

## The Abandoned Wife Chapter 2 - 10

### Chapter 2

Roxanne hurried to Harvey's office.

After pushing the door open, she spotted the little rascals inside. They were sitting on the couch in the office and swinging their legs nonchalantly.

The boys lit up at the sight of Roxanne. Scrambling off the couch, they ran toward her excitedly. "Mommy, you're finally done! I thought you'd be staying in the laboratory forever!"

"Mommy, you've worked hard! Are you tired? Sit down. I'll give you a massage."

They led Roxanne to the couch so she could take a seat.

As Roxanne took in their concern, she suddenly felt it was worth it to get yelled at.

"Look at how obedient you are. You weren't like this when you hacked into my computer earlier!" Harvey huffed angrily behind his desk.

Archie declared, "It was all your fault, Professor Lambert! You kept asking Mommy to work overtime. Look, she's getting malnourished!"

"That's right! Mommy's an ordinary human being. How could you ask her to work day and night?" Benny chimed in as he kneaded Roxanne's shoulder.

His temper spiking, Harvey gave a bark of laughter and responded, "You're too overprotective of her! Everyone in the research institute does the same!"

With that said, he shook his head and turned to Roxanne. "How did your research go?"

Roxanne shot him a grin. "It went smoothly. I'll send the data to you later."

She paused before asking, "Have you restored the data in your computer?"

Harvey ran a hand through his hair in frustration. "It has been an hour, but I still can't restore anything."

Amused, Roxanne patted Benny's hand. "Benny, go restore Professor Lambert's computer. Don't be naughty. What if he loses some important data?"

Benny immediately replied, “That won’t happen. I prepare a backup and various security levels every time. He won’t lose a thing!”

As he said that, he trotted over to Harvey and restored the latter’s computer. The little boy’s fingers typed on the keyboard furiously and produced lines of codes.

A few minutes later, the computer screen blinked and returned to normal. Harvey took one look at his computer in admiration. He had to admit his mentee’s sons were geniuses.

At a young age, Archie was already a medical genius. He was capable of differentiating thousands of herbs and showcased his talent in medicine. He also had a sharp eye for investments.

Benny, on the other hand, was interested in programming. He was now a little hacker who was very sensitive to numbers. Like

his brother, he also did great in investments.

Besides, both of them were adorable, mature, and cheeky.

Thus, he couldn’t bring himself to yell at them whenever they kicked up a fuss. Instead, he could only vent his frustrations on Roxanne.

Roxanne immediately offered an apology. “I’m sorry, Professor Lambert. Please don’t blame the kids for their naughty acts.”

Please don’t yell at me, too. I can’t always be their scapegoat, can I?

Harvey chuckled at her reaction. “Don’t worry. I didn’t summon you here to yell at you. I have a task for you. Listen, I’ve been planning on setting up a research institute back in the country. It will be focusing on traditional medicine. However, I’m still busy here and can’t leave for now. After careful consideration, I’ve decided to send you back!”

Roxanne had no idea he would say that. She froze and hesitated.

Go back home?

She never thought of going back to that place again after leaving six years ago.

After all, she didn’t have a family or someone she cared about back there.

Besides, she had grown to love Yartran.

Her first reaction was to reject the offer. “Professor Lambert, I—”

Harvey interjected, “Roxanne, I know you don’t want to head back, but I hope you’ll consider my suggestion. You’ve been my student for years, so I believe you know how wide and profound traditional medicine is. There aren’t enough herbs here for you to research. In Chanaea, you’ll have all the herbs you want. You can use and research them freely. Most importantly, many hidden and prestigious families are in possession of ancient medical skills in Chanaea. I remember you’re interested in that, right? That was why I made the suggestion for you to return to Chanaea. You have a bright future ahead of you. Besides, you’re different now. No matter what happens, or who you run into, I believe you can handle everything calmly, right?”

At his words, Roxanne fell silent.

He’s right. I’ve changed into a completely different person now. I can face all obstacles without fear. Besides, it has been six years. Perhaps that man is already married to his first crush. Why am I afraid? With that thought in mind, Roxanne took a deep breath and nodded solemnly. “All right, then. Professor Lambert, I’ll listen to you and return to Chanaea.”

Harvey beamed. “I’m glad you made up your mind quickly. Don’t worry. I’ll ask Linda to come with you. I’ll also arrange a team to help you out there.”

“Great. Thank you, Professor Lambert!” Roxanne gave a curt nod.

As they were conversing, Archie and Benny shared a look. They could sense each other’s excitement.

Mommy’s finally returning to Chanaea!

In fact, the two of them had been dying to head back for ages. After all, their father was back there. They wanted to see him in person. Of course, they also wanted to teach him a lesson for deserting his wife and children.

Two days later, Roxanne and the boys landed at the international airport in Horington.

Roxanne was finally back in Chanaea after six years.

After disembarking the plane, they walked out of the hallway. Just then, Benny squeezed his legs together and tugged at the

corner of Roxanne's skirt. "Mommy, I need to pee now."

Roxanne and Archie giggled at the sight of his urgent expression. "Okay. Let's go, then."

