

Ready to Rule: The Real Heiress Strikes Back

Chapter 16

Lucinda was so upset, she was about to cry. "But Grandpa..."

"Welcome home, sweetheart," Cameron said, his voice trembling a little as he and Kylie pulled Lydia into a hug. "From now on, your mom and I will make up for all the love you missed. We'll give you twice as much as before."

Lydia could feel the weight of the crown on her head. She was almost sure it was the Eternal Stars, one of the world's top ten crowns. It was said to be over a thousand years old and unbelievably precious. Rumor had it, a billionaire had it hidden away. She never imagined it would end up with her real parents.

"This is too much," she whispered.

Cameron just laughed. "Only the best for my daughter. That's how it should be."

Kylie gently smoothed Lydia's long, silky hair. Her voice was soft. "He's right, Lydia. You've suffered so much for eighteen years. It's our fault for not finding you sooner. You had to go through so much at the Smiths'."

As she spoke, Kylie's eyes filled with tears again, and a few slipped down her cheeks.

"My grandma at the Smith house took care of me. I was okay," Lydia said quietly.

Kylie nodded. "We should find a time to visit and thank her in person. She's done so much for you."

Lydia smiled. "I'd like that."

No matter what happened with the Smiths, her grandma would always close to her. That would never change.

"Lydia, come take a look at all your gifts. And the cars and motorcycles, too," Cameron said quickly, trying to lighten the mood before Kylie started crying again.

Kylie wiped her eyes and took Lydia's hand, leading her over to the gift shelves. "Everything here is something your dad, your grandfather, or I have collected over the years. They're all for you now."

Lydia glanced at the shelves. There were sparkling jewels, designer watches and handbags, antiques, paintings, all kinds of rare and expensive things. She could barely take it all in.

Cameron cleared his throat and looked at her. "Lydia, your grandfather never lets anyone touch these antiques. He treasures them. But the moment he found out you were coming home, he wanted you to have them right away. He just..."

"I get it," Lydia said with a nod.

She figured Mr. Norwood felt the same way her grandma did. Her grandma had raised her from the time she was little, and even after finding out Lydia wasn't her real granddaughter, she never stopped loving her.

"Lydia, you're really understanding. Come, let's see if you like any of the cars," Cameron said.

By the window, Lucinda's legs felt like jelly. She had to grab the window frame to keep herself upright.

What was going on?

"Grandpa, who is she?" Lucinda asked, her voice shaking.

She had seen the words on the heart-shaped rose arrangement: "Welcome home, baby girl." Still, she refused to believe it. She tried to convince herself the girl was just a distant relative, or maybe someone her parents wanted as a future daughter-in-law for one of her brothers.

Her parents only had one daughter. That was her. There couldn't be anyone else.

Mr. Norwood looked at her, guilt written all over his face. He knew he had to tell her the truth now.

"Lucinda, she..... she's your parents' biological daughter."

Lucinda's heart plummeted. She stared at him, stunned. "That's impossible. Mom and Dad only have me. I've never heard anything about another daughter."