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She dashed into the room, grabbed a bag, and mindlessly started packing her belongings.

Lance did not utter a word. He headed back into his room and booked her a flight. He had long wanted to buy her that ticket home.

Sasha boarded the plane that very night and arrived in Avenport at daybreak.

She hesitated about heading straight to Frontier Bay as she suspected Sebastian would still be there.

She avoided him because she wasn't sure if she wanted to see him or she was too guilty to face him after what happened to the kids.

She waited until after eight before she rushed over to the villa. To her surprise, the gate locked.

Why is it locked?

Panicked, she ran to the security post to check with the guard there. "Excuse me. May I know why the gate for Royal Court One is locked?"

"Oh, Royal Court One. Mr. Hayes has already moved out. It has been vacant for some time. It will probably be put on sale soon," the security guard said with a sense of regret.

It was disquieting news to Sasha!

Moved?

Where to? Why did he move?

"Do you know where he has moved to? I need to find him," she pressed anxiously.

The security guard shook his head. "I have no idea. I heard they had lots of unfortunate incidents during their stay here. The kids fell sick, one after another. I presume they found another place with a better environment for the kids."

A better environment for the kids?

His comment was like rubbing salt on a wound, adding to her guilt.

The fact that the kids taking turns to fall sick reverberated in her mind.

I'm sorry, my sweeties. Mommy did not mean to make you suffer.

Teary-eyed and out of desperation, she sought help from Brandon to find out her kids' whereabout.

"They moved because of Matteo. Since he fell sick, he has been getting treatment at Roxanne's research laboratory. Sebastian bought a small house nearby for a temporary stay so it would be easier for him to care for Matteo." Brandon reported his find over the phone.

When Sasha heard that, she was overwhelmed and allowed her tears to flow uncontrollably.

Brandon waited in silence to say something, but in the end, he guietly hung up.

Twenty minutes later, Sasha arrived at the small house.

Compared to Royal Court One, it was tiny without a garden or pool. The garage of Royal Court One was bigger than that house.

Sasha clenched her fingers around her luggage handle more tightly, nervous.

"Vivi, stop playing. Come and wash your hands before you take your breakfast, okay? We gotta go to preschool soon."

"Okay!"

Just as Sasha anxiously stepped up to the gate of the house, she heard that familiar voice.

Before she could blink her eye, a little figure in pink crawled out from the bush and dashed toward the house.

Vivi! That is my little Vivi!

Tears filled her eyes again, and she immediately sprinted forward, shouting, "Vivi, Mommy is back!"

The running little girl stopped abruptly, then turned around in confusion.

Yes, that is my little girl, my sweetie!

Sasha was overwhelmed. She dropped her luggage bag and rushed forward in tears to hug Vivian.

Unexpectedly, her little sweetie, who used to stick to her like a leech, looked at her with wide-eyed shock. Suddenly, she turned around and ran away from Sasha!

"Ms. Dolivo, come quickly!" Vivian screamed in fear and wept loudly.

Sasha stopped in her path, dumbstruck, while she tried to make sense of what had just happened.

What's happening?

Why did my precious little sweetie run away in fear? She should be running into my arms, not away!

Sasha felt a piercing pain in her heart, so painful she felt she could not breathe.

Wendy heard Vivian cry. After carrying the girl, she came out to investigate with the other two children in toil.

When the children and mother met, they all froze.

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It had been almost two months since she left them. When she finally saw their adorable faces after a long sixty days, she wanted to rush over to hug them all in her arms.

However, her worst nightmare came true. Her two sons behaved like their sister.

She expected them to rush toward her ecstatically, just like how she felt about them. Sadly, that did not happen. Instead, the boys looked at her coldly, as if she was a fragment of their imagination. Perhaps they were disappointed in her and did not wish to get close to her anymore.

They don't want me anymore?

She felt the stinging pain in her heart again. Then she swayed briefly and stumbled toward them.

"Little Ian, Matt, it's Mommy! I'm back! Can you come over and let me hug you? I'm really sorry. I shouldn't have left you," she cried.

At that moment, she was truly remorseful.

Why did I leave? These are her kids, and they did no wrong.

Weeping uncontrollably, Sasha kneeled in front of the children.

Finally, Matteo stepped forward and looked at her, tears all over his sunken cheeks. He chokingly asked, "Why... did you... leave without a-a word? Why did you... stay away for so... long?"

"[..."

"You don't want me anymore, do you?" the boy piteously questioned her.

"No, no, that's not true! I would never abandon you. Matt, they have to kill me to take me away from you." She shook her head violently in denial.

She was desperate to explain and to seek their forgiveness.

Vivian came forward and chipped in, "Then why did you not call us? Don't you know I was sick? Why did you not ask for me?" Her child-like voice was cracking, and she was choking on tears, too.

Sasha's face paled. She badly wanted to hug her girl, but under that tearful gaze, she lost her courage to do so.

Indeed, she lost the right to seek their forgiveness, and she had to earn their love again.

She had left them and told Sebastian she did not want them anymore. For two whole months, she did not bother to call or check on them.

Sasha collapsed on the floor in devastation.

The atmosphere was stifling and filled with sorrow.

Wendy was watching them and wanted to step up to help.