She reached out to ruffled Benny's hair.

At once, Benny trembled violently. "Stop it, Mommy. I'm going to pee my pants!"

With a chuckle, Roxanne led him to the restroom.

Archie then brought him into the restroom while Roxanne waited outside with their luggage. She didn't forget to send her professor a text to inform him about their arrival.

Suddenly, a familiar voice rang out.

"Idiots! How could so many of you fail to keep an eye on a little girl? What use are you if you can't even complete such a simple task?"

There was a hint of fury in the man's melodious, deep, and rich voice. It was pleasing to the ears.

Roxanne's hands, which were initially typing out a message on her phone, froze instantly.

Six years had passed since she last heard this voice, but she still found it eerily familiar.

Looking up, Roxanne spotted the tall figure some distance away.

Standing not far off was a tall man. His black suit accentuated his long legs and added a touch of elegance to his figure. Even in the crowd, he was eye-catching.

Roxanne could see his perfect side profile from her line of sight.

His tall nose and sculpted features were the envy of many. In fact, he looked so handsome that other men paled in comparison to him.

Lucian Farwell!

Roxanne's heart clenched at the sight of him.

She had no idea she'd run into him on the day of her arrival.

The feelings she had buried deep in her heart emerged temporarily, but she quickly put a lid on them.

Her gaze turned frosty.

She could finally appear calm before him.

Right then, the boys emerged from the restroom. “Mommy, we’re done!” they declared cheerfully.

Roxanne snapped out of her reverie and nearly had a heart attack.

The first thought that popped up in her mind was that she needed to leave right away. I can’t let Archie and Benny see him. They bear a resemblance to him. If they bump into each other, he’ll definitely realize something’s wrong!

Roxanne refused to get involved with him yet again.

Flustered, she urged, “You’re done? Come, let’s go. You don’t want your godmother to wait, do you?”

Without waiting for a reply, she dragged her luggage away.

Halfway through his phone call, Lucian heard a familiar voice and turned at his shoulder.

From the corner of his eye, he spotted a familiar female figure.

Roxanne Jarvis? Is that her? She’s back?

Lucian ran after her immediately, but her figure had already disappeared into the crowd.

As his gaze turned dark, Lucian was about to explode with rage.

She left the country so resolutely and even abandoned the kid. There’s no way she’s back!

### Chapter 3

Roxanne’s heart lurched to her throat and remained there as she hurried out of the airport. She kept turning at her shoulder to confirm he didn’t come after them.

Fortunately, his figure remained nowhere to be seen even after they exited the airport.

Roxanne could finally heave a sigh of relief.

The kids found it strange that she kept turning her head to glance behind them.

As Roxanne seemed anxious, they knew it wasn’t the time to ask questions.

Without a word, they allowed her to drag them out obediently.

“Roxanne! Archie! Benny!” A woman called from afar.

The three of them lifted their heads and saw a lady dressed in a suit, waving at them happily as she made their way to them.

Roxanne relaxed gradually at the sight of the woman. Flashing a smile, she said, “Madilyn, it’s been so long!”

Madilyn Xander was her best friend back in university and was currently working as a doctor in her own family’s hospital.

Shortly after, Madilyn came to a stop before them and flung her arms around Roxanne. “You’re finally back home. I’ve missed you so much!” she said in a friendly manner.

Roxanne chuckled and replied, “I’ve missed you, too.”

They’ve been in touch over the years online but rarely got the chance to meet each other in real life.

After giving her a hug, Madilyn squatted down and pulled the boys into a hug.

“My babies, do you miss me?”

Archie and Benny giggled adorably before answering in unison, “Of course we do! Aunt Madilyn, we even dreamed of you.

You’re still as pretty as ever!”

“How sweet of you!” Madilyn beamed happily after hearing their praise.

Roxanne’s guard was still up. She glanced at the gate of the airport and said calmly, “Let’s go. We can talk back home.”

Madilyn gave the boys a peck each on their cheeks before getting to her feet. After placing the luggage in her car truck, she ushered them into her car and sped away.

At the same time, Lucian appeared at the gate of the airport.

“Cancel my schedule overseas,” he told his assistant, Cayden Lawson.

Cayden gave a brief nod in acknowledgment. “Mr. Farwell, we’ve widened the search for Ms. Estella. She’s young and can’t go far. Don’t worry.”

Ms. Estella is Mr. Farwell’s darling daughter. It’s more crucial to find her. His work overseas isn’t as important in this situation.

Lucian’s gaze turned dark as he strode toward the Maybach parked by the road. Soon, the car drove away.

An hour later, Madilyn’s car arrived in Durwest Garden. It was a residential area full of mansions.

Roxanne had asked for Madilyn's help to rent a place, and this was the house that Madilyn had gotten her.

The four of them hopped out of the car and entered the new house under Madilyn's lead.

"The surroundings seem nice. I like this place."

Satisfied, Roxanne turned to look at Madilyn. "You're quite efficient, huh?"

Madilyn arched a brow. "I'm your neighbor. The owner of this house moved to the capital and wanted to rent this place out. I

happened to stumble upon it. Whenever we're free, we can visit each other's places."

