

Million-Dollar 121

Chapter 121

After the middle-aged man left, Vivienne leaned against Percival's bed in high spirits.

She couldn't tease him, nor could she let her subordinates tease him, could she?

Maybe because she had just won a round, she was in such a good mood that she fell asleep on

Percival's bed.

When Percival came out, still looking a bit angry, he saw the little lady curled up in his blue-gray quilt,

sleeping soundly. His initial anger immediately vanished.

He hadn't expected Vivienne to still be in his bedroom, so at this moment, he was just wrapped in a

towel around his waist.

He stood at the bathroom door, hesitated for a moment, but still couldn't resist stepping forward to look

at Vivienne's sleeping face.

Vivienne had been trained to be vigilant since she was a child, so even though she was asleep, she

was still very alert.

As soon as Percival approached, even before she opened her eyes, she quickly lifted her arm and

grabbed Percival.

The sudden change caught Percival off guard. Vivienne's little hand swiftly grabbed the towel around his waist. The towel fell off, leaving him completely exposed.

Vivienne also opened her eyes. After she woke up, both of them were immediately stunned.

Silence was the awkwardness of the night.

Vivienne gawked at the naked Percival in front of her, then blankly looked at the towel in her hand.

After realizing what happened, she tossed the towel like it was hot to Percival, immediately turning her face away.

Percival was also embarrassed. He caught the towel and wrapped up his lower body. Noticing that her cheeks were as red as cooked shrimp, he couldn't help but tease her. "Did you like what you saw?"

Vivienne initially didn't want to look at him, but after hearing him ask that, she coughed. "Too small. I couldn't see clearly."

Percival's face suddenly changed. He pulled Vivienne into his arms, leaning close to her. "Are you sure? I doubt your eyesight. Do you want to take another look?"

"Then... I'll take another look." Vivienne finished speaking and looked at his certain part again, but

unfortunately, he had already wrapped up the towel.

Percival almost lost his footing.

Did she even know what she was doing?

He was an adult man!

Did she really think his self-control was that good?

Percival looked at Vivienne with his deep eyes. Her beautiful face made his throat a bit dry. He laid her down on the bed and said with a laugh, "I didn't know you were so forward."

His hair was still wet, and the tips were dripping with water. When he leaned down, a drop of water fell on Vivienne's face and made it look like a tear was sliding down her cheek.

He knew his Vivienne wouldn't cry, but this scene still left Percival stunned, and he stared blankly at the water trail on her face.

Vivienne lay under him. When she looked up at him, he now was completely different from the enticing figure in the bathroom. His eyes seemed confused and even a little fragile.

Her heart suddenly ached, and then, for some unknown reason, she suddenly lifted her upper body

and kissed Percival's slightly open lips.

Vivienne was the first to come back to her senses, cursing herself for losing her head. She was a person who had never had a romantic experience, so why had she taken the initiative to kiss a man ten years older than her?

She would never admit that she was attracted to Percival's charm.

She tried to hide her embarrassment. "Your kissing skills are terrible."

After saying that, she tried to push Percival away and get up, but he forcefully pushed her back onto the bed.

Percival was amused by her actions. Tonight, she first said he was immature; now she said he was an incompetent kisser. He felt like he had to prove himself.

He lifted her chin, leaned down, and kissed her fervently. His hot breath, filled with his long-held desire, was like a raging fire, completely swallowing Vivienne's breath between their lips.

At first, she struggled, resisted, kicked him, hit him, and even angrily bit his lips.

But he didn't care. He just enjoyed the sweetness he had been longing for until he felt her body gradually relax. She immersed herself in this feeling with him.

That night, Vivienne practically fled back to her room.

She burrowed into the quilt, replaying in her mind the moment when she was about to suffocate.

Percival finally let her go, then licked his own lips and smiled at her. "How was it? How are my skills?"

Since Vivienne was nine, she had never had such emotional ups and downs. She felt like there was a screaming beast inside her body.

That night, she suddenly realized that she was still just a little girl.

She was having emotional ups and downs; she felt shy and sometimes panicked.

And all of this was because of one person.

Percival.

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Percival knocked on the door of Vivienne's bedroom. "Vivienne, time to get up."

Vivienne opened her eyes. Hearing Percival's voice instantly reminded her of last night's events, and her face immediately turned red.

"Vivienne, I'm hungry. Didn't you say you were here to take care of me?" Percival knocked on the door

again. "If you don't come out, I'll tell Grandfather what happened last night."

Vivienne jumped up, opened the door, and glared at him. "Shut up!"

Percival couldn't help but laugh. This little girl was still shy.

Even though she was the one who took the initiative last night, it now seemed like he was the one who took advantage of her.

Every time he thought back to Vivienne's hurried departure last night, he laughed hysterically. It was the first time he had seen her so panicked.

By the time Vivienne finally got dressed, washed up, and slowly walked to the kitchen, Percival had already taken out the ingredients.

"Tortellini?" Vivienne glanced at the package in Percival's hand.

"Do you want some?" Percival asked her, shaking the Tortellini in his hand.

Vivienne nodded. She always preferred pasta, and Percival seemed to know this, so he always accommodated her.

Despite last night's failure, Vivienne was even more excited about cooking. She was not discouraged at all.

Percival was scared that she'd screw up her cooking again, so he kept hovering around her in the kitchen.

He thought boiling water to cook some tortellini was a simple task. There was no way Vivienne could mess it up.

But the moment he turned his back, Vivienne tossed all the tortellini into a pot of cold water.

Oh dear.

Percival looked at the pot full of tortellini and sighed deeply.

Just as he'd feared, the tortellini had been cooked to pieces because they were put in the pot before the water was boiling.

Vivienne had turned what was supposed to be decent tortellini into a meat soup.

Fortunately, he had kept an eye on the seasoning, so at least the taste was alright, even if it wasn't a pretty sight.

When Vivienne brought two bowls of the meat-filled soup to the table, she was really bummed out.

The pasta she cooked yesterday were not tasty, but at least they looked alright. How did it turn out like

this today?

"Alright, stop looking at it. No amount of staring is gonna turn it back into tortellini." Percival comforted

her helplessly. "Next time, remember to wait for the water to boil before you put the tortellini in."

After saying that, he had a taste. Luckily, with him around, it ended up tasting pretty good.

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Vivienne caught on to the mockery in his tone and lifted her gaze, landing on his pink lips that were moistened by the soup and momentarily daydreaming.

She was reminded of last night and felt her cheeks heat up.

Percival looked up at her and saw her rosy lips sipping the soup. He was reminded of the allure those lips held, stirring something within him.

He quickly recalled her mocking his kissing skills last night and couldn't help but ask, "Vivienne, have you ever had a boyfriend before?"

Vivienne was taken aback. "No, why?"

"Nothing. I just thought you were pretty good at kissing." Percival tried to play it cool, but even he could sense a bit of jealousy in his tone.

He thought that just because his Vivienne never had a boyfriend didn't mean she hadn't been kissed.

Just the thought of other men kissing Vivienne was enough to stir his heart.

Vivienne felt a bit awkward, and her cheeks flushed even more. "It was during college. I was just curious and watched some adult videos with my roommate."

Percival was speechless.

This girl really had no filter.

Vivienne lightly kicked his chair. "How many girls have you kissed before?"

"One." Percival answered with a smile.

Vivienne was stunned. She didn't find it strange for this twenty-eight-year-old man to have only dated once. It wouldn't be strange if he had one or two girlfriends.

But for some reason, even though it was an expected answer, she felt a bit uncomfortable. She lost her appetite after looking at the meat in her bowl.

