

Ready to Rule: The Real Heiress Strikes Back

Chapter 19

"I'll just look around." Lucinda forced a polite smile, doing her best to hide the anger burning inside her. She wandered through Lydia's new room, checking out every corner, even peeking into the bathroom.

When she finally made it back to her own room, she lost it. She swept everything off her desk in one dramatic swoop. The thick, pricey carpet muffled the noise, which was probably the only reason no one came running to see Lucinda's meltdown.

"Why her? Why does she get everything?" She whispered, the words trembling with pure frustration.

For the first time, Lucinda felt real fear settle in. Everything she'd ever had, all the things people envied her for, suddenly felt like they were slipping away. What was she supposed to do now? Why couldn't she have been Mom and Dad's real daughter?

Grace, who'd been quietly following her, knelt down and started picking up everything Lucinda had thrown. She carefully put each thing back in its place, then turned to look at Lucinda, who was now sprawled on the couch, crying.

"Miss Lucinda, I know you're not their biological daughter, but you've been with them for eighteen years. Lydia just got here. Of course your parents feel guilty about what she's been through, so they're showering her with gifts. They just want to make her happy and make up for lost time. You shouldn't let it get to you."

Lucinda's voice was low and shaky. "How can I not care? You saw what happened. Mom and Dad gave her so many gifts and surprises, even the rooms for my brother's future wives. They even gave her the Eternal Stars. That was supposed to be mine."

Grace's eyes softened but she spoke firmly. "So what? All those things don't come close to the love you've received from them and from your Grandpa over the last eighteen years. And don't forget, your Grandpa made it pretty clear that your place in the Norwood family can't be replaced. He doesn't even like Lydia. So you can't lose your head now."

Lucinda went quiet, breathing hard as she tried to calm down. After a while, she let out a long sigh, though her eyes were still clouded with worry. "But Mom and Dad are still so biased. She just got back and already took so much from me. What happens next?"

Grace asked quietly, "Miss Lucinda, do you want to go back to your biological parents?"

Lucinda didn't even hesitate. "Of course not!" She spat the words out. The thought of going back to some rural village made her skin crawl. No way. She was meant to be the daughter of the richest family in the city, not some nobody from the middle of nowhere.

Grace just smiled, like she already knew the answer. "Exactly. Miss Lucinda, you're meant to shine. You could never live in a place like that."

Lucinda clenched her fists, her nails digging into her palms. "But now that Lydia's here, things are definitely going to change for me. My place in this family isn't safe anymore."

Grace looked at her seriously. "Miss Lucinda, you don't have to stay in the Norwood family forever."

Lucinda stared at her, confused. "What, you think I should go back to that awful place?"

Grace shook her head. "It's simple, really. When a girl grows up, she gets married. You've been engaged to Connor Jefferson since you were a kid. If you marry him and become his wife, your life will be even better than it is here."

The idea hit Lucinda like a bolt of lightning. She sat up, eyes shining with hope. "You're right, Grace! As long as I marry Connor, I'll never have to worry about getting kicked out of the Norwood family."

Grace nodded with approval. "That's the spirit. With your looks, your brains, and everything else you have going for you, Connor is bound to fall for you."

Lucinda straightened up, her hands clenched in determination. "Lydia can try to take everything from me, but Connor will always be mine."

Meanwhile, after the little welcome party, Kylie and Cameron moved all of Lydia's

gifts into her room. Good thing her new suite was huge. If it had been any smaller, there wouldn't have been space for everything.