Roxanne's lips curved as she bobbed her head in agreement.

After she unpacked their stuff briefly, it was time for dinner.

Hence, Madilyn brought them out for dinner.

She had just driven into the restaurant's parking lot and was about to park her car when a little girl ran out of a dark corner.

Madilyn slammed on the brakes before her car could hit the little girl. In shock, she stared at the little girl who had collapsed to the ground.

Roxanne's heart was racing at the near accident, too. She turned to make sure her boys were fine before opening the door to get out.

There was a young girl around five years old mere inches away from the car. She sat on the ground, clearly in a state of shock.

Roxanne felt her heart soften at the sight. She made her way to the girl carefully before asking, "Hey, are you hurt?"

The young girl had a fair complexion and looked sweet with her hair braided up.

She had a tall nose, huge eyes, and delicate

features. Dressed in a pink fluffy dress, she hugged an expensive doll in her arms.

Hearing Roxanne's voice, the little girl regained her composure and shook her head shyly. She didn't forget to eye Roxanne warily.

Roxanne's heart stirred as she observed the little girl silently. After confirming that the little girl was unharmed, she heaved a sigh

of relief inwardly and reached out to help the little girl up.

She had just stretched her hand out when the little girl cowered back in fear.

Roxanne's hand paused midair. Flashing an assuring smile, she explained, "Don't worry. I just want to help you up."

Glancing around, she asked doubtfully, "Where are your parents? Why are you alone?"

The young girl hugged her doll tightly and shook her head without uttering a word. Roxanne's brows snapped together, for she had no idea how to communicate with the girl.

Madilyn and the boys soon got out of the car.

Archie and Benny shared a curious look when they noticed the little girl remaining silent the entire while.

She looks cute. Why isn't she talking? Could she be a mute?

#### Chapter 4

The same thought popped up in Roxanne's mind. Is this little girl a mute?

Her sympathy for the little girl increased. In a gentle voice, she asked, "Can you give me your hand?"

With that, she stretched her hand outward.

Despite staring at her timidly, the little girl seemed to be less rigid after hearing her words.

Roxanne waited patiently for the little girl to accept her hand.

After a long hesitation, the little girl finally reached out to take Roxanne's hand cautiously.

Seeing that, Roxanne held her hand gently and helped her up. She didn't forget to check the little girl again for any injuries.

Because of her action, they got physically closer to each other.

The little girl felt soft and fluffy. She even smelled like milk.

Roxanne couldn't help but recall her daughter, who was a stillborn baby.

If she were to grow up well, she'd be around this little girl's age.

As that thought surfaced in her mind, Roxanne was overcome with heartache and regret.

As if sensing her emotions, the little girl stayed put and gazed at her quietly.

I know I shouldn't talk to strangers, but this lady is really pretty. Strangely, I feel the urge to get close to her.



At that moment, Madilyn remarked, “Oh, what an adorable young girl. She’s as adorable as our boys!”

Roxanne nodded in agreement. “I believe she got lost. Let’s send her to the police station and see if we can get in contact with her family.”

Right after she said that, the young girl gave her a slight tug.

Roxanne looked down in confusion.

The little girl was shaking her head profusely, her eyes turning red. She seemed like she was about to dissolve into tears any minute.

Clearly, the little girl didn’t want her to do that.

Seeing the girl’s distraught expression really tugged at Roxanne’s heartstrings. She had no other choice, though. If she didn’t send the little girl to the police station in time, she might be accused of kidnapping the latter.

Roxanne was in a dilemma.

“All right. We don’t have to go to the police station.” She squatted down and tried to negotiate with the little girl. “Do you have your parents’ phone number? I can call them so they can come here to pick you up.”

The little girl stopped shaking her head, but she slumped in dejection instead.

As she didn’t respond, Roxanne assumed she didn’t have her parents’ number. She was about to send her to the police station when the little girl moved.

Roxanne watched as she pulled out a pencil and a post-it note. She then scribbled a phone number with the word “Daddy” behind it before handing the note to Roxanne.

After taking the note from her, Roxanne punched in the number belonging to the little girl’s dad.

“Oh, she’s indeed mute,” Archie and Benny muttered under their breaths.

Roxanne stiffened and shot her sons a warning look. “Don’t be rude to her.”

The boys straightened their backs and gave the little girl guilty smiles.

Glancing at them, the little girl inched nearer to Roxanne instinctively and reached out to grab the corner of Roxanne’s dress.

However, Roxanne didn't notice that as she was busy double-checking the phone number before making the call.

Back in the Farwell residence, Lucian strode into the mansion angrily. "Is Essie back?"

The butler came to welcome him. Wearing a worried expression, he said, "No. I didn't see Ms. Estella around."

After saying that, he realized the temperature surrounding his employer had dropped drastically.

Lucian's lips thinned as he furrowed his brows.

I've searched everywhere I could. Where could she be? Did something happen to her?

As that possibility occurred to him, a faint gleam of malice shone in his eyes. It appeared as if he wanted nothing more than to destroy the entire world.

