... We can't afford to mess with the Hoggard family given their status. If Hayden is truly willing to defend Stacey, it'll be difficult for us to flee even if we are Menterra citizens."

Jenny, annoyed by Dorothy's words, snapped, "Mom, are you getting so old that you've started to become timid? I've never seen you be timid when Dad was powerful. It was due to your courage that you were able to become the lady of the Smith family and achieve the prominence you have today." She then looked Dorothy in the eyes and continued seriously, "Mom, I won't give up." Then, she turned to gaze at Carter Villa. This time, she contemplated for a long time before saying, "I think it's fine if we have no choice but to give up on this project. I..."

Dorothy knew Jenny so well that she could tell what she was thinking right away, and she quickly stopped her, saying solemnly, "Jenny, you can't. Hayden won't like you. I looked into Hayden. He lacks emotion in a love connection. He took over the company at the age of 18, and every year, innumerable ladies wanted to sleep with him and marry him, but none of them were successful."

"I don't think so. Can't you see he has some feelings for Rebecca now?" Jenny retorted.

As Dorothy heard it, she said anxiously, "Jenny, you..."

Jenny stared in the direction of Carter Villa and snorted. "Mom, don't worry. I know what to do."

Chapter 239

Stacey and Hayden had no idea Jenny had already set her sights on them, but they weren't afraid of it because the Carter family had long been well- prepared for it. Several children constantly followed Stacey's children, making Jenny didn't have the chance to take action on her children.

Furthermore, Adrian had requested that someone dig into the information about Jenny and Dorothy. After such a long time of investigation, he had gathered a large amount of information and evidence that could be presented to the court. However, the conclusive evidence of Dorothy's scheme against Edwin's children couldn't be discovered or submitted to the court because it had been much too long. After receiving the proof, Adrian checked and verified it before heading home.

After arriving home, Adrian showed all of the evidence to Stacey and explained the findings of his investigation. While he was explaining, Hayden sat alongside them. Hayden frowned slightly as if unsure about Jenny and Stacey's relationship. Noticing Hayden's doubt, Adrian hesitated for a moment and took the initiative to explain it to Hayden.

Hayden's eyes darkened after he heard that. He reviewed all the evidence brought back by Adrian and eventually returned it to Stacey, asking, "Do you want to put her in jail?"

Mutilation of little children was a severe felony in Menterra, punished by at least 130 years in prison. They believed Jenny wouldn't come out alive after 130 years of punishment in prison.

Stacey had mixed feelings. Among the materials Adrian had collected, there were photos of Jenny's ex-husband Jeffrey's daughter. That girl was very adorable, but she was killed by Jenny. "Yes, I do," she admitted, nodding without hesitation.

Adrian said, "Then, I'll hand over the evidence to Jeffrey and arrange for the best lawyer for him. I promise to send Jenny to jail."

Hayden turned to gaze at Adrian, thinking for a moment before stating, "I have some connections in Menterra. If you need my help, just let me know, and I'll assign someone to handle it."

Upon hearing this, Adrian shook his head and responded, "No need. I'm simply obeying the law. With your connections, it's a waste of talent on such a case."

After saying that, everyone found it amusing and busted out laughing. Although Stacey and Adrian had no idea what connections Hayden had, they could certainly surmise that it was truly pointless to ask someone with high authority to execute such a small task for them.

After deciding how to deal with Jenny, Adrian took away the evidence he had collected through hard work.

A few days later, the year-end entertainment ceremony was due to take place. Stacey had promised Charlie and Lynn that she would attend, and she had also received an invitation card, as did Hayden.

Hayden was, however, invited as a special identity. His invitation card was substantially different from Stacey's. It was a gold-embossed invitation card that appeared highly distinguished. When the invitation card was delivered to him, she even peeked at it several times, thinking that it looked very noble. He was amused and handed it to her so she could look over it.

However, the invitation card was only a small episode. Soon, it was time for them to attend the event. There were still three children, but Stacey had no plans to keep them at home. She could only be secure if she kept them with her and could access them at any time.

