

After All the Hurt, She Chose Herself

Chapter 5

Meanwhile, in a long hallway.

Gideon was looking at the information his assistant had just sent him about Dawn.

His long fingers tapped on the keyboard. [Keep looking. No matter the cost, I have to find Dawn.]

If he could find Dawn, there might be a way to treat Lilith's illness.

But just in case, he still had to have a child with Aria. Besides, she would jump at the chance for him to touch her.

This way, Aria could use the pregnancy to milk him for more money.

Isn't that how Aria always operated?

So pretentious. It was disgusting.

After Aria left the company, her phone buzzed several times.

The messages were from her mother, Roxanne Brent.

To be precise, she was her wealthy adoptive mother—and Lilith's biological mother.

[Aria, I haven't been feeling well these past few days. Come see me.]

But the debt she owed for being raised was immense. Before Lilith was brought back into the family, Roxanne had truly raised her as her own daughter.

Aria turned the steering wheel and drove home.

When Aria pushed the door open, she noticed the maid seemed surprised to see her.
"Miss, you're back too?"

Too?

She hadn't been home in nearly three years. Who else was back?

Aria had just sat down on the sofa when she heard the sound of leather shoes on the floor.

A familiar yet distant male voice reached her ears. "Roxanne, Flora will be here in a bit."

Aria froze.

It was Charles Brent.

He had actually returned to the country.

Charles was her adoptive mother Roxanne's biological brother, which meant Aria was supposed to call him uncle Charles.

But Charles was only 28, a full 22 years younger than Roxanne.

So, by age, Charles and Aria were peers.

Growing up, Charles was raised in Roxanne's home.

At the time, Aria and Charles were close in age and naturally started playing together. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to call them childhood sweethearts, and their relationship grew increasingly close.

That all changed when Lilith was welcomed back into the Rowan family. Although Aria remained the eldest daughter of the family, everyone in their circle knew she wasn't a true Rowan, and that her position was just for show.

After it was clear there was no blood relation between them, Aria and Charles gradually got together, and Charles had even said he would marry her.

But not long after, Charles went abroad, and she married Gideon.

Aria turned her head.

She saw Charles walk in with his arm around a woman's waist.

After so many years, Charles had lost a lot of weight, his gaze had become sharper, and he now had a girlfriend.

Charles completely ignored her, speaking only to Roxanne. "Roxanne, Flora likes grapes. Have someone bring some out."

Roxanne came out with a platter of fruit, smiling. "Flora, it's been so long. You've gotten even more beautiful. Sit down and have some fruit. Thank you for taking care of Charles abroad all these years."

She spoke with energy, her complexion rosy. She didn't look sick at all.

Only then did Aria understand. Today was a setup.

When Roxanne had found out she was dating Charles, she had used her own life and Charles's future to force them to break up.

Roxanne had pointed at her, screaming hysterically, "If you dare to keep seeing Charles, I'll kill myself!"

Roxanne had been in a car accident while saving her once, which left her with a chronic health condition that meant she couldn't get agitated. Aria owed Roxanne her life.

Besides, an uncle dating his niece—if that got out, it would ruin Charles's future.

Aria lowered her gaze.