Right then, a lady clad in thick makeup hurried into the mansion and asked anxiously, "Lucian, I heard Essie went missing? Is it true? Did you find her?"

The lady was none other than Aubree, the one whom Lucian wanted to marry previously.

Nevertheless, Lucian kept his authoritative aura before her. "She's still missing. Now that you're here, I'd like to know what you told Essie this afternoon. Why would she run away from home for no reason?" Aubree seemed surprised to hear his question as she stared at him incredulously. "Lucian, what are you saying? Are you saying I did something to Essie?"

Seemingly hurt, she added, "I did nothing to her! Never mind if someone else misunderstands me. You've seen how I treated her dearly over the years! Even though Essie treated me coldly, I didn't mind and took good care of her. I never yelled at her. No way would I do something to make her run away from home!"

With her red-rimmed eyes and innocent expression, she was trying hard to convince Lucian that she had nothing to do with Estella's disappearance.

Deep down, she wanted nothing more than for the mute little girl to disappear forever.

Indeed, she was harsh to Estella that afternoon. She also told the little girl that she would give birth to more adorable children after she married Lucian.

By then, Lucian would no longer adore Estella.

As Estella couldn't talk, Aubree wasn't afraid that the former would complain about her behavior to Lucian.

However, she had no idea that Estella would end up running away from home.

This is great! It will be better if she can't return. That way, I won't have to see her again!

## Chapter 5

Lucian glared at her silently for a few seconds.

Meanwhile, Aubree dug her nails into her palm to stop herself from revealing her real emotions.

"You'd better not be lying."

Lucian averted his gaze a while later and turned to Cayden. "Did the police get back to you?"

Cayden's voice was grim. "Not yet."

He glanced at Lucian carefully and asked, "Could someone has kidnapped Ms. Estella?" Concern was evident in his voice.

The girl was Lucian's darling daughter. She was well-adorned in the Farwell family and thus became the target of many of

Lucian's rivals. Previously, she was nearly kidnapped.

Now, she was nowhere to be found, and even the police couldn't find her anywhere. Hence, Cayden couldn't help but think of the worst—someone had kidnapped her.

Lucian's gaze turned as dark as thunder. "Increase the manpower and expand the search area. I want to see her by the end of today!"

"Got it!" Cayden responded loudly.

He felt a chill go down his spine when he realized his employer was about to blow his top.

Lucian had just spun on his heels to leave when his phone rang.

Right now, he wasn't in the mood to talk on the phone. Pulling out his phone, he was about to reject the call when he realized it was from an unknown number.

Recalling Cayden's earlier words, Lucian scowled and answered the call.

A female voice rang out. "Hello."

Hearing that, Lucian narrowed his eyes suspiciously.

Why does this sound just like her voice?

The figure he spotted that afternoon at the airport flashed across his mind.

"Hello? Is anyone there?" Roxanne repeated dubiously after a while.

Lucian came back to his senses and replied curtly, "Yeah."

His answer was only one syllable, so it was too short for Roxanne to recognize his voice.

Roxanne heaved a sigh of relief after hearing his response. "Hello. I've run into a little girl who gave me your phone number. You must be her father, right? Are you free to pick her up now?"

Her voice rang in his ear clearly and resonated in his mind.

The more she spoke, the colder Lucian's gaze became.

When she stopped talking, Lucian's eyes were practically blocks of ice.

It's her! It has been years since we last met, but there's no way I'd have mistaken her for someone else! Roxanne Jarvis, you're finally back!

Gritting his teeth forcefully, Lucian lowered his voice deliberately and asked, "Where are you?"

"We're at Drunken Fairy. We'll wait here with her. Will you come to the restaurant to pick her up?" Roxanne answered at once.

"Yes. I'll head there right away."

With that said, Lucian cut the line and ordered, "Get the car. We're heading to Drunken Fairy."

Not knowing why his employer grew furious all of a sudden, Cayden replied in the affirmative hastily.

Roxanne stared at her phone as the screen dimmed. Strangely, she felt nervous for no reason.

The man's voice sounded hoarse. Why does it sound familiar?

As Roxanne couldn't figure out an answer, she stopped deliberating over the matter.

“Aren’t you hungry?” Madilyn asked.

After all, they had been waiting outside for some time. She continued, “I’m starving. Let’s head in for dinner. We can bring her out when her father arrives later.”

Roxanne shot her a grin. “All right. Let’s go in.”

She squatted down again to the little girl’s height to meet her gaze. “Are you hungry? Do you want me to bring you in for dinner?

Your daddy should be on the way here. When he arrives, I’ll bring you out. Will that do?” she asked.

The little girl stared at her for a few moments, seemingly reluctant.

“If you don’t want to come in, I’ll wait here with you,” Roxanne added patiently.

Hearing that, Archie and Benny chimed in, “We’ll wait with you too, Mommy!”

Madilyn slapped her forehead in exasperation. “Am I the only one starving here?

Little girl, we’re not bad people. No bad person

will treat you to a meal in an expensive restaurant! You must be hungry, too. Come on in with us. There’s no need to be stubborn.”

