

Million-Dollar 301

Chapter 301

Vivienne didn't panic. She was right on Hurricane's tail as she beautifully drifted around the first bend.

"Interesting, number twelve can keep up with Hurricane. She seems like she's a pro."

The number of people taking notice of Vivienne's skills began to increase. Murmurs about number twelve began circulating among the crowd.

Kala, standing from a vantage point, watched as Vivienne leaped ahead and surpassed Hurricane in just a few swift movements. She couldn't help but feel a knot in her stomach.

Everyone bore in their minds Hurricane's aggressive pursuit of Carl earlier. It was clear as day that his intentions were far from honorable. Against him, Vivienne's chance of victory seemed slim.

Just as Kala's concerns peaked, Hurricane repeated his ruthless tactics.

But Vivienne, remaining unfazed, skillfully dodged his aggressive attacks and continued charging forward.

"Heavens! She evaded Hurricane's attack! How is that even possible? It was such a narrow space; how did she manage that?"

"That's insane! I've only seen such skills at the International Grand Prix. You need at least five to eight

years of experience to reach that level!"

As they gasped in surprise, Vivienne accelerated ahead, tearing herself away from Hurricane's grasp.

Hurricane, however, wasn't ready to lose so easily. His car engine roared, trying to maintain the pace

while incessantly gnawing at her like a snake that had caught the scent of its prey.

Vivienne's car sped ahead like the wind, leaving a bewildered Hurricane behind. At the last bend, he

made a desperate attempt to overtake but was blocked by Vivienne's sudden change in direction.

"You..."

Before his curse at her could leave his lips, he lost control and crashed hard into a blockade.

Hurricane was thrown out of his windshield, fracturing two ribs and badly harming both his legs.

"Ah! My legs!"

His agonized screams echoed far and wide, but Vivienne paid them no mind as she gracefully crossed

the finish line.

"Vivienne! You were amazing!" Kala ran to her in disbelief and threw her arms around her in a tight

embrace.

Meanwhile, Vivienne merely removed her helmet, as she walked over to Hurricane. "Like I said, you're not worthy to race me."

Her bold declaration left the crowd silent. They even trembled nervously under her stone-cold stare.

Suddenly, the silence was broken.

"My god! She beat Hurricane?!"

"How is this possible?!"

"I've never witnessed such an electrifying race! It was absolutely mind-blowing!"

They began guessing Vivienne's true identity, wondering if she was a national racer, as her skills convincingly surpassed even the most seasoned riders.

The combined greatness of immense talent and dedicated practice that the young woman projected evidently had everyone in awe.

Kala stood by her side, bursting with pride. After all, Vivienne was a child of the illustrious Brooks family. It was only natural for her to excel.

"You! You played dirty!" Hurricane groaned in severe pain on the ground. He was barely able to form coherent sentences. When was the last time he had faced such humiliation?

Just as he was about to crawl over and attack Vivienne, he was pinned down instantly by an imposing figure.

"Are you insane? How dare you try to touch my girl?! You're asking for death." The man's cold voice echoed ominously, chilling the air around them. It belonged to none other than the infamous Percival.

"Save me...please, save me..." Hurricane, his consciousness blurred, reached out, pleading for Vivienne to treat him.

Undisturbed by the chaos around her, Vivienne wrapped the coat, which she had received from Percival, around her.

She turned to Hurricane and spoke in a flat and emotionless tone, "Want to plead for my help? Ha! You think I'd help someone like you?"

She coldly looked down at the man she had just defeated. But before she could make another remark, she was interrupted.

Kala turned towards Percival. She had heard of the arranged marriage between the Brooks and Ellington families but had never really seen the infamous heir.

Despite being well-known as a useless man, Percival carried a regal aura that was hard to ignore.

The cold night winds howled around them as Vivienne gently assured Kala so she could relax. "It's okay. Let's go back."

And with that, the inhabitants of the race track were left speechless. They had just witnessed a display of skill and authority that was nothing short of extraordinary.

Chapter 302

Carl had already been whisked away by the ambulance. He should be nearing the hospital by now.