"It was with you." Percival added, under Vivienne's surprised gaze. "In my dreams."

Vivienne's mood instantly cleared up.

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After breakfast, Vivienne changed Percival's bandage. The medicine she gave him was really effective.

After just one night, Percival's hand was almost back to normal.

And that was because she wanted to intentionally punish Percival for stalking her, so she didn't use the best medicine.

Today was the weekend. Vivienne didn't have to go to school, and Percival didn't have to go to the Ellington Group's Havenwood branch.

With nothing to do, Vivienne had Percival clear out two rooms and had a ton of spices delivered. One room was used for storing spices and the other for mixing them.

Since natural spices could sometimes cause allergies, many previously usable natural spices were now internationally banned and could only be replaced with industrially synthesized ones.

She hadn't touched perfumery in a while. Although she didn't take Elijah, seriously, she did need to familiarize herself with the newly released industrial spices.

Percival went to the study on the lower floor to work remotely. He was dealing with some matters from Ellington Group's Rivenwood headquarters.

Vivienne only then realized that the lower floor was also Percival's. He had even knocked through the

ceiling of the floor and built a staircase that led directly downstairs.

The lower floor was also an open-plan duplex, with nearly every room knocked through. It was filled with bookshelves that extended from the floor to the ceiling.

Vivienne took a look and randomly picked out a few books. There were books on astronomy, geography, economics, and philosophy. There were even some rare stand-alone books. She was quite surprised. "You haven't been in Havenwood for long, so how come you have so many books?"

"I buy books when I'm bored, and before I knew it, I had a lot." Percival answered while looking at his computer. "Those stand-alone ones are to make my grandfather happy."

Percival paused, then said, "In the future, if he's mad at you, just take a stand-alone book from me and give it to him. He'll definitely cheer up."

"Hmph, how could I possibly be mad at Vivienne?" Richard in the video chat seemed very annoyed at

Percival. "Vivienne is a good girl. I like her very much; I feel happy just seeing her. Only you, you naughty child, would make me angry."

"Richard." Vivienne realized then that Percival was video chatting with Richard, so she walked over to

say hi.

"Vivienne." Richard immediately smiled when he saw Vivienne. "I heard you moved in with Percival."

"Yes, he got injured, so I came over to take care of him for a few days." Vivienne nodded in reply.

"A few days is not enough." Richard shook his head. "Let me tell you, wasp venom is very potent.

Although his hand has deflated, the venom is still in his body and could flare up at any time. So, you

should stay here indefinitely."

Richard was getting carried away, and Percival started feeling embarrassed for him, but Vivienne was

very tolerant towards Richard, laughing and responding to whatever he said.

After chatting for a while, Richard laughed and said, "Vivienne, I heard you're entering a competition.

Good luck, beat that punk Elijah!"

Vivienne laughed. It wasn't a boxing match after all.

She moved aside, not wanting to interrupt their grandfather-to-grandson conversation.

She carefully skimmed through the books on Percival's bookshelf, looking for anything useful.

Accidentally, she discovered a small box in a corner.

The box had a combination lock and was spotless. It was clearly frequently used and cleaned.

She glanced at Percival in the distance, who was busy with his computer and had his headphones on.

She then quietly started trying to crack the combination.

She opened the box. Inside was a delicate anklet, adorned with tiny silver bells.

She used to love this anklet. She wore it on her ankle every day. Wherever she went, the sound of the bells followed.

Her mother used to joke that she sounded like a little alarm clock since she was always making a racket.

But she lost the anklet later on, and despite searching for a long time, she couldn't find it.

How did this anklet end up in Percival's possession?

She was about to put the anklet back, but Percival had somehow appeared behind her.

He sidled up behind her and wrapped his arms around her waist. With a slight chuckle, he whispered in

her ear, "Vivienne, what are you looking for?"

"What's this?" Vivienne swung around with the anklet in her hand and a playful smile on her face. "Is

this a prized possession Mr. Ellington has been carefully guarding? Could it be a keepsake from a girl

you fancy?"

"It's from an old buddy of mine." Percival didn't elaborate further and held Vivienne tighter, with a hint of

annoyance tinging his voice. "Vivienne, apart from calling me by my full name or Mr. Ellington, could

you possibly come up with another way to address me?"

"Another way to address you? How would you like me to call you?" Vivienne tilted her head upwards to

look at Percival, then, with a sudden serious expression, she asked, "Should I call you Mr. Wolf?"

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Percival paused for a moment. A small figure flashed in his mind. It was a little girl who used to

affectionately call him "Mr. Wolf". He lowered his head, carefully observing Vivienne's face. From the

moment he first saw her, he could see a familiar shadow in her features.

"You don't like that?" Vivienne pondered for a moment and asked, "You're ten years older than me and

like a wolf. I would call you Mr. Wolf."

Percival fell silent.

He chose to ignore the age issue.

"No, I quite like it." Percival lowered his head again, uncontrollably kissing her.

Vivienne was startled. Before she could react, Percival pressed her against the bookshelf, forcefully trying to possess her.

Vivienne attempted to push him away. She was afraid of feeling the same uncontrollable emotions that she felt last night. But the moment his lips touched hers, she felt a conflicting desire to accept him. It was so contradictory.

Suddenly, the bookshelf behind Vivienne collapsed due to their weight, toppling the shelves behind it like a row of falling dominoes. Dust flew up, and books scattered all over the floor.

Vivienne and Percival both fell on the bookshelf and stared blankly at each other.

This was truly an unexpected turn of events for both of them.

Suddenly, applause echoed in the study.

Vivienne and Percival turned to look, seeing Leopold and Thomas standing on the stairs with astonishment written all over their faces.

Leopold clapped his hands and said in surprise, "Just one night, and you two have progressed this far?

So quickly and passionately? Was the bed at home not big enough, the sofa not soft enough, or the

floor not cool enough that you had to choose the bookshelf?"

Leopold and Thomas often visited Percival's apartment, so they knew the password to the door. It

wasn't just the two of them; Cecilia and a strange woman were also present, both equally as surprised.

"What kind of behavior is this?" Cecilia, after realizing the situation, was very angry.

"Mom, why are you here?" Percival said helplessly as he helped Vivienne up. "This was an accident."

"An accident?" Cecilia asked unhappily, "Why haven't I seen you have such an indecent accident

before? Yesterday, I heard Isolde say that Ms. Hawthorn moved in with you. I came to see, and who

would've known I'd find this?"

Her good manners prevented her from saying more unpleasant words, but the way she looked at

Vivienne indicated her belief that Vivienne was seducing Percival, leading to this embarrassing

situation.

"Cecilia, do you need an eye checkup?" Vivienne saw through Cecilia's implication and asked

sarcastically.

"What do you mean?" Cecilia didn't understand.

"If your eyesight is fine, you should be able to see that it was Percival who pushed me down, right?"

Vivienne sneered.

She had always been this way. If someone treated her well, she would respond in kind. If someone treated her rudely, she wouldn't show any respect either.

Even if this person was Percival's mother.

Cecilia didn't show any kindness to her, so she wouldn't respond with kindness either.

"You!" Cecilia didn't expect Vivienne to be so direct. She was Percival's mother, but Vivienne didn't try to please her. On the contrary, she was blunt and impolite.

She had never lost a fight in her life and was momentarily at a loss for words.

Leopold saw the conflict between Vivienne and Cecilia and immediately got excited, leaning towards

Percival with a grin. "Look, this is the world's most difficult dilemma. If your wife and mother fall into the water at the same time, who will you save first?"

"Why did you bring my mom here?" Percival frowned at him.

