

The Million-Dollar Heart by Rebecca Ryan

#Chapter 1 - Read The Million-Dollar Heart by Rebecca Ryan Chapter 1

Chapter 1 On a July evening, around seven o'clock when the sky was still not completely dark.

On Emerald Mountain, Vivienne was standing in front of a nameless grave, dressed in black casual clothes with a cold expression. She said to the tombstone, "Mother, tomorrow marks the end of our ten-year pact. You asked me to temper my edge for a decade, and I've done it. Tomorrow, I'm going back to the Hawthorn family."

It was so quiet that only the sound of the wind could be heard. Suddenly, a loud "bang" made Vivienne turn her head. There was a black car not too far away, skewed to the side. Obviously, a tire had blown.

Aman stepped out of the car, dressed in black sportswear, staggering forward as if he was injured. Then, about a dozen men followed him, all dressed in black.

Percival turned his head and looked back. His face bore a layer of coldness, and he clutched his abdomen with one hand, his lips turning pale.

"Just give up. We've paid such a high price. You can't escape, the men in black closed in on Percival. The leader of the group had an expressionless face, emanating a strong aura of menace.

"You think you can catch me?" Percival narrowed his eyes, his voice icy. He felt a sharp pain in his stomach, like a knife cutting into him. He could feel his blood draining out and knew he couldn't hold on much longer.

"Let's see about that," after the leader of the men in black spoke, he launched an attack towards Percival. Just then, a stone came flying and hit the man in black, who immediately fell to his knees.

"Who's there?" The man in black yelled.

Vivienne answered casually, "You're disturbing my mother's rest. Can you fight somewhere else?"

Everyone turned their attention to Vivienne, their expressions serious. Even Percival looked surprised. The people before him were international assassins, each one a formidable force. Yet they had been defeated by a young girl with a single stone. This girl was something else.

"I hope you will remember to mind your own business in the next life." The man in black ordered, "Kill her." His followers immediately rushed at her. Vivienne's eyes were cold.

"Watch out." Percival yelled seeing the men rush at Vivienne. But he was immediately stunned. He saw that the dozen or so assassins didn't even have a chance to react before they all fell in front of Vivienne.

Vivienne was still standing in the same spot, her face emotionless, not even blinking. If it weren't for the sight of her hand not yet withdrawn, Percival would have thought he was seeing things.

"Get lost." Vivienne's voice was ice-cold.

The men in black looked at her as if they'd seen a ghost, "Who are you? What did you do to us?" They still didn't understand how they had fallen. All they saw was the girl slightly lifting her hand and scattering some sort of powder, then they all fell. They hadn't even touched a single finger of the girl. While waiting for Vivienne's response, the men in black all passed out. Vivienne glanced at them and then looked at Percival not too far away. His heartbeat quickened as he saw her clear eyes, as clear as the moon. Collecting his thoughts, he walked over and said gently, "Thank you." Vivienne glanced at him, "I didn't do it to save you." She just didn't want her conversation with her mother to be interrupted. After saying that, Vivienne turned around and lightly patted the tombstone, "Mom, I'm leaving. Take care." Vivienne waved her hand and moved on. "Wait a minute..." Percival didn't finish his sentence when he fell to the ground.

Vivienne turned back, frowned, and then left. Suddenly, a gust of wind picked up around her. Vivienne stopped and looked at the tombstone, "You want me to save him?" There was no response, Vivienne was silent for a moment, sounding a bit helpless, "Alright, I'll save him."

Vivienne crouched down, opened Percival's clothes and saw that he had a serious wound on his stomach. But it wasn't a big deal, She took out a small porcelain bottle from her bag, sprinkled some powder, and then took out another bottle and fed Percival a mysterious pill.

If Percival were awake now, he would definitely see that the pill was a highly sought-after healing medicine on the black market. One pill was worth fifty dollars and was in short supply.

After feeding Percival the pill, Vivienne didn't stay any longer and walked away. At the Hawthorn Mansion in Havenwood. "As long as I'm alive, Vivienne will never get into our family." An angry voice echoed, heard throughout the mansion.