Before she could do that, the remaining kid stepped forward to his mother. He gazed at her, then stretched out his little hand to wipe the tears off Sasha's eyes.

"Don't be sad, Mommy. They were upset because they missed you too much," lan said.

"What?" Sasha looked at her eldest son in disbelief.

lan continued to wipe her tears gently while adding, "It will be alright so long as you promise you won't leave us again."

What a big relief after that horrifying experience!

Sasha stared gratefully at Ian, who was wise beyond his age. Her tears flowed uncontrollably again, and she held him tightly in her embrace. Matteo and Vivian joined them, and the four wept in joy.

She was grateful to be blessed with such sensible and lovable children.

Wendy was relieved as she, too, could not help but weep.

lan really had the characteristic of an eldest child. He was more sensible and mature, just like their father.

Sebastian was poring through a pile of documents when he heard the news. His pen tip snapped under pressure as he clenched his fist in anger.

His horrifying fury caused Luke to freeze in silence.

"Who gave her permission to see the kids? Throw her out!" he barked through tightly clenched jaws.

"Yes, Mr. Hayes. I will see to that immediately." Luke shuddered and instantly left to make the necessary arrangement.

He could understand his boss' anger.

Sebastian was stretched thin during this period, taxed by a busy work schedule and Matteo's illness. With the support of his staff, work was still manageable. However, even under Roxanne's care, Matteo had not fully recovered, and the sleepless nights drained him further.

It was preposterous and arrogant for Sasha to sashay in at her own whim to visit the kids after being away for two months. Who did she think she is?

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Sasha sent Vivian and Ian to their preschool.

It was the same one, but the Hayes had brought in a brand new team to run the school.

"Remember to come to pick us ya, Mommy!" Vivian reminded her repeatedly at the gate. She had gotten over her disappointment and was back to being the little clingy angel she used to be.

"Of course! I will bring a strawberry cake for my sweetie. And Ian, I will make you your favorite berry pie, ya," Sasha joyfully promised them.

"Yes!" The cool little guy, Ian, could not hide his excitement and nodded happily.

After they entered the school compound, Sasha immediately went back home. She was extremely worried and wanted to examine Matteo herself to find out what was wrong with him.

Unfortunately, there were already a few men in black guarding the gate when she arrived.

"Ms. Wand, Mr. Hayes has given instructions that you are not allowed into the house."

"Why? I am the children's mother. Why can't I go in?"

"He said you should know the reason. He wants you to leave immediately or we will have to throw you out." The men coldly gave her the ultimatum.

Sasha did not expect this brutal blow.

I should know the reason?

Did he mean the time when I said I don't want the kids anymore?

But it was an impulsive comment I made in the fit of anger. I never meant it!

Sasha panicked and hurriedly tried to explain to the men. "Please, listen to me. I said those words during a heated quarrel with him. It was said in the fit of anger; I did not mean it."

"We do not need to know your conversation. We are only acting on Mr. Hayes' instruction. Please do accordingly, Ms. Wand." The men did not mince their words and had no intention of giving in.

Sasha was ashen-faced because she had not expected Sebastian would be so harsh on her.

However, she could not blame him for doing that. She had indeed said she did not want the kids anymore and then disappeared from their lives for a full two months. It wasn't wrong of him to be angry or to stop her from seeing them now.

Sasha was utterly devastated. She stared longingly at the house for a long while, then listlessly dragged herself away.

After she left, the men made a call., "Mr. Scott, we have gotten rid of that woman."

Luke was at a loss for words. He glanced toward the closed door of Sebastian's office and silently hung up.

His boss was reacting abnormally, which made him worried. Although he had fumed when he heard Sasha was back and met the kids, he was unusually calm after that.

If Sebastian was his usual self, he would have raged at everyone who crossed his path and traumatized all the staff.

Why the calmness?

Is this the quiet before the storm? Or is he waiting for the right moment to seek revenge on her?

Luke was deeply disturbed.

"Mr. Scott, the receptionist at the lobby called to say a Ms. Wand is requesting to see Mr. Hayes. Should they let her in?"

"What?" Luke sputtered out the tea in his mouth in shock.

OMG! It really is Murphy's law at work.

"Why let her in? Don't you know one needs an appointment to meet Mr. Hayes?" He panicked and chided the clerk.

Stunned at his reaction, she could only hold back her tears and kept apologizing for her mistake

"Damn..." Luke swore.

A moment later, the door to Sebastian's office swung open, and Luke immediately stood up. "Mr. Hayes, are you heading out?"

"Yes, come along with me. I have an appointment at World Trade Center," Sebastian listlessly said. His bloodshot eyes and tired look were evidence of the lack of a good rest.

There was no sign of anger in him, though.

Sebastian's total lack of anger dazed Luke, but the latter soon snapped out of it as he grabbed the car keys and followed behind his boss.

Maybe he has really let go of the matter...

Sasha waited outside the building for a long time.

She did not know what happened or why the clerk suddenly turned hostile and chased her away when all she did was ask to meet Sebastian.

Anyhow, she decided she could wait on the street outside the building.

Sasha waited from morning to noon, then from noon till the office was about to close. Still, there was no sight of the man she had been waiting for.