"We didn't bring her." Leopold shrugged. "We just opened the door, and your mom happened to come in. We can't stop her, can we?"

He patted Percival's shoulder. "You know your mom's personality. If I stopped her, she might go to my

house and complain to my mother. Then I would be in trouble. So, Mr. Ellington, deal with your own mother.”

“What are you trying to say? Why can they come, but I can’t?” Cecilia heard their conversation. She needed to maintain good manners and poise in front of others, but she didn't have to be so polite to her son.

"Isolde told me you were injured. As a mother, can't I come and see what's wrong with my son?" After speaking, she glared at Vivienne. She thought she was nothing but rude, like someone who grew up in the countryside. She couldn't understand why Richard had chosen her as a granddaughter-in-law.

"Bro, is this how you handle things?" A woman who had been silently following behind Cecilia suddenly stepped forward and smiled at Percival. "Your mother is just concerned about you. You shouldn't ignore your mother because of an outsider."

After speaking, she deliberately glanced at Vivienne.

Vivienne raised an eyebrow. Before she could say anything, Percival coldly asked, "Who are you?"

The woman's face changed instantly. Cecilia quickly said, "This is Stella. Don't you remember? You

used to play with her when you were a child."

"Don't know her." Percival said coldly to Stella Pembroke, "Ms. Stella, your upbringing seems to be lacking. You are not part of this family, and you shouldn't interfere. Don't you think you've crossed a line?"

He paused for a moment. His tone was light but ruthless. "I only have one sister, Isolde. My fiancée might misunderstand."

Leopold couldn't help but laugh and give Percival a thumbs-up. He was really something.

Stella looked embarrassed and angry. She pushed Thomas aside, covering her face and crying as she ran out.

"Stella!" Cecilia glared at Vivienne and hurriedly chased after her.

Vivienne was puzzled. This person was scolded away by her son, so why was she glaring at her?

The study was in shambles. The bookshelves had collapsed, and books were scattered all over the floor. It was definitely uninhabitable.

Percival called Leopold and Thomas for help. They packed up important things and carried the computer upstairs. Then he called someone to come and clean up.

But Vivienne noticed that Percival carefully placed the anklet back in its box and took it upstairs.

Chapter 124

In the living room, as Leopold settled onto the couch, his eyes fell upon a sealed glass bottle resting on the coffee table.

"What's this?" he asked, his curiosity piqued, as he picked it up.

"Hands off," Vivienne warned, reaching out to reclaim it. It was the concentrated Tranquil Aroma perfume essence, too potent to touch the skin directly.

But Leopold, known for his mischief, quickly hid the bottle, flashing a sly grin. His eyes darted between Percival and Vivienne, and he teased, "Let me guess, is it something naughty, like a slippery massage oil..."

Vivienne had initially ignored his jesting, but from the corner of her eye, she saw Cecilia, who had been pursuing Stella, returning alone. She attempted to retrieve the bottle from Leopold.

With a swift move, Leopold evaded her, accidentally tossing the Tranquil Aroma perfume out of his hands. It landed with a crash at Cecilia's feet.

Instantly, the strong fragrance filled the entire apartment, making it difficult for everyone to breathe

comfortably.

Cecilia hesitated for a moment, then disregarded it, stepping over the broken glass and storming in, her voice accusing, "How could you... Achoo! Stella, she... Achoo! You... Achoo! Achoo! Achoo!"

Before she could finish her sentence, the overpowering scent triggered five consecutive sneezes, leaving her eyes moist and red.

Vivienne, feeling an unexpected pang of guilt, glared at Leopold and handed Cecilia a few tissues.

Cecilia's nose was unbearably itchy; she didn't have the luxury to disdain Vivienne. Wiping her tears and nose, she asked between sneezes, "What is this... Achoo! ...smell?"

Finally unable to bear it, she ran away, sneezing all the way.

The four people left in the living room exchanged puzzled glances.

Percival had prepared himself for a day of incessant nagging from his mother, but a bottle of perfume managed to divert her attention. He decided that this was a great solution. He thought it was a fantastic item to have on hand. The next time his mother bothered him with trivial matters, he could just sprinkle it around the house.

And he should prepare some for Isolde too. Lately, his mother's repetitive complaints had been driving

the poor girl crazy. She constantly complained to him about it.

Thus, an argument vanished into thin air.

Vivienne glanced at the time; it was already 11 A.M. Unusually enthusiastic, she suggested to Leopold

and Thomas, "It's lunchtime. Let's eat together; I'll cook."

"Don't bother!" Leopold jumped up as if propelled by a spring, ready to flee.

"Ms. Hawthorn, I've already ordered food; it will arrive shortly. You don't need to trouble yourself,"

Thomas said, his face contorted in displeasure. He swiftly placed orders on the app, not paying much

attention to the items, as long as something was ordered.

"Oh, really?" Vivienne looked disappointed. She wanted Leopold and Thomas to experience her

improved cooking skills, but apparently, that plan was thwarted. "Well, maybe next time."

Leopold and Thomas exchanged a silent glance, relieved that they had escaped unscathed this time.

They silently vowed never to approach Percival during meal times. It was too perilous.

Suddenly, they understood why Isolde, who had been so attached to Vivienne, hadn't come along with

Cecilia today. The little girl was indeed clever; despite her young age, she knew how to avoid trouble.

However, what surprised them was Cecilia's persistence. She regrouped in the afternoon and returned.

When Thomas opened the door and saw Cecilia, wearing a mask, walking in, the conversation in the living room ceased.

"Where's Vivienne?" Cecilia skipped the pleasantries and got straight to the point.

"Upstairs," Leopold kindly pointed the way for Cecilia.

Cecilia walked upstairs with determined steps to find Vivienne.

Watching Percival's stern gaze, Leopold shrugged and explained, "Well, the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law conflict has always been a timeless conundrum. You can't stop it."

He suggested with a grin, "If you're worried about your fiancée being bullied by your mother, why not go up and help?"

"I'm worried about my mother," Percival sighed, rubbing his temples. Vivienne could be a handful. Well, let his mother have a taste of her own medicine. He trusted Vivienne to handle the situation tactfully.

In the fragrance lab, Vivienne, having finished her meal, had retreated to the meticulously organized room. Cecilia entered just as Vivienne was contemplating the freshly delivered Tranquil Aroma essence.

Hearing the door open, she turned around.

Cecilia instinctively took a step back when she saw the perfume essence in Vivienne's hands. The morning's sneezing fit was still fresh in her mind, making her wary.

However, noticing her own hesitation, Cecilia quickly composed herself, standing tall and confidently stepping forward. She glanced at Vivienne's fragrance workstation, her curiosity piqued. Suspicious, she asked, "Do you really know how to blend fragrances?"

Cecilia hadn't come today to introduce Stella to Percival, as she had pretended. Instead, during a morning poker game, she had coincidentally encountered Stella and her mother, Mrs. Pembroke.

Mrs. Pembroke was an old friend of Cecilia's. During their game, she casually mentioned Vivienne's audacious challenge against Elijah, acting as if it was a trivial matter.

Stella chimed in, adding that Elijah was an apprentice of the internationally renowned Master Q, and he held the title of The Perfume Prince himself. Stella couldn't fathom why Vivienne had challenged Elijah, considering his reputation and credentials.

Stella even showed her news articles about the incident. Indeed, the event at Cloudcrest High School's

auditorium had made the headlines. Elijah's high profile and Vivienne's previous public exposure due to Arabella Hawthorn's accusations had quickly made it a trending topic on social media.

Elijah's numerous fans ridiculed Vivienne online, claiming she was overestimating her abilities. Even bystanders were doubtful about her skills. Facing the sly remarks from her friends, Cecilia grew increasingly furious.