In the living room, Vivienne lifted her eyes slightly to look at the furious Beatrice in front of her. Her gazes were meaningful and her face expressionless. In an angle where others couldn't see, she showed a hint of mockery.

She was brought back by her father, Dorian. Before she could settle in, Beatrice had already gotten the news and called them to the Hawthorn Mansion. As soon as they entered, Beatrice made it clear that she didn't agree with Vivienne coming back.

Dorian clenched his fist and gritted his teeth, trying to hold back his emotions. After ten years, he finally found his daughter. He was overjoyed but never expected that his mother would not let Vivienne come back. Moreover, she disrespected Vivienne in front of the whole family.

"She's not worthy. I will never acknowledge her as my granddaughter." Beatrice slammed the table, "My only granddaughter is Arabella.*"

Beatrice's gaze turned to Vivienne. Those tired old eyes stared straight at her like a knife. Vivienne lifted her eyes to meet Beatrice's, then turned away. She didn't care about the old woman staring at her.

Dorian suddenly looked up, "Now that I've found Vivienne, I'm not letting her go again. Mind your own business, mom."

"You dare!" Beatrice stood up abruptly, her voice booming, "If you dare bring her back, I'll strip you off your position and revoke your shares?"

Dorian laughed scornfully, "Position? Shares? Mom, I'm just a small fry in the company, earning a measly 4 grand a month. It's you who's clinging onto me, not wanting me to leave. And about my shares, haven't you already taken them all back?"

"You!" Beatrice was so angry she was grinding her teeth, "Are you deliberately picking a fight with me?" She couldn't believe that this son of hers, who'd always been seen as a pushover, would dare to talk back to her because of Vivienne. She knew that Vivienne and her late mother were nothing but troublemakers, out to wreck the relationship between her and her son.

Just as Dorian was about to speak, Arabella, who had been silent for a while, suddenly piped up, "Granny, please let my sister, Vivienne, come back." "Humph." The old lady looked at Arabella with less hostility, but still replied coldly, "Let Vivienne come back? Dream on."

"But she's Mr. Ellington's fiancée." Arabella blinked, flashing a smile.

Chapter 2 The atmosphere turned awkward in an instant.

"Wait, what? Percival's fiancée?" Beatrice jumped to her feet before finishing her sentence. "Yeah, right. It's Vivienne who's engaged to the Ellingtons, not you. Now that Vivienne's back, you don't have to marry Percival."

Richard had always doted on Percival, especially after Percival saved him two years ago, despite ending up disabled. Richard's affection for him only grew. And he also became more and more reckless, squandering Richard's money without a second thought.

But for some reason, the Ellingtons suddenly sent someone over a while back, saying that the Hawthorn's lady had an engagement with Percival and they had to honor it. At the time, Vivienne wasn't back yet, so the Hawthorn's lady was Arabella, right?

Beatrice was immediately anxious. Even though the Ellingtons held a high status, Arabella was her carefully nurtured protege. She wanted Arabella to marry someone better, someone who could elevate the Hawthorns to new heights. Although Percival was favored, he lacked real power, and the money he had was still provided by his parents and Richard. It was important to know that the money would run out, and when it did, he might be dependent on Arabella's wealth.

Beatrice naturally wouldn't allow that. But because of the engagement with the Ellingtons, she couldn't just call it off. So she'd been brainstorming ways to smoothly break off the engagement.

Now that Vivienne was back, there was no need to break off the engagement. After all, Vivienne was just a country girl. She was a good match for the disabled Percival. The Hawthorns could even use this opportunity to deepen their relationship with the Ellingtons. It was a win-win.

Thinking of this, Beatrice immediately said, "I agree with Vivienne's return. You guys go teach Vivienne some manners. She's getting engaged to Percival in a month. We can't have her embarrassing the Hawthorns at the engagement party."

Dorian and Cordelia were stunned and looked at Beatrice in disbelief. They still hadn't recovered from Arabella's words earlier. Soon Dorian lifted his head. "Wait, what engagement party? Isn't Arabella the one engaged to Percival?"

