

Ready to Rule: The Real Heiress Strikes Back

Chapter 8

Kylie hugged Lydia close, her eyes red with tears. Eighteen years. Her precious daughter had been out in the world for eighteen years. Every time she thought about it, her heart ached, sharp and relentless.

The old man gave a quiet huff and stood up from the couch. "That's enough. I don't want to say any more, but let me be clear. Lucinda is still my granddaughter and a member of the Norwood family. I expect the two girls to get along. I'm going back to my room."

He shook his head and leaned on his cane as he left the living room. Lydia couldn't help but furrow her brow.

Lucinda?

Kylie noticed her confusion and spoke gently, "Lucinda is... the child your father and I raised. It's a long story. Go take a shower and change your clothes. I'll explain everything when you're done."

Lydia nodded. "Okay."

Cameron and Kylie had set up a room for her on the second floor. It faced the sun and looked like something out of a fairy tale. The room was bigger than the whole Smith family's villa, with a bedroom, a lounge area, a walk-in closet, a jewelry section, a makeup area, a bathroom, and even a balcony for the view. It was almost too much to take in.

Soon, the maids brought in rack after rack of clothes.

Kylie stayed by her side, helping her pick something out. "Lydia, take a look. These are all the newest collections from the Capital's most popular brands. Do you like any of them?"

It was summer, so most of the clothes were light and airy. Lydia's eyes swept over the endless rows of outfits. She reached for a tag, her expression shifting into something unreadable.

Kylie caught it and asked softly, "Lydia, do you not like these? If you don't, I'll have them bring more options right away."

"I like them," Lydia answered with a small, complicated smile.

Kylie didn't quite believe her and spoke quickly, "It's okay, just pick something for now. I'll have them send over more clothes in a bit."

"No, really. I like them." Lydia reached out and picked a simple white dress. "This one's fine."

About twenty minutes later, Cameron waited downstairs, barely able to sit still. When Lydia finally walked out, looking fresh and changed, he almost burst into tears.

She looked so much like her mother.

In that white dress, Lydia was stunning, like a piece of pure crystal-clear, bright, and impossible to ignore. She had the same kind of beauty her mother had when she was young, but there was something different about her too. Kylie had a gentle, graceful warmth that made people feel at ease. Lydia, on the other hand, had a cool, quiet strength about her, like a sword hidden in its scabbard, its sharpness just beneath the surface.

"Lydia, my sweet girl," Cameron choked out, tears running freely down his face. "How did your mother and I ever let you slip away?"

Lydia felt a strange ache in her heart. "How did you find out I was really your daughter?"

Cameron wiped his face and glanced at Kylie, letting out a heavy sigh. "The whole city was talking about the Smith family looking for their real daughter. Your mother and I realized Mrs. Smith gave birth at the same hospital, on the exact same day as your mom. It seemed like too much of a coincidence, so we started looking into it quietly. We never expected... it turned out there had been a mistake. All three families' babies were switched at birth."

Lydia's brow creased. "Three families?"