This Vivienne was so clueless. She had grown up in a remote place and had never been exposed to the perfumery profession. Why did she think she could challenge Elijah?

If Vivienne were just a nobody, Cecilia might not have been so irritated. She might have found

Vivienne's audacity admirable. But Vivienne was Percival's fiancée, and her actions reflected upon the Ellington family's reputation.

Cecilia's anger grew as she thought about it. She had even lost interest in the game and had decided to confront Vivienne and persuade her to find a way to cancel the fragrance competition.

Stella, who insisted on coming along, was with her.

"Vivienne, I heard that you've arranged a fragrance blending competition with The Perfume Prince Elijah at Cloudcrest High School next Friday?" Cecilia questioned coldly.

"Yes," Vivienne nodded. She had seen the news today, so she knew why Cecilia was asking.

Cecilia hesitated, considering how to persuade Vivienne to comply. Her eyes were suddenly drawn to a perfume bottle inside the glass cabinet.

"Is this... the discontinued Oriental Night Fragrance?!"

Chapter 125

Cecilia's eyes widened as she stared at the snuffbox-shaped perfume bottle that was painted in vibrant colors in sheer astonishment.

She had only seen Oriental Night Fragrance, an antique perfume, in old photographs and videos.

She couldn't help but lean closer to the massive glass display case filled with perfume bottles.

"Oh, that one is only half full." Vivienne casually mentioned.

"Even half a bottle is rare!" Cecilia exclaimed, almost squeaking like a prairie dog. She had thought that the Oriental Night Fragrance, a perfume from a century ago, was extinct.

As a collector of antique perfume and perfume bottles, she was incredibly excited to see a bottle of Oriental Night Fragrance.

She then spotted a glass bottle with a heart-shaped cap on the side, immediately regaining her

composure.

"Butterfly Dream Scent, although it's been discontinued, there's still a fair amount on the market. It's quite easy to acquire if you have the money." She thought to herself.

Noticing that her gaze was fixed on the Butterfly Dream Scent, Vivienne added, "This one is a first edition."

"What?!" Cecilia's eyes widened again. "This is a 1919 first edition of Butterfly Dream Scent?"

Many perfumes on the market had been around for decades, even centuries sometimes, but their scents had often been reformulated over time and were no longer as good as the original.

This was mostly due to market demands or because many natural fragrances had become extinct or banned, resulting in the use of synthetic substitutes.

Therefore, a first-edition perfume was extremely rare.

Then, her eyes landed on a few uniquely designed perfume bottles, causing her pupils to dilate.

"Is this... an Apple Tree Vessel?" She pointed at a translucent bottle with layered curves and a cap resembling a tree crown as her voice trembled.

"Yep." Vivienne glanced at it and nodded. "It's John's creation, the Apple Tree Vessel. The ones next to

it are also his work."

"How do you have such rare antique perfumes and perfume bottles?"

Cecilia felt so excited that she was about to pass out. She took a deep breath and looked at Vivienne

suspiciously. "These aren't fakes, are they?"

"Some of these are from my own collection, and some were left to me by my mother." Vivienne replied

calmly, "Of course they are real. I only brought a few with me."

She liked to gaze at the antique perfumes and perfume bottles in the cabinet while creating new

scents, imagining their stories for inspiration.

"Only a few?" Cecilia took another deep breath and grabbed Vivienne's hand, her eyes sparkling as

she asked, "How many more do you have? Can I see them?"

She knew Vivienne's mother, Evelyn, was a talented perfumer.

The Hawthorn Group was in a financial crisis back then, and it was the eight perfumes created by

Evelyn that saved the company.

Cecilia had bought and loved every one of those eight perfumes.

Because of this, she believed that a woman who could create such fantastic perfumes wouldn't have fakes in her collection.

"When it's convenient." Vivienne was a bit taken aback by Cecilia's sudden enthusiasm.

"Anytime is convenient for me!" Cecilia said excitedly.

Vivienne fell silent.

She was talking about herself.

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Downstairs in the living room.

Leopold Sterling had been squatting next to the stairs, craning his neck to look upstairs.

"What are you doing, Mr. Sterling?" Thomas asked as he passed by.

"I'm just wondering why they haven't started arguing yet. They've been in there for a while." Leopold said, looking puzzled.

"Do you want Mrs. Ellington and Ms. Hawthorn to argue?" Thomas frowned, not understanding Leopold's peculiar taste.

"It would be more interesting. Better yet, if they started fighting." Leopold loved to watch drama unfold.

"I'm curious to see what Mr. Ellington would do if things got out of hand between Cecilia and Vivienne."

Before he could finish his sentence, the door to Vivienne's perfume studio creaked open. Cecilia

walked out with a satisfied expression on her face, clutching the Apple Tree Vessel bottle she had just

persuaded Vivienne to give her.

Under Leopold's incredulous gaze, she walked out with a spring in her step. It wasn't until she stepped

into the elevator that she came back to her senses.

Wait...

Why did she go to see Vivienne in the first place?

"Mr. Ellington, did Vivienne put a spell on your mother or something?" Leopold couldn't believe he had

waited so long for nothing to happen.

And from the looks of it, Vivienne clearly won over Cecilia.

Good Lord! The Cecilia he knew was fearless in front of everyone, except Richard, of course.

Whenever she got stubborn and made a fuss, even Percival would get a headache.

Now, she went in looking dissatisfied and came out looking content?

Unless Cecilia was under a spell, he would never believe it.

Percival, still tapping away on his laptop on the sofa, didn't even look up when he heard Leopold. But

he was indeed relieved. He had thought his mother was going to leave Vivienne's room in tears.

Just then, Vivienne felt a bit thirsty. She came out of the perfume studio, grabbed a bottle of mineral

water from the kitchen fridge, and started heading upstairs while drinking.

Leopold immediately stopped her. With his curiosity peaking, he asked, "Vivienne, how did you manage

to win over Percival's mother?"

Percival and Thomas were lounging on the couch and couldn't help but pause in their actions when

they heard the question.

Vivienne's hand, which was holding a glass of water, stilled for a moment as she thought back. She

hadn't really done anything in particular, yet Cecilia had inexplicably warmed up to her.

So, she summed it up in four words. "Personal charm, I guess."

The men were dumbfounded.

After watching Vivienne ascend the stairs, Leopold couldn't help but shake his head, turning to Percival

to comment, "Your little fiancée's got quite the ego. She really is a match for you."

"Ever heard of 'like husband, like wife'?" Percival chuckled lightly, returning his attention to his laptop.

Leopold couldn't help but roll his eyes yet again.

It was a good thing that Vivienne had managed to win over Cecilia so easily, but what Percival hadn't expected was that since that day, Cecilia had begun visiting their residence daily.

Each time, she didn't look for him but headed straight towards Vivienne's perfume studio. One day she'd take an antique perfume, the next, an antique perfume bottle, and the day after, a sample of a new scent Vivienne had just concocted.

However, Vivienne only allowed Cecilia to take items from her own collection. She wouldn't part with the items that belonged to her mother.

Of course, Cecilia didn't come empty-handed either. Each time she came, she'd stuff various pieces of jewelry into Vivienne's hands like they were candy.

Percival began to wonder if Vivienne could possibly be his long-lost sister because Cecilia kept interrupting their daily routine. Percival found his alone time with Vivienne dwindling, and he was seriously considering finding a way to send his mother back to Rivenwood.

Chapter 126

Friday.

Cloudcrest High School auditorium.

Today was the scheduled day for Vivienne and Elijah's fragrance blending competition. News about Vivienne, Percival's fiancée, challenging the renowned Perfume Prince, Elijah, had spread across the internet since his talk at Cloudcrest High.