"Once Vivienne's back, she's the older daughter of the Hawthorn family. She's the one engaged to the Ellingtons. Now that she's back, she should honor the engagement," Beatrice shot back.

At this, Cordelia furrowed her brows and looked at Vivienne, feeling a pang of sympathy. Beatrice's scheme was too transparent. No wonder she agreed so easily to Vivienne's return. She had ulterior motives.

Who didn't know that Percival was disabled?

Beatrice didn't even want Arabella to marry Percival before, but now she wanted Vivienne to marry him. "I don't agree." Dorian growled, and his expression darkened. "Arabella is the one engaged to Percival." "And so what." Beatrice retorted. "We can't afford to piss off the Ellingtons."

"You guys!" Dorian was so angry his face turned red.

But Beatrice didn't care. She turned to Vivienne. "If you want to return to the Hawthorn family, you have to get engaged to Percival."

Vivienne lifted her head to look at Beatrice, her eyes shining brightly. After a moment, she spoke calmly. "Fine, I agree." She had to return to the Hawthorn family!

As for the engagement, Vivienne smiled faintly. She came back to the Hawthorn family just in time to call off her engagement to Percival.

After leaving the Hawthorn Mansion, Vivienne went back to Dorian and Cordelia's house. Eight years ago, Dorian was kicked out of the Hawthorn Mansion by the family elders. Now they lived in a small apartment at Prominent Estates on the edge of downtown. The neighborhood was somewhat run—down. Probably because of its years, walls were peeling. Dorian's family lived in a small three-bedroom apartment.

Vivienne greeted Dorian and then went to her room. Her luggage was still not unpacked since she just got home today. As soon as she entered her room, someone knocked on the door. She got up to open it and saw Dorian and Cordelia outside, looking like they had something to say.

"What's up?" Vivienne made way for Dorian to come in.

"There's something." Dorian pursed his lips, unsure of how to start. "Whatever it is, just spit it out." Vivienne offered Dorian a seat and stood aside. "I want to help you cancel the engagement."

Vivienne lifted her eyes, looking surprised at him.

Cordelia walked over and sat Vivienne down on the bed, softly explaining, "Your dad thinks marriage is a big deal, and Percival is disabled. If you marry him, you'll have to take care of him for the rest of your life. He hopes you can find a man of good character who truly loves you and will cherish you for a lifetime."

Cordelia paused, then continued, "But this engagement was set by your mother, so we still need to ask for your opinion."

Even though she hadn't spent much time with Vivienne, she felt sorry for her. Percival was disabled. So what if the Ellington family had got money and power? That engagement was nothing but a trap, and once Vivienne fell in, her life would be done for.

Vivienne looked at Cordelia with a slight smile, "Yeah, I'm planning on calling off the engagement."

Cordelia was Dorian's second wife and Vivienne's stepmother. In the short few hours of interaction, Vivienne didn't find Cordelia off-putting. She also saw that Dorian and Cordelia truly cared for her.

"That's great." Dorian excitedly stood up, "I'll get in touch with the Ellington family right away to talk about calling off the engagement." Emerald Mountain.

Chapter 2

At an unnamed monument deep in the woods, three people were standing there. The one on the left was a stylishly dressed man with earrings, he looked the tall man next to him, 'Mr. Ellington, it's been two days and the girl hasn't shown up. I guess she might not come at all, let's get out of here.'

"Let's wait a bit longer. The man in the middle, with narrow eyes, was staring at the nameless monument with a glint in his eyes. He was dressed in black casual clothes, his short hair covering half of his eyes. His handsome face had a stubborn coldness.

This was Percival from the Ellington family, the one who Vivienne had saved. And the one who spoke first was the young son of the Sterling family from Rivenwood, Leopold Sterling

'Come on. If you keep this up, your engagement with Miss Hawthorn Leopold touched his earlobe and chuckled, "Miss Hawthorn is a remarkable woman from Havenwood, and your two families have been engaged since childhood. Your grandfather has repeatedly stressed that the engagement banquet must be flawless."