Percival's gaze finally landed on Kala, but it only lingered momentarily before shifting back to Vivienne as his eyes showed a hint of concern.

"I'm Kala, Vivienne's cousin." Kala quickly introduced herself. She was surprised when she noticed that Percival's attention was hardly on her.

I mean, she was an Oscar-winning actress. Weren't most men supposed to be head over heels for her?

But Percival seemed indifferent.

Interesting!

"It's getting late." Percival's voice softened when he addressed Vivienne. "Vivienne, let me take you

home."

Vivienne didn't refuse. On the contrary, it was Leopold who began grumbling and complaining.

"Typical! As soon as he sees Vivienne, he forgets about everyone else."

But he didn't have the guts to complain too loudly, fearing that Percival would ditch him like last time and trick him into eating a bunch of garlic again.

Soon, they arrived at the Brooks Mansion.

Percival dropped them off at the front door and left.

Kala watched his retreating figure, then turned to Vivienne as her curiosity piqued to max levels.

"Vivienne, is your engagement to Percival of the Ellington family just a marriage alliance?"

Everyone knew that the alliance between the Ellington and Brooks families was a powerful combination for mutual benefit.

But having witnessed their interaction, she felt there was more to their relationship than just a mere business arrangement.

Especially since Percival's and Vivienne's engagement was arranged before Vivienne disappeared.

Their relationship seemed different from the rumors.

"Hmm?" Vivienne raised an eyebrow at Kala.

"He seems quite fond of you, and you don't seem to resist his affection." Kala's blunt assessment made

Vivienne's eyes flicker slightly.

But she quickly regained her composure, and her usual calm demeanor resurfaced. "That's just your impression."

Her engagement to Percival was arranged by their elders. From the start, she never considered that their relationship would continue or that they would actually marry.

As their interactions increased, her attitude towards Percival changed. But she was still uncertain about their future together.

As of now, her main focus was investigating her mother's death. She didn't have the time or energy for anything else, let alone considering their relationship once everything was settled.

"My impression?" Kala looked at her, feeling puzzled.

Vivienne's eyes narrowed slightly, and a hint of curiosity appeared in her gaze. "You seem quite interested in Mr. Ellington and me."

Realizing the probing look in Vivienne's eyes, Kala quickly explained herself. "No, you misunderstood.

I'm just curious because there are some unpleasant rumors about Mr. Ellington."

"Oh." Vivienne studied her for a moment longer before turning to enter the house.

Meanwhile, after receiving treatment at the hospital, Carl quickly returned to the Brooks Mansion.

His sneaky trip to the race and the resulting injuries were impossible to hide from his mother, Cheryl.

The entire family knew about it.

Although Cheryl didn't destroy his beloved car, she was furious. She grounded him and locked up his car, forbidding him from racing again.

Carl resented the idea of not being able to race, but he hadn't forgotten one thing.

If it weren't for Vivienne's help in the North Peak race, he didn't know what would have happened.

After watching half of the race and hearing about Vivienne's impressive performance from Kala, his attitude toward her shifted dramatically.

As soon as he returned from the hospital, he hobbled over with his crutches to knock on Vivienne's door.

"Vivienne, can I get your autograph?" Carl asked, his eyes shining with excitement.

Vivienne only raised an eyebrow in response.

"Did you hit your head too?" Vivienne crossed her arms and spoke with a hint of amusement in her voice.

Carl, however, didn't seem offended.

Even though Vivienne was younger than him, her racing skills far surpassed his.

In his eyes, anyone who could beat him deserved his respect.

"So, can I call you Vivienne?"

Carl scratched his neck, seemingly finding it strange to address her so informally. "Anyway, you won the race! From now on, I'll be your follower."

"Weren't you saying I set you up?" Vivienne asked with a teasing smile on her face.

"No, no." Carl quickly waved his hands, denying it vehemently. "That was my own fault! It had nothing to do with you, Vivienne. If I hadn't intentionally bid to get the price up, I wouldn't have lost over 12 million dollars on a stupid piece of stone."