Guests had flocked to the school, many drawn by the prospect of witnessing this unique competition.

"Ms. Hawthorn."

Vivienne had just arrived at the auditorium when she was met with a face full of malicious glee.

"And you are?" Vivienne asked, her brow knitting slightly. She couldn't quite place the heavily made-up woman in front of her.

Stella forced a smile. "We met at Percival's place."

"Oh." Vivienne remembered now, but dismissed the woman as insignificant. She was just about to step into the auditorium when Stella stopped her.

Stella's face contorted for a moment, but she quickly regained her smugness. "Ms. Hawthorn, have you seen Cecilia? She invited me to accompany her today."

She covered her mouth with her hand, feigning concern. "You really mustn't lose too badly today.

Cecilia doesn't like you much as it is, and if you embarrass the Ellington family..."

"Vivienne!"

Stella was cut off as Cecilia spotted Vivienne from afar and hurried over.

She would have run if not for the need to maintain her ladylike demeanor. So she quickened her pace instead.

Much to Stella's shock, Cecilia briskly approached, took Vivienne's hand, and warmly greeted her. "You finally arrived. Where's Percival?"

"Mom." Percival had been delayed by a few elder acquaintances.

"Ah." Cecilia nodded at Percival in greeting and then turned her attention back to Vivienne. "May I come closer to the stage to watch your competition later?"

Percival watched Cecilia with a touch of helplessness in his eyes. He knew that she loved antique perfumes, but he hadn't realized that she was a perfume fanatic.

Recently, she had been pestering Vivienne every day, asking her to display her mother Evelyn's

collection at a small antique perfume exhibition in Rivenwood whenever Vivienne had spare time.

The trio continued towards the auditorium, completely ignoring Stella.

Stella felt her cheeks burn with humiliation as she remembered her earlier boast that Cecilia disliked Vivienne.

"Mrs. Ellington!" She called out, unwilling to give up.

Cecilia turned to look at her with a frown on her face. "Stella? What are you doing here?"

Stella's face turned pale, then red out of embarrassment. She turned and fled.

"What's her problem?" Cecilia asked but didn't dwell on it.

Percival didn't even glance at Stella from the corner of his eye.

They accompanied Vivienne into the auditorium, greeting many familiar faces.

Among the spectators were some genuine perfume enthusiasts, some Elijah's fans, and a few drawn by the allure of the Ellington family name. None were there for Vivienne.

Elijah was a well-established figure in the industry, whereas Vivienne was an unknown entity. Many believed that if it weren't for her engagement to Percival, Elijah wouldn't have even given her the chance to challenge him.

The only people supporting Vivienne were Percival, Cecilia, and the students from Class Eighteen.

Despite the heavy academic load for seniors and the competition being held during school hours, Class Eighteen was granted permission to attend and cheer for their beloved teacher.

"Go, Ms. Vivienne!"

As Vivienne ascended the stage under Elijah's disdainful gaze, cheers emerged from the crowd.

She glanced down to see Logan, Charlotte, Faye, and Oberon, all from Class Eighteen, waving at her enthusiastically from the front row.

Beside them sat a grim-looking Arabella, Elijah's newly appointed apprentice. Arabella had been granted special permission to attend.

Arabella's hostile gaze met Vivienne's, and she mouthed, "Sis, you're going to lose."

In the few days since becoming Elijah's apprentice, Arabella had once again become the center of attention. Many students sought to please her in hopes of getting close to Elijah.

Nobody dared bring up her past misdeeds, as those trying to curry favor with her would immediately defend her.

Arabella, on the other hand, took it all in stride, bossing everyone around as if they were her servants.

But the memory of her past indiscretions still left a bitter taste in her mouth.

Every time she walked by and heard whispers, she wondered if they were discussing that

embarrassing scene of her kneeling before Vivienne and how she ended up in jail.

Things were definitely different now. This only fueled her hatred for Vivienne.

Vivienne casually withdrew her gaze and walked over to her assigned perfume station.

It was hard to deny that the perfume competition was professionally organized. To prevent the scents

from blending and interfering with each other, two clear acrylic booths were used to separate the

perfume stations.

In addition to Mrs. Dunhill and Henry White, who were recommended by Percival, three other

internationally known perfumers were also part of the judging panel.

"Ms. Hawthorn."

Before the competition started, Elijah suddenly said, "Every competition needs a wager, right?"

"What do you want?" Vivienne asked, her expression calm.

"I'm quite interested in the perfume formula your mother left behind." Elijah looked supremely confident.

"If I win, I'm willing to trade it with one of my vintage formulas."

He was confident about his victory.

He didn't believe that Vivienne knew anything about perfume-making. He thought she was only challenging him because she had the perfume formula her mother left behind.

But this time, under his pressure, the perfume Riley Fairfax had concocted was far superior to anything he had made before. It was even better than Evelyn's nine perfumes.

So he was extremely confident. Even if Vivienne used Evelyn's perfume formula, he would still win.

"I'm not interested in your formula." Vivienne's response was within Elijah's expectations. She knew he and his backers were after her mother's formula.

She wondered if it had anything to do with the elixir. If so, who was Elijah associated with?

GTO?

Or some other unknown group?

"Ms. Hawthorn, regardless of how precious your mother's formula is, most of the ones in my collection

are long-lost recipes." Elijah's face fell. "Are you sure you won't reconsider?"

"No need." Vivienne replied definitively, "You won't win."

The crowd in the hall gasped when they heard Vivienne. Many thought she was too arrogant. Some

even started predicting her downfall, saying that the higher she stood, the harder she would fall.

Chapter 127

There was a substantial media presence at the event, arranged by Elijah himself to boost his profile.

Some were even live-streaming the event online.

The previous incident had quickly spread online, sparking an internet backlash.

Arabella watched with satisfaction as the topic on Twitter began to trend. She was delighted to see the

barrage of unsightly insults directed at Vivienne in the comments section.

...

On stage.

"Vivienne, don't get too cocky!" Elijah laughed bitterly in his rage.

"Enough." Vivienne looked impatient.

"I'll make sure you lose dignity!" Elijah coldly threatened her before signaling for the competition to

start.

Given that perfume blending required inspiration, even though the contestants had a week to prepare, the competition was set for one hour.

The time quietly passed, and the audience watched as Elijah theatrically sniffed various ingredients.

Once in a while, he would spray the blended perfume on a tester strip and then pretend to contemplate something as he scribbled on a piece of paper. He seemed to be trying to impress the audience with his creativity.

On the other hand, Vivienne swiftly picked out a few ingredients she needed as soon as she arrived at the perfume blending station. She then began to blend the perfume according to specific proportions, and in less than ten minutes, she had completed a bottle of perfume.

Afterwards, she sat down at the perfume blending station and started to doze off.

To ensure fair competition and prevent cheating, everything on the two perfume blending stations was projected onto a large screen behind the stage.

Thus, the audience got a close-up view of Vivienne's face. It was magnified several times and occupied half of the large screen.

Percival rubbed his temples. He was somewhat exasperated. He had to admit that his darling girl looked rather cute when she was sleeping.

But he didn't like the idea of so many people watching her sleep.

Elijah, who was still gently fanning the scent from the tester strip, caught sight of this and sneered. He thought to himself that, as anticipated, Vivienne was using the formula left by her mother for the competition.

But she was too naive. She was not even bothering to hide it.

A video of Vivienne challenging Elijah last Friday had been uploaded online, so most of the people in the audience knew about the perfume formula left by Vivienne's mother. Now, like Elijah, they assumed Vivienne was using it.