Percival smirked, "The people from the Hawthorn family haven't proposed to call off the engagement yet?"

"The Ellington family is the most prestigious family in Rivenwood. Would the Hawthorn family dare to call off the engagement? Even if you're disabled, they wouldn't call off the engagement. And let's not mention that you're not actually disabled."

If the Hawthorn family knew that Percival wasn't disabled, they certainly wouldn't call off the engagement.

"Well Percival's eyes dimmed. If the Hawthorn family didn't call off the engagement, it wouldn't be fun.

Seeing his reaction, Leopold knew he'd been talking in vain. He decided not to bring it up anymore, "Since we can't wait for your savior, let's get going. Once we find my Mystic Mistress, she'll be able to save Isolde."

Percival gave him a puzzled look, “Your Mystic Mistress? Are you sure she really exists?”

Leopold was left speechless, unable to respond to the counterargument. After a while, he said forcefully, “Of course she exists. My Mystic Mistress is beautiful and kind hearted, especially her medical skills. She can cure serious illnesses...”

Before he could finish, he was interrupted by the person standing on Percival's right, “Mr. Sterling, you don't even know her name, what she looks like, or even how to find her, yet you boast about how great she is. Your Mystic Mistress must be someone you dreamed of, right? It'd be better to contact the mysterious doctor, Specter Healer.”

She can cure serious illnesses? Even a professor at the medical research institute wouldn't dare to claim that.

Leopold shouted angrily, “You're talking nonsense. My Mystic Mistress is not a dream, she is real, like really real. Besides, Specter Healer is hard to find and only treats patients on a whim. We've been looking for so long with no news. They might not even be taking patients.”

“I suspect they are not capable at all. Their His medical skills are not even comparable to those of my Mystic Mistress.”

His Mystic Mistress was beyond the understanding of ordinary people like him. Although Mystic Mistress never mentioned her name, and now it'd been ten years, the appearance of Mystic Mistress had also changed, he still believed that as long as he saw Mystic Mistress, he would recognize her.

“Alright, alright, she's real.” Thomas didn't want to argue with Leopold anymore, mainly because Leopold had a near—obsessive fixation on his Mystic Mistress.

Percival glanced at them and then turned his eyes back to the monument, bowed, and then turned to say, “Let's go.” “Mr. Ellington, where are we going?” Thomas asked. Percival's mouth curled up slightly, “To Havenwood. To get my fiancée to call off the engagement.”

Over at Prominent Estates.

Chapter 3 Dorian was about to call off the engagement with the Ellington family when a sudden ring of the doorbell interrupted him.-

Dorian and Cordelia immediately got up to answer the door. Vivienne also got up, seeing as it was basic etiquette to greet the guests.

The visitor turned out to be Arabella. Dorian and Cordelia were taken aback, and even Vivienne raised an eyebrow. Weren't they just at the Hawthorn Mansion and here Arabella was already on their doorstep?

"Dad, Mom, I came to visit you, and also to see my sister. I brought her some clothes." Arabella was dressed in a light-colored dress, her hair pulled to the sides, and she wore a sweet smile on her face. She had an air of refined tranquility about her.

Cordelia glanced at the bag in Arabella's hands and her expression immediately changed. These clothes were bought by Beatrice for Arabella; many were only worn once and never again.

"You're so considerate." Cordelia took the bag from Arabella and casually placed it on a cabinet. "What brought you here all of a sudden?" Dorian glanced at the bag in Arabella's hand, and his expression turning serious.

Arabella's gaze shifted slightly, she looked up at Dorian, her eyes welling up with tears, and said in an aggrieved tone, "I know you just found my sister and you want to spend more time with her. I understand if you don't want to see me, but granny told me to come to teach my sister some manners

Dorian frowned, his gaze on Arabella laced with impatience. Well, here we go again. Over the years, every time she came over, she would be in tears, as if someone had mistreated her. Wasn't she the one who looked down on them as foster parents after she got Beatrice's favor? Who was she putting on this act for now?