Therefore, Charlie had made the necessary arrangements for her in advance. They had already discussed it with the entertainment ceremony organizer and were able to make arrangements.

Hayden didn't even need Charlie's help. He easily addressed these issues on his own and could take Jeremy there as agreed with the organizer. Stacey had no doubts about his remarks as she recalled his gold-embossed invitation card.

Lillian and Kevin were ecstatic to learn that they could go out with Stacey and meet Charlie.

Jeremy was also thrilled. He had never been to an entertainment ceremony before. He remembered Hayden telling him that it was where his mother used to receive the award for her efforts, so he wanted to go and see Becky stand on stage and accept the award for himself.

Patrick knew they were heading out a few days before and had requested permission to use the helicopter ahead of time. So, this time, they could fly there in their private helicopter.

Lillian and Kevin had taken helicopters before, but they were still quite attracted to them. When they saw the helicopter, their eyes shone with excitement.

Stacey found them amusing. She reached out to pick up Lillian and load her into the helicopter. Hayden also picked up Kevin and loaded him into it. Jeremy was three years old, but he still struggled to get into the helicopter by himself. In the end, Hayden picked him up, and Jeremy climbed up.

The country had strict flight

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controls. Even if there were private planes and helicopters available, they would have to apply ahead of time if they wished to fly. Lillian, Kevin, and Jeremy rarely took the helicopters, despite Stacey and Hayden having one at home. After stepping onboard

the helicopter, the three children's excitement was evident as they looked around and touched things.

Following Stacey and Hayden, Gwen and Marie boarded with some tiny items from Lillian and Kevin in their hands.

Jeremy had a small backpack, but all of his belongings were with Hayden.

Lillian and Kevin had their own

special seats Stacey buckled their seat belts after she had put them and that left Jeremy. When she

turned around, she discovered

that

Jeremy had already taken a seat, and Hayden had helped him fasten his seat belt.

"My house... has one, too," Jeremy spoke in an odd tone, but he spoke it out.

Stacey and Hayden were astonished when they heard that. Then, they both laughed.

"Next time when I go to your house, can I see the helicopter?" Stacey asked, smiling at Jeremy.

Jeremy's eyes shone with delight, and he quickly nodded, adding, "Hmm!"

Hayden, giggling, turned to face Lillian and Kevin and smiled, inquiring, "Lillian and Kevin, would you like to take my helicopter next time?" Upon hearing that, Lillian and Kevin looked at Hayden with excitement. Kevin asked, "Is your helicopter different from ours?"

Hayden, smiling, nodded and replied, "There are some differences."

"I want to see it!" Lillian exclaimed with excitement.

"Me, too!" Kevin also shouted excitedly.

"Okay. Why don't you and your mommy take my helicopter the next time we go back to Alagua City together?" Hayden suggested with a smile.

"Okay!" Kevin agreed loudly.

"Hmm!" Lillian also responded with tremendous excitement.

Chapter 240

The helicopter was considerably more convenient and less crowded than the airliner, so they arrived in Jacaster with ease.

On the other side, Jenny grew frustrated after realizing that they had left. She had made a lot of effort to gain access to the residential area by knowing a scion who lived there. Her original plan was to spend a few more days observing Stacey and her two children following her return to it. Moreover, after Dorothy reminded her, she decided that instead of targeting them, she should direct her efforts toward Hayden. If she could win him over, it would be a greater deal than obtaining Theodore.

However, Jenny hadn't anticipated Stacey and Hayden to leave before she could keep an eye on them. Not only did they leave, but all of the children she had targeted followed them along. Most significantly, they still took the helicopter and flew away. If it was a flight, she could at least discover their destination. But she found it difficult to investigate because they were taking the helicopter.

Dorothy was likewise startled that Stacey and Hayden had departed by helicopter. But in reality, she felt relieved after learning they had left. Hayden exuded an overwhelming sense of crisis, and she had always thought that he wasn't someone to mess with, but Jenny had lived a comfortable life since childhood and was spoiled to have such terrifying stubbornness. Dorothy felt at ease that he had departed in advance, so she didn't have to worry about Jenny being insensitive and insisting on getting close to him, which might have disastrous consequences.