Everyone’s gazes fell on the young girl.

As Archie and Benny were also hungry, they stared at the little girl expectantly.

Biting her lip, the little girl came closer to Roxanne and reached out to tug at her sleeve. She then gave a careful nod.

“You don’t have to force yourself,” Roxanne told her gently, seeing through the girl’s thoughts.

The little girl shook her head yet again.

Seeing that, Roxanne patted her head affectionately. She took the little girl’s hand and led her into the restaurant.

Madilyn held the boys’ hands and watched as the little girl trotted beside Roxanne obediently. She teased, “She was wary of us just a while ago, but she’s gotten close to you now.”

With a sigh, she lamented, “Indeed, good-looking people are always favored.”

In response, Roxanne grinned and held the little girl’s hand tightly without responding to Madilyn’s teasing words.

## Chapter 6

The Drunken Fairy was one of the best private restaurants in Horington. Every dish served was exemplary, and the place only accepted the most high-profile clients. Reservations also had to be made at least one month in advance.

Madilyn had managed to book a table yesterday using her connections.

The restaurant's interior was exquisite; a screen separated every table, each room's entrance was made of wood, and the

building didn't have a roof. When night fell, the chandelier above gave off a very antique and quintessential vibe, and one would feel as though they were dining under the moonlight.

The small group made their way into the building and seated themselves at a corner table.

It wasn't long until the waitstaff arrived with their food.

Worried that the little girl would feel uncomfortable, Roxanne gave her all her attention, feeding her and wiping her mouth at every opportunity.

Archie and Benny sat next to them. Seeing Estella indulge in the food melted their hearts, and they tried their best to peel as much shrimp as they could for her.

Estella never stopped chewing as she kept her focus on the growing pile of food before her.

"Did you hear what happened? The Farwell family's princess has gone missing! The family's scoured the entire city for her, but they still can't find her."

Suddenly, a voice could be heard coming from the table next to them.

The next person to speak sounded warier. "She couldn't have been kidnapped, could she? Whoever's done it sure has nerves of steel. Who would ever dare lay their hands on her? She's Lucian Farwell's precious little girl! They must be tired of living."

Roxanne's movements slowed down visibly at the mention of Lucian's name, and she began to space out.

The conversation resumed anyway. "Right? The little princess might be mute and has never said a single word, but she still gets to live the best life. How lucky of her!"

Mute?

A look of suspicion flashed in Roxanne's eyes as she stopped moving.

Lucian's precious little girl is mute?

This child I picked up hasn't spoken a word.

Judging from her behavior and clothes, she does look like someone from the Farwells.

And that man over the phone! His voice...

At the thought of this, Roxanne suppressed her astonishment as she turned to the child on her left.

Seemingly having noticed her gaze, the girl glanced up at her with eyes full of puzzlement.

As soon as their eyes met, Roxanne felt as though she had been struck by lightning.

"This kid... She can't be Lucian's daughter, could she?"

Madilyn put down her cutlery and stared at the child for a few seconds. "That'd be too much of a coincidence, wouldn't it?" she asked hopefully.

As Roxanne's best friend, she knew everything the former had gone through for the past six years.

This girl looks like she's around five or six, which means she's about Archie and Benny's age.

If she really were Lucian's daughter, that means he would've had a child with that first crush of his right after Roxanne divorced him.

That guy just couldn't wait, huh?

Roxanne really deserves someone better than him.

Not knowing what her friend was thinking, Roxanne recalled all the events that had ensued after she met this child. The more she thought about it, the more certain she was that the little girl seated next to her was Lucian's daughter.

"I'd say we've hit the jackpot this time," she remarked with a grimace.

Seeing how sure the woman looked, Madilyn felt her heart sink as she gazed at the confused-looking child. "What should we do, then? Lucian's probably on his way now!" she whispered.

Roxanne began to panic.

A brief moment later, she handed her phone to Madilyn. "Take my phone and act like it's yours. I'll get Archie and Benny out of

here. We'll be waiting for you at the parking lot."

Madilyn nodded in understanding.

Still, seeing the little girl remain perplexed made Roxanne's heart ache. "I'll leave this little one to you."

She then turned to her own two children. "Let's go."

The two boys followed her obediently without question.

Upon walking past the little girl, Roxanne felt a soft tug on her sleeve.

Looking conflicted, she turned to the child, only to see the latter gripping onto her sleeve tightly, looking extremely flustered.

Seeing the girl's distraught expression really tugged at Roxanne's heartstrings.

Regardless of whatever had happened between her and Lucian, she knew this child was never to be blamed.

Eventually, she comforted the little one, "I have to go now. This lady here will take good care of you, so wait right here, okay?

Your daddy will be here soon."

With that, she forced the child's grip off of her and strode out of the private room, never looking back.

At the same time, Madilyn hastily instructed the staff to take the three used sets of plates and cutlery away.

Not long after the waitstaff had done as told, the wooden door was pushed open.

A group of bodyguards dressed in black stood in two rows, making a path in between them.

Seeing that, Madilyn instinctively straightened her back and gazed at the entrance, trying her best to appear calm.