Dorian got suddenly upset, "What manners to teach? Vivienne's manners are just fine; she doesn't need anyone to teach her. She's not marrying into the royal family. Why the need for all these manners?"

"Ha ha!" Vivienne couldn't help but laugh at Dorian's comment. Dorian sure had a sense of humor. Arabella's beautiful face suddenly turned red as she lowered her head and bit her lip, "Dad, that's not what I meant. I just..."

“Alright, go tell your granny, I’m calling off the engagement with the Ellington family. Since she looks down on Vivienne, then she shouldn’t care whether she has manners or not,” Dorian said somewhat irritated.

“What? Call off the engagement?” Arabella couldn’t keep up her act, her hands clenching her skirt, hatred almost spewing from her eyes.

What a joke! He sure treated his biological daughter differently.

When the Ellington family thought she was the one engaged to Percival, she had subtly expressed her reluctance to marry Percival, but Dorian had said that it wasn’t up to him to call off the engagement, as it was Beatrice’s decision.

And now?—

Vivienne just came back, and Dorian was in a hurry to call off this engagement. How come he wasn’t saying it wasn’t up to him this time?

“Yes, Vivienne is only nineteen. I’ve only just gotten her back, and I’m not going to let her get married,” Dorian said seriously, “Go tell your granny that she should stop getting any ideas to marry Vivienne off.”

He knew what Beatrice was thinking. He might have listened to her in the past, but on the matter of Vivienne’s marriage, he would make no concessions. If anyone dared to have any designs on Vivienne, he would sever ties with them.

Arabella said, looking at Vivienne and softly saying, “You don’t want the Hawthorn family to be in trouble, do you? This is the result of our grandfather’s lifetime effort. If because of you...” She didn’t finish her sentence, deliberately leaving it hanging.

Hearing this, Vivienne slightly lifted her eyes, her red lips curled into a smile, “Yes, I don’t want to get married. Do you?”

Arabella was stunned, her expression turning sour. Was she to marry that disabled Percival? She was the talented girl of Havenwood, she had made great achievements in various fields, and now she was an honor student, her future bright. Why would she ruin it by marrying that disabled man?

What did Vivienne mean by that? Was she deliberately trying to make her sick?

“This joke is not funny at all,” Arabella managed a smile, looking quite uncomfortable. Vivienne blinked, tilting her head to look at her, “I’m not joking.”

Arabella almost couldn’t help slapping Vivienne. “You’re the real Miss Hawthorn.” Arabella’s tone suddenly became high-pitched, and the malice in her eyes grew stronger.

“Well.” Vivienne/replied nonchalantly, “So you're teaching me, the real Miss Hawthorn, how to handle things?”

“You!” Arabella’s hands were clenched tight, and she took a deep breath and said with a light laugh, “You misunderstood, how dare I teach you anything? It’s granny who said that the engagement with the Ellington family is important, especially since after the engagement, they will invest a sum of money in our company, so we can't call off the engagement.”

Without waiting for Vivienne to speak, Arabella stood up, “Dad, I have to go to the company later, I can’t stay long. Granny said that she didn’t agree with sister and Mr. Ellington calling off the engagement. If you insist on doing this, she'll take back this apartment.”

Beatrice didn’t actually say this; it was all Arabella’s own words. But she could change Beatrice’s attitude before Dorian could see Beatrice.

Dorian’s expression changed, he was about to say something, but Arabella had already left.

Chapter 4 After Arabella left, Dorian angrily slammed his cup onto the table and said, “What a pain in the ass!”

Cordelia poured him a glass of water and comforted him, “Come on, don’t get your knickers in a twist. She doesn’t consider us family anyway, so what's the point of getting mad?“—

Arabella was the child they adopted eight years ago. At that time, Dorian was all about finding Vivienne, but after a long search without any luck, he stumbled upon Arabella instead.

Arabella had some resemblance to Vivienne. Dorian, missing Vivienne and feeling sorry for Arabella, took her in. Arabella was very well-behaved, sensible, and had a sweet way of speaking. In addition, she was good at making people happy. Beatrice was wrapped around Arabella's little finger.