"Jenny, they've all left, and their whereabouts are unknown. Maybe we should go too," Dorothy suggested, glancing at Jenny. She then sighed softly, adding, "Let's just give up on Theodore's project. It's only worth up to 65 million dollars. We can also get it from another direction."

"They'll definitely come back," Jenny insisted. She refused to leave and was determined to stay.

However, even if they wished to stay, the reality of their situation wouldn't allow it owing to terrible news from their company. Something happened at the company headquarters in Menterra, and their employees pleaded with them to return. Their expressions changed after they got the news. They had no time to focus on Theodore or Hayden at all.

Jenny thought, 'A man I despise and another who I have yet to win over is nothing compared to the company and money.'

Jenny and Dorothy flew back to Menterra at the same time, but they were surprised to see a swarm of police officers rush in just as they stepped off the plane. They seized Jenny directly and handcuffed her.

Jenny asked, "What's happening? What do you want to do?" She had a bad feeling and struggled immediately.

While Jenny was battling, a man emerged from the corner. She recognized him and was even very familiar with him, as he was her ex-husband, Jeffrey. His eyes were filled with hate and murderous intent.

After the police in Menterra apprehended her, he said coldly, "Irene, you're under arrest."

Jenny was known as Irene in Menterra.

Jeffrey fixed his gaze on Jenny or, more specifically, Irene. He gritted his teeth and said, "Irene, go to jail for the rest of your life as atonement for Jimena."

Upon hearing that, Jenny knew what was going on. She couldn't believe it, pondering, 'There's no way. How could Jeffrey find proof after so many years?' She then attempted to break free from the police's clutches, yelling, "No! You can't arrest me before I see the evidence!"

"Shut up! I'll show you when we get back," a policeman said, pulling out a gun and pointing at Jenny's neck.

Dorothy had intended to assist Jenny, but when she saw the gun, her expression changed immediately. Menterra differed from Zentscape. In Menterra, it was usual for police to fire. If they caused a scene, they could perish from gunfire. She loved Jenny very much, but she loved herself more. So, she abruptly stopped talking and even took a few steps back silently.

Jenny was taken to the Menterra police station half an hour later and shown the proof she was looking for. At that point, her eyes became crimson, and she couldn't believe it, musing, 'I've already taken care of these. How could they discover these? Jeffrey, that useless man. Why did he have to find out now, after all these years of failure?'

Jeffrey walked over, raised his hand, and slapped Jenny hard across the face. He rebuked, "Irene, spend the rest of your life in jail!"

Dorothy also saw the documents. She was shocked not because Jenny had murdered Jeffrey's child, but because Jeffrey had discovered the proof. She had done something similar many years ago. She was terrified for the first several years, but when nothing happened, she eventually forgot about it. Unexpectedly, this case reminded her of what had happened back then. She pondered, 'Jenny's case can be discovered after so many years. How about mine?'

Dorothy could only think of one thing right now, which was escape. She knew she couldn't stay in Menterra any longer and needed to find a means to change her

nationality. After that, she had to flee to another nation to avoid being caught up in Menterra's laws.

At this moment, Dorothy had entirely

forgotten about Jenny. She hurriedly left the police station but didn't return home. The incident with Jenny terrified her and made her feel guilty. She was afraid that she might wind up like Jenny if the case of Edwin's children were exposed. Instead, she went to her company. After contemplating for half an hour, she soon made a new decision. She wanted to transfer the assets and sell the company before changing her nationality and fleeing.

Stacey, who was attending the year-end entertainment ceremony at the moment, was unaware of what had happened in Menterra. She was invited to the ceremony for two dramas, "Love Princess" and "The

Empress." However, she didn't anticipate being able to accept honors on stage, including the Best Actress award and Grand Prize award. The Best Actress award was given to her for her female lead in "Love Princess," whereas the Grand Prize award was for her female lead in "The Empress." She starred in only two plays and won awards for both.

Stacey was confused when the host on stage announced her name. But as soon as she regained her composure, she rose and entrusted Hayden with the children for the time being. Then, she hurried up to accept the award.