As a result, the audience looked at Vivienne with disdain. They figured that even if she did outperform Elijah, it would be thanks to her mother's skills, not her own.

How dare she challenge the 'Perfume Prince' in this way?

Only the students from Class Eighteen, Percival, and his mother looked at Vivienne with confidence.

To be honest, even Leopold and Thomas, who had come to enjoy the spectacle, had doubts about

Vivienne.

"Mrs. Ellington."

Turning around, Cecilia saw Stella, who had previously run away. "Stella?"

The girl had left abruptly earlier, and now she had returned just as mysteriously.

After leaving, Stella had grown increasingly frustrated and had returned to see Vivienne make a fool of herself in front of everyone, losing dignity against Elijah.

"Mrs. Ellington, Ms. Hawthorn's behavior is really unbecoming." Stella frowned, feigning concern. "We all know she doesn't have the talent for perfume blending and is using her mother's formula for the competition. But she could at least pretend to make an effort. Whether she wins or loses now, it won't be a proud victory or an honorable defeat."

"Nonsense!" Cecilia's expression turned cold. "Vivienne won't lose. She doesn't need her mother's formula. She's got a natural talent for perfume blending. Elijah isn't fit to compete with her!"

Stella was stunned and shared the same thought as Leopold. Had Vivienne cast a spell on Cecilia?

How else could the woman, who had despised Vivienne just a week ago, become such an ardent

supporter in such a short time?

What Stella didn't know was that during the week she had been pestering Vivienne, Cecilia had seen for herself how Vivienne casually blended several exquisite perfumes, all of which were no less impressive than any product Elijah had ever made.

Naturally, having the advantage of being close, she pilfered every sample.

She particularly loved one of the chypre perfumes and had asked Vivienne to make it exclusively for her and not to sell it on the market.

Vivienne readily agreed, so the chypre perfume became her own, and she named it "Cecilia."

She was delighted to have such a considerate future daughter-in-law. Who said she didn't like Vivienne?

Maybe she had forgotten her past self.

"Stella, go back to your seat. Your presence here is thinning the air and making it hard for me to breathe." Cecilia coldly dismissed Stella.

Leopold nearly laughed out loud. So Percival got his sharp tongue from Cecilia, huh?

"Mrs. Ellington..." Stella was taken aback. She thought she still held a higher status than Vivienne in

Cecilia's eyes. But now that she had made some negative comments about Vivienne, Cecilia was driving her away.

Cecilia, however, was focused on the stage and ignored her.

As a woman, she could see that while Stella was talking to her, her eyes were constantly darting towards Percival.

Before, when Percival was disabled, she hardly saw Stella trying to get close to him.

Now that Percival was well, Stella was so eager to be around. Did she think Cecilia was blind and foolish?

On second thought, Vivienne was much better. Despite her incredible talent, she remained low-key, and she didn't mind that her son was disabled at the beginning.

Stella noticed that Cecilia was giving her the cold shoulder, and Percival hadn't even spared her a glance. Defeated, she skulked away.

On stage.

An hour passed.

Elijah had finally finished with his theatrics.

Then someone came on stage to spray the perfumes concocted by Vivienne and Elijah onto paper testers. These testers were then passed to the judges.

At first, almost all the judges were rather indifferent toward Vivienne's creation, not even touching it.

They were all taken with Elijah's fragrance, singing its praises.

One of the younger judges smiled at Elijah and said, "The Perfume Prince, truly, your reputation precedes you. This latest creation surpasses anything you've done before."

The head judge, Mrs. Dunhill, a dignified woman in her fifties, was wearing a proper suit, draped in a silk shawl. She also gave Elijah a nod and a smile.

"This might be my favorite among the newer fragrances you've released, following your mentor Master Q's 'Hallucination,' 'Abyss,' and 'Fading Dream.' Keep it up. One day, you might surpass your mentor."

The crowd was astounded by her review. The possibility of surpassing the Scent Maestro, Master Q, was an incredibly high praise. Given Mrs. Dunhill's international renown, her comment was almost equivalent to an authoritative verdict.

The media's cameras couldn't get enough of Elijah. The flashes were seemingly never-ending. They

were all vying to capture this moment, eager to score headline news.

Elijah glanced at Vivienne's neglected paper tester and gave her a smug smile. He knew he was bound to win. Mrs. Dunhill's comment made him even more certain that Riley was Master Q.

Others, naturally, were also watching Vivienne and the reactions of Percival and Cecilia. They were secretly rejoicing over Vivienne's downfall. Not only had she lost dignity, but so had the Ellington family.

"Hmm?"

At that moment, the only judge who was seriously comparing Elijah and Vivienne's paper testers, Henry White, held up Vivienne's tester and said something in French to Mrs. Dunhill with a puzzled look.

Mrs. Dunhill, looking equally puzzled, picked up Vivienne's tester and sniffed it.

A moment later, her face was a picture of shock as she looked at Vivienne. "This... this is... this is 'Hallucination'?"

Chapter 128

The other judges initially thought Vivienne was just trying to rile up Elijah by using her mother's perfume formula to stir up some attention. They didn't even want to try her perfume.

However, upon hearing Mrs. Dunhill's comments, the other three judges reluctantly picked up

Vivienne's scent strips, sniffing them repeatedly. After triple checking, they all looked astonished.

"It really is 'Hallucination'!"

Cameras from various news agencies swiveled towards Vivienne, and everyone in the room was

buzzing with speculation.

"How is that possible?!" Elijah cried out from the stage.

How could Vivienne recreate 'Hallucination'? Even he couldn't pry the recipe from Riley. How could

Vivienne possibly have it?

He turned to Vivienne, his tone frosty. "Did you steal my mentor's 'Hallucination' and replace the

perfume you made?"

"Replace it?" Vivienne chuckled.

"Then how do you explain 'Hallucination'? Don't tell me you made it. You think I'd believe that?" Elijah

demanded.

Vivienne raised her gaze, answering in a calm, measured tone. "Because... I am Master Q."

The auditorium erupted in whispers and gasps.

"Vivienne is Master Q?" Cecilia squealed and grabbed Percival's arm. "Why didn't you tell me sooner? I

would have had her make me a truckload of 'Hallucination'!"

Percival was at a loss for words.

Could he admit that he had no idea?

How many more surprises did this girl have in store for him?

"You're lying!" Elijah's face turned deathly pale. He pointed at Vivienne and raised his voice. "You are not Master Q! How could you possibly be Master Q?! You were just a child five years ago!"

But then he remembered Riley. The twelve-year-old perfume prodigy.

"You can't do it, but that doesn't mean I can't." Vivienne looked at Elijah. Her bright eyes held a chilling glint.

She returned to the perfume station, quickly mixing two more perfumes to be delivered to the judges.

"Master Q only made twenty-one bottles of 'Hallucination'. Twenty were sold, and one was given to a student. Apart from these, there is no other 'Hallucination' in the world, and only Master Q knows the recipe. Only Master Q can make 'Hallucination.'"

At this point, another judge pointed at the two new perfumes that Vivienne had just created, crying out

in shock. “These are ‘Abyss’ and ‘Fading Dream’!”

If a bottle of ‘Hallucination’ wasn’t enough to prove Vivienne’s identity, then ‘Abyss’ and ‘Fading Dream’

left no room for doubt.

The recipes for these three perfumes were never leaked. They could only be created by Master Q.

So, Vivienne really was the ‘Scent Maestro’, Master Q.

“Are you really Master Q?”

Mrs. Dunhill looked at Vivienne with disbelief. The other three judges mirrored her expression.