Then, she watched as a frosty-looking Lucian made his way into the room.

## Chapter 7

There were now only two people inside the room.

Lucian scanned his surroundings before his gaze fell on his daughter.

The little girl was still upset by Roxanne's sudden departure, so upon seeing her father, not only was she completely unafraid, but she even turned away with a huff.

A faint scowl appeared on Lucian's face.



Well aware that Estella was just as enigmatic and difficult to handle as her father was, this was a job for Lucian's assistant, Cayden.

"Are you okay, Ms. Estella?"

The little girl merely glanced at him before furiously turning away once more. Cayden observed her. Noticing that she was safe and sound, he sighed with relief and turned to report to his boss.

With narrowed eyes, Lucian turned to the woman beside his daughter.

Madilyn's chest tightened as she met his gaze, and she secretly squeezed her own hands to compose herself.

"Where's Roxanne?"

Lucian's expression darkened as he took a good look at Madilyn's face.

He could actually tell it was her?

Madilyn fretted internally while at the same time feeling relieved that her best friend had left in time.

This guy's energy is so unbearable! I feel like I could suffocate.

Who knows what might happen if Roxanne were still here?

"I don't know what you're talking about! Who are you guys? You sure are rude to barge in without even knocking."

Concealing her emotions and unleashing her best acting skills, Madilyn pulled the little girl into her arms while staring cautiously at the men in front of her.

The crease between Lucian's brows deepened. "That's my daughter you're holding. Were you the one who called me?"

Madilyn stilled briefly. "Yes, it was me," she answered rigidly.

Lucian stared at her expressionlessly before scanning every detail inside the room. She does sound like the woman over the phone.

But does she think she can fool me?

Besides, the state of this room is an obvious attempt to hide something.

Sure, there are only two sets of plates and cutlery on this table, but three of the chairs look like they've been moved.

There's no way the workers at Drunken Fairy would make such a mistake. There must've been people sitting there before I came.

Also, all this food definitely isn't meant for just a woman and a child.

After glancing around, he set his eyes on Madilyn again.

The woman suddenly had a bad feeling.

The next second, she watched as Lucian took a phone from his assistant and swiped on the screen before peering up at her.

Soon, the phone Roxanne had passed to her began to ring.

Having been caught off guard, Madilyn nearly jumped in fright, but she hurriedly composed herself and glanced at the phone for

a moment before lifting it up and rejecting the call. "Since you're her father, you can take her with you," she commented, meeting the man's gaze.

Then, she caressed the little girl's head, placed her on the ground, and nudged her in Lucian's direction.

Lucian's brows furrowed slightly as he took two steps forward.

Thinking he was coming over to retrieve the child, Madilyn was about to let out a sigh when she suddenly heard the man speak to her in a skeptical tone.

"You seem to have quite the appetite, miss. To think you ordered a whole table of food just for yourself and a little girl."

The man casually stopped next to the table, his words seemingly implying something.

Madilyn fell silent.

After holding her breath for a moment, she forced a smile. "My appetite isn't any of your concern. Besides, I ordered this much food because I've invited my friends over. They just haven't arrived yet."

Lucian raised an eyebrow. "And you've begun digging in instead of waiting for them to show up?"

As his words fell, the man glanced at every dish on the table.

Madilyn felt like she was about to die.

It took her yet another while to collect herself before flashing him another distant smile. "I'm really close with these friends, so they don't mind me eating first. They're used to it."

Not waiting for him to speak again, she took a deep breath. "Look, sir, I found your daughter and kindly informed you about it. I even made sure she didn't go hungry. It's fine if you don't thank me, but why are you interrogating me like I'm a criminal? What

have I ever done to deserve this?"

Despite sounding indignant, the woman was screaming at the top of her lungs deep down.

Please stop asking me questions.

I'm going to end up spilling the truth at this rate!

Who could ever put up with this guy's presence?

Meanwhile, Roxanne waited in the parking lot, holding hands with a child on each side as unsettlement swirled within her.

She knew Lucian too well to understand that even the smallest clue would be enough to rouse his suspicions.

I wonder how long Madilyn can hang on.

If our cover gets busted...

What should I do if that happens?

The woman couldn't seem to find an answer no matter how hard she tried.

Suddenly, she pursed her lips and scoffed at herself.

What am I even scared of?

He probably never wants to see me again after what I did to him back then.

Even if he saw me, he'd probably pretend not to know me or just think of me as an eyesore.

And look at me scaring myself like this before even seeing his face. Seriously?

## Chapter 8

Seeing how restless their mother looked, Archie and Benny asked deliberately, "Who's Lucian, Mommy? Why are we hiding from him?"

Roxanne slowly returned to her senses and stroked their heads, smiling as if everything was fine. "He's no one important. I just have a bit of a personal grudge against him. I want you both to hide if you ever hear his name, okay?"

The two boys nodded. "Okay, Mommy."

After Roxanne looked away, they glanced at each other curiously.

What could've happened between Mommy and Daddy? It all seems like a huge misunderstanding.

As Roxanne continued to ponder over what could be happening on Madilyn's side, the boys spoke again.