Two years after they adopted Arabella, she was taken in by Beatrice. Over the years, she became a celebrated talent in Havenwood, drawing much envy. However, since Arabella had been with Beatrice, she no longer took them seriously. Though nothing showed on the surface, her words often hurt. Dorian and Cordelia were no fools, and over time, they saw Arabella's true colors. So naturally, their interactions with Arabella dwindled.

"It's all my fault. I shouldn't have taken her in." Dorian said regretfully.

"You were only doing it out of the goodness of your heart too." Cordelia looked at Vivienne and said, "The issue now is how to call off this marriage. It seems Beatrice has her mind set on marrying Vivienne off. If we disagree, she won't back down easily."

"I'm determined to call off this marriage. Even if she takes this apartment back, I can still keep the home fires burning." Dorian said firmly. Cordelia sighed. She worried that Beatrice wouldn't let them live in peace in Havenwood.

Vivienne was looking at the content on her phone. The phone screen displayed Percival's information. As an important figure in the Ellington family, Percival's information was very detailed. Besides his photo, there was other information, including his phone number.

"Don't worry about it. I can call off the marriage myself." Vivienne raised her head, with a smile on her face, "And don't worry about having nowhere to live. I'll buy a house for you."

In consideration of Dorian's kindness to her, she would return the favor with a house. "Vivienne..."

Before Dorian could say anything, Vivienne stood up, picked up her phone, and made a call. "Mr. Ellington? I'm the young lady of the Hawthorn family." As soon as the call connected, Vivienne cut to the chase.

Percival was a bit surprised on the other end, "Yes?"

"I'd like to call off the engagement." Vivienne's voice was clear and firm.

Percival was taken aback by this, and after a moment, he laughed, "I agree."

Vivienne froze for a moment as she looked at the cell phone that had been hung up. He agreed just like that? In a high-end club in Havenwood.

Percival lounged on the sofa, legs crossed, long fingers holding the phone, his deep gazes staring at the call log on the phone, with a cold smirk on his lips.

"Is that really the young lady of the Hawthorn family, Arabella?" Leopold holding a glass of wine, found it hard to believe. "She said so herself." he replied, his voice low and enchanting. "Hah!" Leopold chuckled, "She's quite a character. I'm starting to find her interesting."

Despite Percival's bad reputation, his family's wealth still attracted many girls. However, Richard had chosen the young lady of the Hawthorn family as his fiancée. He had assumed that the Hawthorn family would never call off the engagement.

He had investigated that the Hawthorn family's company had started to go downhill in the last few years and was severely short of funds, and that their engagement to the Ellington family would lead to a large investment, which was the condition of Richard's engagement. Therefore, Beatrice would never agree to a call off the engagement.

But what he didn't expect was that she would take the initiative to call it off. She really was the well-known talent of Havenwood, her character unmatched by many girls.

Percival was in a great mood, his eyes narrowed to slits as his fingers worked quickly on his phone.

Leopold went over to look at it and said in surprise, "Mr. Ellington, how did you manage to save the recording of your conversation with her?" Percival's eyes twitched a bit, his fingers still operating the phone, "How could I not share

such good news with my grandpa to cheer him up?” “Your grandpa might have a heart attack from the excitement, right?” Leopold couldn’t imagine Richard’s reaction after knowing about this. “He might not have a heart attack, but he’ll probably throw a fit.” This was Richard’s usual tactic.

He had used all means to get Percival to marry the Miss Hawthorn, which was a headache for him. Now that Miss Hawthorn had called off the engagement, the old man should quiet down a bit.

He took a sip of wine, turned his head to look at Percival, and asked with some confusion, “Speaking of which, why don’t you want to marry Arabella? She’s beautiful, has excellent grades, and has achieved a bit in many fields. Plus with her grades, she’s likely to get into a prestigious university. Such a woman is a rare find.”

Percival put down his phone, picked up his wine glass and gave it a little swirl. “If she’s so amazing, this cripple shouldn’t be holding her back.” he said. Leopold glanced at Percival’s flawless legs and quietly looked away.