Vivienne produced a ring, slipping it on her left index finger. The onstage projection magnified the ring

several times on the big screen, clearly showing the engraved Phoenix Blossom.

“Master Q’s ring!” Henry White shouted.

“She really is Master Q!”

“The legendary Scent Maestro!”

The auditorium erupted in exclamations.

No one had expected that the girl they had dismissed from the beginning was actually the Master Q,

who had taken the world by storm five years ago.

Thinking back, Vivienne was only fourteen years ago.

At fourteen, she had captivated the world with her three limited-edition perfumes. She was a rare talent indeed.

Vivienne turned towards Elijah, who was retreating and intending to slip away. "Why are you running?"

You see your master, and you don't bow? You're disregarding your elders. Did I teach you this?"

Everyone in the room remembered that Elijah had always claimed to be Master Q's student. Yet he didn't even know that Vivienne was Master Q. He even wanted to take Vivienne as his student and even accepted Vivienne's challenge.

How could they be master and student?

In no time, everyone's suspicious gaze fell on Elijah.

Elijah's face turned from white to green. He was now at the edge of the stage.

After confirming that Vivienne was indeed Master Q, he wanted to slip away unnoticed.

"Not bowing?" Vivienne's lips curled in a mocking smile. "If you bow loudly and make me happy, maybe I will consider taking you as my student."

“You’re a worthless Perfume Prince!”

The angry shouts from the audience were like a storm, raining down on Elijah on the stage.

Elijah nearly collapsed. He tried to console himself. “It’s okay. I still have Riley.”

Worst case scenario, he could get some surgery, change his appearance, and use Riley to debut new works under a new identity.

As long as he could move the siblings before Vivienne discovered Riley's incarceration, he would be safe.

Sadly for him, Vivienne wouldn't be so easily fooled.

Her expression hardened, and she took deliberate steps towards Elijah. “You have some explaining to do.” She demanded. “Why is the perfume Riley had been working on being sold under your name?

Majestic Woods Perfume, your debut scent, was something I guided Riley to create!”

“You... What are you babbling about?” Elijah forced a smile. “Yes, I used your apprentice's name, but all of my creations are my own inspiration!”

“Is that so?” Vivienne's eyes narrowed, and her voice turned ice cold.

Suddenly, the large electronic screen behind the stage flickered, and the scene changed to a news

broadcast from Havenwood.

The footage showed Elijah's Midland Villa, where Riley and Raymond were being escorted onto an ambulance by the police.

“Following a blast due to illegal substances, Havenwood police officers arrived at the villa and rescued a pair of siblings from the basement. According to them, the girl, Riley, despite being deaf and mute, has a prodigious talent for perfume creation and was imprisoned by the world-renowned Perfume Prince, Elijah, to create perfumes for him.”

The hall erupted in outraged cries after a moment of stunned silence.

“My God! He's not only a fraud but a criminal!”

“A twelve-year-old deaf and mute girl. How could he do this?!”

“Scum! Absolute scum!”

Many in the audience had brought food and drinks with them. Furious, they rose to their feet and began hurling their sodas, cupcakes, and ice creams at Elijah, cursing him all the while.

“To think I used to admire him! I must have been blind!”

"I bought all his perfumes! Turns out they were all created by that poor little girl while he pocketed all the money!"

Feeling that this wasn't enough, several people rushed onto the stage and started attacking Elijah.

Chapter 129

Arabella sat rigidly beneath the stage, completely at a loss as to how things had spiraled so

disastrously out of control. It seemed that every time she made a move against Vivienne, things took a

turn for the worst.

Elijah had suddenly been branded as a kidnapper and a fraud.

And she, as his apprentice... What would become of her?

She watched the angry crowd, trembling in fear of being swept away in their rage.

She tried to stay unnoticed, hoping to slip away in the chaos, but was confronted by a group of high

school girls.

They hurled insults at her with scathing words.

"Arabella! Where do you think you're going?! No wonder Elijah chose you as his apprentice; you're

both nothing more than scum!"

"Yeah, pretending to be all high and mighty because you're Elijah's apprentice, ordering us around like

we're your servants. You're useless!"

In the blink of an eye, punches and kicks began to rain down on her. Once a brawl started, it was hard to stop it, especially when the crowd felt justified in their anger.

Each punch and kick was seen as a righteous act.

The mob's fury was eventually subdued by the arrival of the police, who took Elijah away on charges of kidnapping and illegal confinement.

Once the chaos in the auditorium had subsided, the sound of soft sobbing could be heard from a corner.

Arabella's long hair had been hacked off haphazardly, and her school uniform was torn to shreds, revealing her undergarments. Bruises covered her from head to toe, and her face was so swollen that it was hard to recognize her once beautiful features.

But no one paid her any attention or offered her any assistance. Once Elijah's crimes were exposed, everyone remembered her past deeds.

Most importantly, she herself admitted that Beatrice had tested her and Vivienne's talent in perfumery.

She had claimed that Beatrice favored her because Vivienne lacked talent, which led to Vivienne's jealousy and Percival's plot to bankrupt the Hawthorn family.

But was that really the case?

Vivienne lacked talent?

She was the renowned Master Q!

She could earn more money with a single perfume than the entire Hawthorn family fortune. Did she need to be jealous or seek Beatrice's approval?

So Arabella had been lying.

That day of the apprenticeship, she and Elijah had teamed up to humiliate Vivienne.

Such a habitual liar who constantly tried to tarnish her sister's reputation did not deserve sympathy.

"Why are you doing this to me?! What have I done wrong?!"

Seeing that no one was willing to come to her aid, Arabella angrily got to her feet, accusing everyone.

"It was all Elijah's doing! I've only been his apprentice for a few days. I didn't know anything."

Still, no one paid any attention to her; their faces were indifferent, lacking even a hint of pity.

Unable to bear this cold treatment, she fled in despair.

Vivienne remained on stage. Although a large group of people had rushed up to beat Elijah, the stage was in chaos, where she stood, everything was clean and orderly; even the bottles and jars on her perfume table were still neatly arranged; not a single one had fallen over.

After releasing the news, she hadn't said a word. She just watched coldly as Elijah was beaten into a pulp by the angry crowd before being taken away by the police.

In truth, she could have used her influence to rescue Riley and Raymond directly.

However, she hadn't fully figured out Elijah's background yet and didn't want to expose her own strength so quickly. Also, she wanted to use this scandal to help Riley and Raymond.

After she left Graslandia, she returned home and started investigating the potion issue, neglecting the siblings, which allowed Elijah to take advantage of them.

After this incident, everyone would know that the deaf-mute girl, Riley, was Master Q's apprentice, and

all the perfumes that Elijah had launched on the market were the creations of this 12-year-old girl.

With these achievements, the siblings' future would be secured.

Vivienne suddenly addressed the crowd still in the auditorium. "I'm here today to present my fourth

creation."

Upon hearing this, everyone was taken aback.

Vivienne returned to her perfume table and quickly mixed another perfume.

The audience's attention was immediately drawn to her, especially the perfume enthusiasts, who were thrilled to witness the birth of a new creation from the mysterious Master Q.

The five judges sitting in the jury box were in awe.

Mrs. Dunhill and the others were all stunned when the chaos ensued. They hadn't expected a simple perfume competition to turn into a crime scene.

When they thought about it, the perfumes they had just praised from Elijah must have been created by Riley, which made them feel sick to their stomachs.

How could he have the audacity to accept their praise?

But now, their attention was entirely focused on the new perfume that Vivienne had just finished mixing.

"Ms. Hawthorn, no, Master Q." Mrs. Dunhill stood up excitedly. "Could we be the first to experience your new creation?"