"Mommy, we left in such a rush back there. If that guy becomes suspicious, he might check the surveillance cameras and find us easily," Archie reminded.

The woman tensed up instantly. "Oh, God. I totally forgot! What do I do?" I was so focused on running away that I forgot about the cameras! Lucian might already be here.

I can't stay here. I have to take the kids home right now.

Seeing the way their mother reacted made the boys turn away to conceal their smiles, and they only consoled her after they had suppressed the smiles on their lips.

"Don't worry, Mommy. I'll handle this."

Benny took his laptop and began tapping away on the keyboard.

It only took a while for him to hack into the restaurant's surveillance cameras and wipe out every footage of them.

"I'm done!"

After deleting all the footage, the boy glanced up at his mother with twinkling eyes, eagerly waiting for her to praise him.

Heaving a long sigh of relief, Roxanne pulled the two children into an embrace.

"Thank goodness I have you. You've just saved me!"

Aware that she was still nervous, the boys let her hold them a little longer.

"Are we leaving now, Mommy? Or should we wait for Aunt Madilyn to come outside?" asked Archie after Roxanne had let go.

Having calmed down, the woman gazed at the entrance of the empty parking lot.

"Let's wait a little longer."

The boys nodded in response.

Back inside the restaurant, failing to force a confession out of Madilyn, Lucian could only quash the hostility that surged within him.

"Pardon my rudeness. Thank you for helping me find my daughter. Well, then, we'll be off now. Enjoy your meal with your friends," he stated coldly. Then, he turned to the little girl. "Come, Essie."

With a reluctant pout, Estella waved at Madilyn politely before walking toward her father.

Lucian arched his brow slightly but said nothing more, leaving with the little girl and his group of subordinates.

Upon walking out of the building, he tried to carry Estella into the car, but the child avoided him with a huff.

Seeing that, Cayden hurriedly stepped in and did the job.

The car began to move.

Seated at the back, Lucian reached out to his daughter and placed her on his lap.

With nowhere else to run, Estella could only let herself be carried like a doll, although she continued her silent tantrum and refused to look at the man.

“Tell me, Essie, was there another lady apart from the one from just now?” the man asked gently.

The little girl glanced at him and grew more infuriated at the thought of that pretty lady having left her because of him.

Seeing her scowl deepen, Lucian pinched her cheek in amusement. “I’m not even mad at you for running away from home, but you’re here getting all mad at me? Don’t you know how worried I was? Will you tell me why you ran away?”

Yet, the child shoved his hand away and turned her head to one side again, ignoring him.

Looks like she’s really upset.

The man pursed his lips in frustration, feeling at a loss as to what to do. “You don’t have to answer me if you don’t want to, but promise me that you won’t run away from home again.”

He then turned to Cayden, who was seated in front. “Get the restaurant’s surveillance cameras.”

He clearly hasn’t given up.

“Yes, Mr. Farwell,” Cayden responded helplessly.

## Chapter 9

Twenty minutes later, the car slowly stopped at the Farwell residence.

Estella did not want anyone to carry her. She quietly got down from the car by climbing down slowly.

Lucian followed right behind and did not utter a word.

The moment the father and daughter stepped into the house, they heard someone calling Estella.

“Essie!” Aubree, who was playing on her phone in the living room, exclaimed when she lifted her head and saw them entering the house.

The moment she saw the child from a distance, she ran toward her and gave her a hug. “Essie, you’re finally home! How could you run away and not tell us? I got the shock of my life when you went missing, do you know that? Are you okay? Are you injured?”

She started inspecting Estella’s body to make sure the latter was all right.

Estella froze for a bit, as she was taken aback by Aubree’s actions.

But the cold look soon returned to the little one’s gaze when Aubree’s voice kept ringing in her ear, expressing her insincere concern.

Does she not know why I ran away? I wouldn’t have run away if she hadn’t told me Daddy wouldn’t care about me anymore.

Feeling disgusted after seeing the hypocrite’s face, Estella recalled the gorgeous woman she had met today.

There was a world of difference between these two women.

Estella absolutely despised Aubree’s pretentious behavior.

She started struggling and pulled herself away from the woman.

“What’s wrong, Essie? Stay still, okay? Let me check if you’re all right.”

Aubree could feel Estella wanted to avoid her. She tightened her grip on the little girl and sighed helplessly in front of Lucian.

Estella started reacting more aggressively, as she was in pain.

Aubree was running out of patience.

When she punished Estella in the past, the little girl would tremble in fear and not make any noises.

This was the first time she fought back!

Aubree would have acted more harshly if Lucian were not around.

But since Lucian was there to observe their interaction, she had to be more cautious not to arouse his suspicion. A hard glint flashed across her eyes, and an idea popped up in her mind. Instead of continuing with this tug of war, she decided to release Estella and fall to the ground.

Aubree then looked at Estella in disbelief. "Essie, I know you dislike me. But I'm really worried about you. How could you..."

She choked on her words as she looked at the little one with red-rimmed eyes.

