

Chapter 36 Deliberate Retaliation

As night fell, Calista grabbed a taxi to Everglade Manor. She had thought of discussing matters with Lucian over the phone. However, he hadn't been answering her calls for some reason.

She wasn't sure if Lucian would be in Everglade Manor. He had rarely been there in recent years. Despite three years of marriage, she never fit into his social circle. She had no choice but to wait, hoping he would eventually be there.

Upon arrival, Calista looked at the villa. It was enveloped in darkness. She hesitated for a moment before deciding to go inside.

She opened the door and flicked the light switch on the wall. The living room instantly flooded with bright light. And there Lucian was, relaxing on the couch with his head tilted back.

Lucian furrowed his brows and raised a hand to shield his eyes. His tone was irritable as he ordered, "Turn off the lights."

Calista hadn't expected him to be here. After all, Lily had gone through such a distressing experience today. Calista was prepared to wait all night for Lucian to return. However, now that he was home, why hadn't he switched on

the lights? It was so typical of him!

She turned off the lights in the living room, leaving only the entrance light on. Then she sat on the couch across from Lucian and got straight to the point.

"Lucian, please drop the charges. If you have an issue with me, deal with me directly. Don't drag innocent people into this."

She wanted to resolve the matter and free Yara. Lucian must have understood her purpose in coming here.

Lucian put his hand down. He was experiencing gastric pain and couldn't muster the energy to argue. He was already in a bad mood when he asked irritably, "Are you trying to beg or provoke me?"

Calista was at a loss for words. She wasn't begging or provoking anyone. She had come here for a negotiation!

Before Calista could reply, Lucian continued, "You were having dinner with a man at a romantic restaurant. And now you're asking for my help for a stranger. Calista, should I call you a saint or a hypocrite?"

His lips curved to a cold, mocking smile. Calista wanted to fire back but remembered that the

police were still holding Yara. She swallowed her rising anger. She wanted a resolution.

"Tell me, what do you need to set Yara free?" Calista inquired.

Lucian had anticipated her arrival. If he had intended to put Yara in jail, he wouldn't have appeared here tonight, nor would he have permitted this conversation. He played the game of hide and seek quite skillfully. 1

Lucian looked at the disposable shoes on Calista's feet. He sneered, "We're not even divorced yet, and you're already playing the guest? Would you not bother coming here next time?"

Calista didn't want to waste time on irrelevant matters. She had lived there for two years and nine months. When had he ever cared what she wore? He only brought this up to vent his anger on Lily and avoid freeing Yara.

She took a deep breath and said, "Lucian, how can we have a proper discussion?"

"I haven't eaten all day. My stomach hurts. I don't want to talk," Lucian said. He closed his eyes and behaved in a way that made it clear he wanted his guest to leave.

Calista's forehead throbbed with anger. She

pursed her lips. Then, she retorted, "Would you be open for discussion once your stomach stops hurting?"

Lucian's response was evasive. "Maybe."

Calista felt that he was brushing her off. Who knew what excuses he might come up with later? But for now, Calista could only hope he would be willing to talk after he had eaten.

Calista headed for the kitchen. Frustration welled up inside her. She opened the fridge but found only a few water bottles, instant spaghetti, and a handful of eggs. She noticed the spaghetti was fresh. But its packaging indicated it would expire today.

It was late, and the nearby grocery stores had all closed for the night. She didn't feel like making the half-hour drive to a more distant store. Thus, she resolved to prepare instant spaghetti instead.

As she cracked the eggs into a bowl, she heard Lucian's cold voice from the kitchen doorway. "I don't want spaghetti."

Calista responded without looking at him, "Only spaghetti is available. All the nearby grocery stores are closed."

In his usual calm manner, Lucian suggested, "

"Then go to a different store. Surely not all the grocery stores in town are closed, are they?"

Calista lost her patience. She tossed the cutlery into the sink and turned to glare at him. "Do you want to eat or not? If not, forget it!"

Calista had always put in so much effort to make sure Lucian had his favorite meals ready whenever he got back home, regardless of how late it was. However, he always threw them away or gave them to his drivers and bodyguards. And now, he dared to be picky when she was cooking for him again?

Lucian watched her with a piercing gaze and asked, "No longer interested in helping Yara?"

Calista muttered a curse under her breath. Finally, she snapped, "Fine, what do you want to eat then?"

"Buffalo wings, Philly cheesesteak, tacos, and beef Wellington." Lucian listed a few dishes she had cooked before. These were the ones he specifically remembered. 1

Calista furrowed her brow. She was aware that if she refused his request, he might use Yara as a threat again.

She turned to Lucian, searching for an excuse. "It's late, and considering your stomachache, it's

not advisable to consume heavy, greasy food."

Lucian's expression softened as if he was agreeing. "So, what would be suitable then?"

Calista responded, "How about some chicken soup?"

Lucian chuckled softly. His smile resembled a charming young man. Did he agree to her suggestion?

But just as Calista sighed in relief, his expression turned cold again. He snorted, "This is all you can do when asking for a favor?"

Calista cursed under her breath again. It was wrong to think this man had changed.

On the way to the grocery store, Lucian endured his stomachache as he drove. Calista was sitting in the passenger seat. She wore a furious expression. She had been glaring out of the car window throughout the entire journey.

When they arrived at the grocery store, Calista headed straight for the fresh produce section. She had occasionally shopped here before. So she was familiar with the layout. She walked quickly, pushing the cart with purpose. The wheels made a loud clattering sound on the floor.

Lucian strolled behind her with his hands in his pockets. His words were laced with mockery as he asked, "Are you in such a hurry to cook for me?" 1

Calista shot him a cold look and retorted, "Narcissism is an incurable disease."

At this late hour, the grocery store had limited fresh vegetables. The remaining meat wasn't the freshest either. Calista took some pre-packaged drumsticks displayed in the refrigerated section. She didn't bother to check their condition. She dropped them all into a plastic bag.

Lucian wrinkled his nose in distaste. "Is this how you usually shop for groceries? Can't you see the meat is not fresh anymore? Are you trying to get back at me because I haven't given you any money or something?"

Calista turned to him. Her annoyance was evident in her eyes. "If you dare lay a finger on Yara, rotten meat will be the least of your worries. I can always add something to it."