Prominent Estates.

12:48

Chapter 4

The moment Vivienne entered her room, her phone began to ring. Upon seeing the caller ID, her expression turned serious. She walked to the window to take the call.

“We found something.” a deep male voice said from the other end of the line. “The day your mom died, the Four Prominent Families of Rivenwood were all at your house.”

Vivienne’s gazes darkened. “The Four Prominent Families of Rivenwood?” “Yes.” the man on the line continued. “The Ashford family, the Pendleton family, the Churchill family, and the Ellington family.” Vivienne was taken aback. “The Ellington family? Percival’s family?”

“Yes,” the man paused slightly. “The Ellington family is the most powerful among the Four Prominent Families of Rivenwood, a true top-tier aristocracy. Of the families associated with yours, apart from the Ellington family, the other three families are of a lower rank.”

The man went silent for a moment, then continued, "The other three families came to your house looking for something. I'm not sure what exactly. The member of the Ellington family who came to your house was Percival."

Vivienne's gaze turned icy, and her beautiful eyebrows furrowed. "Percival? What was his motive?" "It seems he was looking for someone."

Vivienne didn't respond. She leaned on the bed, her fair, slender fingers gently tapping the windowsill. After a while, she finally spoke up. "Keep investigating what the other three families were looking for. As for the Ellington family, don't bother. I'll look into it myself."

"Got it."

Chapter 5 Chapter 5

After hanging up the phone, Vivienne pushed open the window, staring at the blue sky outside with a cold expression. "Mom, who did you piss off?"

She left the Hawthorn family when she was only nine. All she remembered was her mother being bullied by Beatrice, but her mother always put up with it. At that time, she didn't understand why her mother, who was clearly a smart and capable person, would be bullied and not fight back. It wasn't until they left the Hawthorn family and found themselves pursued by various parties that she understood her mother's mysterious Muay Thai. Her mother wasn't ignorant of resistance, she was evading those who were after them.

Until one day, her mother received a call. She noticed her mother's unusual expression, but due to her young age and multiple escape experiences, she thought someone was after them again.

But that night, her mother committed suicide. Her mother ended her life with a poison she developed.

Before leaving, she told Vivienne to go to the Emerald Monastery to find Finnian, to learn Muay Thai from him, and warned her not to leave there for ten years and to hide her abilities. Her mother made a special request that after her death, she should be cremated, and there was no need to erect a tombstone.

Ten years later, she was to return to the Hawthorn family to find her father, Dorian, and fulfill her engagement with Percival. She did everything else. The only thing she didn't do was marry Percival.

For the past ten years, she lived in the shadow of her mother's death, she had to seek revenge, and couldn't let marriage hinder her. But now she found out that Percival was also involved in the events back then.

The engagement was cancelled, so to find out the truth about the past, she had to find another way.

A burst of urgent knocking interrupted Vivienne's thoughts. She opened the door, only to see Beatrice barging in with a bunch of people.

About ten people squeezed into the small living room, including Beatrice's eldest son, youngest son's family, and Arabella. Their faces were filled with rage, especially when they saw Vivienne, as if they couldn't wait to tear her to pieces.

"Vivienne! You irresponsible girl! Who gave you the right to break off the engagement with the Ellington family? You'ungrateful child! Do you even care about me anymore?"

The moment Beatrice saw Vivienne, her old and blurry eyes almost spit fire. She couldn't believe that Vivienne would unilaterally break off the engagement. If it wasn't for Richard's call, she wouldn't even know.

He's call she wouldn't eve

Since Vivienne just returned, the Hawthorn family hadn't publicly announced her identity, so Richard didn't know that the person to be married to Percival was Vivienne, not Arabella. But Beatrice didn't care, as long as Richard wanted to get engaged with the Hawthorn family's daughter, as long as Vivienne went there, the Hawthorn family wouldn't lose anything. But Vivienne actually broke off the engagement!

Vivienne's gaze was icy, and an aura of coldness emanated from her. She stared at Beatrice for a long moment without saying a word.