Upon noticing Aubree lying on the ground after removing his coat, Lucian frowned and pulled Estella aside. "Essie, I know you're not happy, and you can take it out on Daddy. But you can't vent your anger like this to others. It's rude, do you know that?"

Estella refused to admit she was at fault, but at the same time, she felt helpless. Daddy always sides with that evil woman!

She pulled her hand away from his grip, hugged her doll tightly, and ran upstairs.

Now that Estella was gone, Aubree gradually crawled up from the ground and said gently, "Don't be too harsh on Essie. We don't

know what she had been through when she was wandering in the streets-"

Lucian interrupted her, "You should go now. Essie is still mad, and she wouldn't want to see you."

Aubree's expression turned stiff for a moment, but she responded with an awkward smile. "All right then. I'll come and visit her on another day."

She then lowered her head and walked out of the Farwell residence.

After she stepped out of the residence, Aubree's expression instantly turned grim.

How did he manage to find that little b\*stard! And how dare she behave like this in front of me? Why isn't she dead! Damn it!

Meanwhile, Madilyn stayed back at Drunken Fairy even after Lucian had left.

When it was about time, she came out of the restaurant and quickly ran to the car.

"Are you all right?" Roxanne asked while opening the door for her. "He left?"

Madilyn heaved a long sigh. "Yes. If only you could see how he stared at me. It's as if he could see through me! I nearly cracked under the pressure and gave you away."

Roxanne smiled and expressed her gratitude. "You must have had it hard. Let's go elsewhere and grab something to eat, shall

we? My treat.”

Madilyn waved her hand and turned her down. “No, thanks. I’ve packed all the leftovers. I must enjoy all these dishes from this exquisite private restaurant.”

## Chapter 10

The four of them then returned to the mansion.

Roxanne and the two children were so hungry that they gobbled up all the leftovers Madilyn brought from the restaurant.

After dinner, the children went upstairs to take a shower.

Madilyn cast a doubtful look at her best friend. “Why are you running away from him? I don’t get it. I thought you two had a divorce agreement? Why are you so afraid of him? And you didn’t tell me why you divorced him. What exactly happened in the last few years?”

After meeting her gaze, Roxanne lowered her eyes and hesitated for a moment. She decided to roughly tell Madilyn the story.

“Oh, my God! No, you didn’t!”

Never in a million years did Madilyn think Roxanne would drug Lucian and give birth to his children.

So that’s why she ran away when she heard his name!

Roxanne bit her lower lip and looked agonized. “I don’t want him to know about Benny and Archie. Besides, I’m still worried that he would still hold grudges against me for drugging him. People with an identity like his can easily take revenge against me as long as he wants to. I wouldn’t be afraid of facing the consequences if I were alone. But now that I have two kids, I have to act responsibly.”

She flashed a self-deprecating smile and continued, “Maybe it’s just me overthinking. He might not even give a damn about it. I’m just a nobody anyway.”

“That’s what you thought!” Madilyn knitted her brows. “I think he recognized your voice. When he went in just now, he asked where you were. It seems he was coming after you!”



Roxanne was stunned for a bit upon hearing that. She felt a prickly pain in her heart.

He must have hated me for what I did that night. I bet that's the only feeling he has for me.

Upon seeing how upset her best friend was, Madilyn consoled her. "Don't worry, Roxanne. I'm sure you won't bump into him so easily since Horington is a big city, and your jobs aren't really related either." Roxanne nodded, hoping luck would be on her side.

"Mommy!"

Suddenly, Roxanne heard Archie's and Benny's voices from behind.

Roxanne and Madilyn immediately stopped their discussion and looked toward the stairs.

Archie and Benny had just taken their shower. There was still moisture in their hair, and their fair skin was dewy. The two little ones, who wore pajamas printed with cow spots, came downstairs.

They walked up to the women, tilted their heads upward, and gazed at them with wide eyes. "What are you two talking about?"

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Madilyn squatted down and carried both cuties in her arms. "You two are so adorable! I like you so much! Come, let's go homewith Aunt Madilyn!"

Archie and Benny could not utter a word as Madilyn kept squishing their cheeks. Roxanne could not help but giggle.

She went up and rescued her two boys from Madilyn's clutches.

Suddenly, she remembered something. "Oh, before I forget. Since I came back here in haste and would be busy working, I can't take Archie and Benny with me all the time. Can you recommend me a kindergarten for these boys? And oh, I'll need to find a nanny too."

The boys did not say anything upon hearing what their mother said.

With their level of intelligence, they would not need to go to a kindergarten at all. But since Mommy is busy, we can only try our best to lessen her burden.

Madilyn thought about it for a while. "Yes! I do have a kindergarten in mind!"

Roxanne looked at her. "Tell me about it."

Madilyn said, "There's a kindergarten for children from the elite families, and it's pretty well-known in Horington. The classes are

exciting, kids will get to learn multiple languages, and the teachers are highly qualified. A lot of wealthy families would fight for a spot for their children. You won't have to worry about big bullies in that school." Roxanne instantly responded, "Really? Let me find out more about this kindergarten on the internet. If everything goes well, I wish to enroll Archie and Benny in the school right away!"