Vivienne couldn't help but laugh at his earnest explanation.

In the end, she accepted the notebook from his hands and signed her name.

"Thank you, Vivienne! I'll treasure this autograph forever!" Carl clutched the autographed notebook tightly, as if he feared that someone might snatch it away.

"Remember, it takes a hundred days for a bone to heal." Vivienne glanced at his plastered leg, reminding him to rest.

"I will, I will!" Carl nodded enthusiastically, agreeing with everything she said. "Vivienne, when my leg heals, can you take me for a ride?"

He swallowed nervously after asking, hoping she wouldn't refuse. If she could train with him, even just for a couple of laps, his racing skills would improve immensely.

"We'll see." Vivienne replied nonchalantly.

Despite not getting a definite yes, Carl was still overjoyed.

Just imagining that scenario made him wish he could immediately remove his cast and jump in a car to the racecourse.

"By the way, Vivienne..." Carl suddenly seemed to recall something and hesitated before he spoke. "I noticed you passing by the cat shelter today. You wouldn't happen to be the one who left the cat food

and treats, would you?"

He had his suspicions, but at the time, he couldn't quite believe that Vivienne could be so kind-hearted.

Now, having witnessed Vivienne's skill in a NASCAR race and becoming her fervent fan, he found

every action of hers reasonable and justified.

"You're overthinking it." Vivienne interrupted him nonchalantly, adding, "It wasn't for you; I just felt sorry

for the cat."

Carl was taken aback. Her response seemed icy cold, but somewhere within, there was warmth.

He was used to thinking of Vivienne as someone cold and calculating, but after spending time with her,

he realized that beneath her indifferent exterior lay a tender and warm side.

Even though Vivienne wouldn't admit it, he chose to believe what he saw.

"Regardless, thank you." Carl muttered, looking down shyly. "I don't know what I would've done without those cat supplies you left."

After a moment of thought, he sincerely apologized. "I'm sorry for my previous behavior. I hope you

won't hold it against me. If you ever need help with anything, please feel free to ask. I'll do my best to

support you."

"Enough chatter!" With an expressionless face, Vivienne shut the door, clearly uninterested in his rambling.

Chapter 303

Half a month had passed since the North Peak race.

Scott needed to leave town for a few days, so Vivienne decided that it was time to make her move.

She carefully calculated her timing, planning to sneak into Scott's study under the cover of night when all of the Brooks family were sound asleep. Her goal was to unlock his safe and discover its secrets.

However, before she could even begin her mission, Kala turned up in her room to invite her to watch a show.

"Vivienne!" Kala was in high spirits. She pulled Vivienne towards their home theater to share a new show she was hooked on. "This show is absolutely brilliant! The chemistry between the leads is simply unparalleled!"

Vivienne didn't know what to say.

Could she admit that she couldn't care less about TV shows?

Oblivious to Vivienne's lack of enthusiasm, Kala dragged her to the home theater regardless.

Once Kala started a show, she couldn't stop. She discussed the plot with Vivienne until late into the night, showing no signs of fatigue.

"Look at him, Vivienne! Don't you think the lead guy is just so handsome?!"

Vivienne glanced at the screen without much interest.

Was he handsome?

He was nothing compared to her Mr. Wolf.

While resting her chin on her palm, she barely took notice of the clichéd drama on the screen, choosing instead to think of Percival, who was off somewhere.

They hardly saw each other lately. She now felt lucky to see him once every couple of weeks.

She'd grown accustomed to the feeling of having Percival around her. Once a person got used to something, it became hard to break that habit.

They continued watching the show until the wee hours of the morning. It was only around three o'clock when Kala finally felt exhausted. She rubbed her eyes as she said, "I'm so tired, Vivienne. Let's call it a night."

“Alright.” Vivienne stood up, preparing to return to her room.

Kala waved her off sleepily, yawning as she headed to her own room.

Vivienne first disabled the surveillance in the study, then skillfully located the safe.

The safe was exactly where it had been. There were no signs of it having been moved. It seemed Scott hadn't realized it had been tampered with.