"It was me who let Vivienne break off the engagement." Dorian shielded Vivienne behind him and spoke with a stern expression. "If you have a problem, take it up with me."

Beatrice slapped him, her anger bursting. "You're the one who betrayed the family. Do you know what this marriage means to the Hawthorn family?" She didn't want Arabella to marry Percival before, but she didn't really cancel the engagement. She just wanted to find a way that could get the Ellington family's investment and protect Arabella. But with Vivienne's move, if it caused the dissatisfaction of the Ellington family, the Hawthorn family's company wouldn't get a penny.

"What does it mean?" Dorian sneered. "Isn't it just for your pride? You look down on Vivienne, so you're willing to sacrifice her?"

Dorian's older brother Michael spoke up, frowning. "How can you say that about our mom? She's doing this for the Hawthorn family, and besides, the Ellington family said that Vivienne wouldn't be mistreated if she married over."

"Yeah, although Percival has physical limitations, he's from a wealthy family. Look at Vivienne, she grew up in the countryside and didn't receive higher education. She might not even have finished high school, right? She's nineteen now and can't go to college, so she can only find some lowly paid jobs to get by." Dorian's second brother Joseph added. "With her qualifications, she can only find jobs like waitressing, her future partner can only be ordinary, so what's wrong with marrying Percival? At least she'd have a worry-free life."

"Enough!" Dorian roared. "Vivienne is my daughter. I have the right to decide who she marries. No matter how good Percival is, Vivienne won't marry him." "You!" Michael was so angry his face turned red. "You're unreasonable!"

Béatrice stared at Dorian and angrily said. "You are not in charge of this family. As the granddaughter of the Hawthorn family, Vivienne should contribute to the family. The Hawthorn family doesn't keep freeloaders."

"Ha!" Vivienne let out a cold laugh, her eyes filled with disdain. Beatrice turned her head sharply, her eyes like venomous snakes. "What are you laughing at?"

Vivienne lifted her head, and her cold gazes fixed on Beatrice. "I'm laughing at your poor memory. It seems like I haven't spent a penny of yours since I was born. You never raised me. Why would you expect me to contribute?"

She may have been young back then, but she still remembered that this granny of hers never even bought her a single piece of candy. "You!" Beatrice was so

angry she could hardly breathe, glaring at Vivienne with a hint of resentment. This little brat sure had a sharp tongue. "Vivienne!" Michael shouted angrily, "How can you talk to your grandmother like that? She's your elder. Is this how your mother taught you?"

Vivienne's red lips curled slightly, her hands in her pockets, giving off a relaxed demeanor. "Sorry, my mom's dead, if you have any questions, you can go ask her in the underworld directly about how she taught me?"

Michael's face turned red, "You're absolutely ill-mannered."

Chapter 5

Vivienne's nonchalant attitude annoyed the rest of the Hawthorn family too. But with Beatrice there, everyone kept their mouths shut. However, the looks they gave Vivienne were as if they wanted to eat her alive.

Vivienne just slightly lifted her chin, not caring about their looks at all.

Beatrice stared at Vivienne for a while, taking a deep breath before making an effort to suppress her anger. Her tone softened slightly as she spoke. "This marriage was arranged by your mother. She wouldn't want anything bad for you, right? Richard also said that he hopes you could continue with this engagement to Percival."

Vivienne just smiled at her, without saying a word.

Beatrice frowned, and said coldly, "Vivienne, I want to remind you that the place you're living in now is provided by me, and if you don't marry Percival, I'll take back this apartment. In addition, your father will be kicked out of the company. As long as I'm around, he won't find a job in this city. Without money, he won't be able to support your family."

Before Vivienne could say anything, Dorian stepped forward and said seriously, "You want the apartment, then take it. I'm capable. I don't believe I can't support my wife and child. I won't let Vivienne fall into hardship."

Beatrice was so angry she almost slapped him, but she held back, biting her teeth at Dorian, "Fine. You have guts, I'd like to see how long you can last." Beatrice said coldly, "I'm giving you an hour, move out immediately."