"Mrs. Dunhill, may I ask, if I were not Master Q, would you still want to try the perfumes I create?"

Vivienne asked calmly.

Mrs. Dunhill paused, exchanging glances with the other judges.

Apart from Henry White, the other four were all ashamed.

Due to their prejudice, they had dismissed Vivienne's perfume. Now, they realized they were the ones

who were blind. Their unfair behavior was not fair to the competition.

If Vivienne wasn't the renowned Master Q but just a talented young girl, their arrogance could have

crushed and destroyed a true genius.

"I'm sorry. I'm deeply ashamed of my behavior." Mrs. Dunhill hung her head low.

The other three perfumers also started to apologize to Vivienne.

"I accept your apologies." Vivienne didn't push them further. Instead, she had her newly formulated

perfume delivered to the five judges.

Mrs. Dunhill and her colleagues, who had thought they were out of the game, were overjoyed at this

development.

They were flattered beyond belief to be the first to review Master Q's new perfume.

Mrs. Dunhill and Henry White were the first to take up the scent strips sprayed with the perfume, gently fanning them to catch the aroma.

The other three perfumers followed suit.

A few minutes later, Mrs. Dunhill's face lit up with delight. "Master Q has never failed to impress. This perfume has a fougère base. It starts off strong and masculine, then takes a rich, deep turn, and finally becomes warm and seductive. It's absolutely splendid!"

Henry White also nodded approvingly, asking Vivienne in his broken English. "Is this a men's perfume?"

Vivienne nodded and smiled. Her gaze met Percival's, who had been quietly watching her from the audience. "I've named it 'Timeless Man Cologne.'"

Percival was left speechless.

Chapter 130

A week later, at Bay Estates.

"Haha, old man! You're such an old man!" Leopold was pointing at Percival's ashy face, laughing so hard that his whole body was shaking.

"You've been laughing for a full week. Haven't you had enough yet?" Percival's forehead was throbbing, and his austere face was as black as coal.

Ever since Vivienne announced the name of her new perfume, he had been the target of continuous ridicule for a week.

First, it was Cecilia and Leopold who couldn't hold back their laughter, almost bursting into hysterics in the auditorium of Cloudcrest High School.

Then his sister, a young miss who was a little more reserved in her laughter, but her teasing was still sharp and precise.

She innocently said, "But brother, compared to Vivienne, you are quite old."

He immediately made a decision. He brought Isolde, who had been avoiding Vivienne for a week, back to Bay Estates, forcing her to eat Vivienne's cooking three times a day without his guidance.

Isolde made several video calls back to Rivenwood, tearfully complaining about her situation.

Also, in addition to his grandfather's mockery, he also received greetings from various relatives.

Some even sent over a variety of supplements, worried that his previous disability might be causing some issues, leading Vivienne to consider him "old."

The most infuriating thing was when someone unexpectedly sent a box of libido-boosting pills and aids.

The worst part was that it was Vivienne who opened the package that day.

"An old man is an old man. We have to accept our age." Leopold said, feigning sympathy while

slapping Percival's shoulder and trying not to laugh.

"Your little fiancée is ruthless! Creating a perfume inspired by you and then giving it such a name. Was

it intentional or just a coincidence?"

He sniffed Percival curiously, exclaiming, "Oh, you're actually wearing it? Timeless Man Cologne suits

the old man perfectly!"

"Let's get to business!" Percival kicked him onto the couch.

The perfume Vivienne designed, inspired by him, was certainly meant for him exclusively.

Not only that, but there were only a little over fifty bottles of Vivienne's new creation sold, all of which he

bought.

So the Timeless Man Cologne disappeared from the market as soon as it was released.

This caused outrage among perfume collectors, including Cecilia, who managed to snatch a bottle from

Percival after a big fuss.

Despite its unfortunate name, the cologne's scent was to his liking.

After using it, he even felt like his sleep had improved.

It was as if it was designed specifically for him.

But he still felt bewildered. He was only twenty-eight, just nearly ten years older than Vivienne. How was he old?

As soon as they started talking business, Leopold straightened up. "Our guys still haven't found out where Elijah is hiding."

Kidnapping and illegal detention were criminal offenses, especially when the victim was a minor, so Elijah couldn't be bailed out.

However, he was severely injured that day in the auditorium and was sent to the hospital by the police.

Surprisingly, he escaped from the hospital.

For the past week, not only were the police looking for him, but so were they.

They had previously discovered that Elijah might be involved with a certain organization.

"What about the Hawthorn family?" Percival asked, frowning.

"They're also in hiding." Leopold said with his face not looking much better. "They probably guessed we would trace the vine back to the melon by using the Hawthorn family to find him."

Percival pondered. If Elijah was indeed associated with an organization, he might have been killed or taken away by the organization since they wouldn't want their people to fall into the hands of the police.

...

East District, in a basement.

"Vivienne, you wretch! I'll kill you one day!"

Arabella was lying on the bed in pain, letting Elijah slap her while he was on top of her. She could only grit her teeth, say nothing, and bear it.

Her long hair had been completely cut. She now sported a short haircut after the attack on her in the auditorium.

That time, she was so angry that she wanted to call the police, but the auditorium was too chaotic at the time, and the surveillance cameras didn't catch the girls she accused of hitting her, so the matter

was dropped.

Then, she was taken to this dark and damp basement by Elijah's people, along with Beatrice, Michael

Hawthorn, and Joseph Hawthorn. She never went back to school; instead, she was being used as

Elijah's punching bag every day.

What made her most angry was that Elijah always treated her as a substitute for Vivienne, venting all

his hatred for Vivienne on her.

She was abused by him to the point where there was hardly a patch of unbruised skin on her.

Why?!

Why should she be Vivienne's substitute and suffer this kind of torment?!

But she could not resist. The first time she resisted, Elijah beat her half to death, threatening to throw

her to his men for their amusement.

In addition to hating Vivienne, Elijah also blamed her for everything, thinking that if it weren't for helping

her, he would not have ended up in this state.

He even showed her the debt contracts from when he helped the Hawthorn family pay off their debts,

telling her that unless she could pay off these debts one day, she could never leave.

But this wasn't her debt. It was the Hawthorn family that borrowed this money, so why should she have to pay it back?

After Elijah finally let her go, Arabella went to her room.

As she passed Beatrice's room, she suddenly heard Michael say, "Mom, you shouldn't have treated Vivienne that way. If you were nice to her, we wouldn't be in this mess. What's the point of you always favoring that Arabella? She can't even play the courtesan role properly. Elijah doesn't seem too fond of her either. Vivienne would be a better choice. She is a dual doctorate degree holder and is also known as the Scent Maestro, Master Q. If she's willing to help us, the Hawthorn family's perfumes could be world-renowned."

"What's the use of talking about this now?!" Beatrice shot Michael a fierce glare. "Vivienne, that little illegitimate child, doesn't have our interests at heart! You think being nice to her would make her help us? Our family's hope of bouncing back relies solely on Arabella pleasing Elijah!"

"What's the use of pleasing him? He's got his own problems." Michael grumbled. "We'd be better off begging our younger brother. At least there's a glimmer of hope there."

"Shut up! That family of heartless wolves won't help us! Haven't we begged before?"

Arabella listened with a cold gaze, noticing that, despite Beatrice's stern response, there was doubt in her heart.

She smirked inwardly. She was using her body to please Elijah, just so they could live comfortably here, and now they dared belittle her?

She glanced at the basement exit, thinking that Michael was right. Elijah was in deep water himself, so how could he help them?

Was she really going to be trapped here without freedom for the rest of her life?

No, she wouldn't!