Vivienne carefully observed the safe, then pulled a pair of tweezers from her tool kit. She was about to start working when she heard a faint noise outside.

Someone was there?

Her eyes narrowed as she grabbed her toolkit and crouched next to Scott's desk, listening to the movements outside.

The footsteps slowly approached the study, paused outside the door, and then opened it.

Vivienne held her breath, hiding her presence completely.

“Where is it?”

It was a familiar female voice.

Vivienne looked up, and her brows instantly furrowed.

Paula Brooks?

What was she doing here?

Paula didn't live at the Brooks Mansion anymore. After her previous tantrum, Baron kicked her out and banned her from returning.

It seemed that she still had the gall to sneak back into the mansion in the middle of the night and enter Scott's study.

Vivienne squinted her eyes. What was she looking for?

Noticing that Paula was approaching the desk where she was hiding, Vivienne took out a marble from her toolkit and threw it out the door.

The marble rolled quickly and hit a vase stand in the hallway, making a loud noise.

"Ah!" Paula let out a yelp of surprise, then quickly covered her mouth and started looking around in panic.

She didn't see anyone around, but her guilt added to her fear.

She had snuck back into the Brooks Mansion and was rummaging through Scott's study. If Baron or

Scott found out, they'd be furious.

Paula's heart pounded like a drum in her chest as she turned and fled.

Once she was gone, Vivienne reopened her toolkit, took out her tweezers, and started working on the safe again.

The safe was made of special materials and had three layers of security to ensure its contents were kept safe and intact.

She switched out her tools as needed, and within three minutes, she turned the handle.

The safe made a click, and she opened it.

She carefully pulled open the door to find a ring and a thick notebook inside.

Vivienne took out the notebook and flipped through it as her eyes narrowed with every page. It was a love letter Scott had written to her mother.

"Karen, where are you? I think about you every moment of every day. If you were still here, we might be watching the snowfall at Ancient Peaks."

"Today's weather is so beautiful, just like the day we first met. I wonder if you remember. For me, it was

an unforgettable memory.”

“You are the love of my life. I could never love anyone else.”

Vivienne read a few more pages, but her beautiful face remained expressionless.

She picked up the ring from the safe and stared at it for a while.

Then she chuckled as a mocking smile spread across her lips.

Heh!

She had underestimated Scott after all.

Did he really think that preparing these items would make her believe him?

Her expression cooled as she put everything back into the safe.

She didn't bother to wipe off her fingerprints.

Since Scott had already detected her presence and had thoughtfully prepared these items for her to

find, erasing her traces would be superfluous.

She might as well tell him straight out that she had been here and that she had seen everything.

...

The next day.

After breakfast at the Brooks Mansion, everyone left, and only Vivienne remained when Mila came over.

Despite being scolded the last time she visited, Mila hadn't given up. She was determined to change Baron and Scott's opinions of her.

"Vivienne, I'm glad you're here."

As soon as she walked in, Mila headed towards Vivienne in the living room with a bag in her hand. She sat down next to Vivienne, saying warmly, "I came to apologize for last time. Calista was out of line for upsetting you. I've spoken to her about it. It was just a misunderstanding, after all. It's normal to have some friction. As long as we clear things up, everything will be fine."

Mila sat near her, and her lips moved rapidly as she continuously chattered away.

Vivienne found it nothing short of noisy.

This woman was amusing. Her eagerness to see Scott was as clear as day, yet she always chose to come when Scott was absent.

What was her game?

Was she intending to win over the daughter since she couldn't win over the father?

Ha!

Vivienne was toying with her smartphone, not bothering to look up at her. She was too lazy to even make up a response.

"Vivienne?" Seeing that Vivienne was ignoring her, Mila awkwardly brushed her hair as the smile on her face froze.

She had humbled herself to apologize, yet the other party didn't even bother to give her a respectful glance. Vivienne treated her as if she were invisible, like she was not even worth acknowledging.

"This is a gift I brought for you. It's the latest fashion item; it's not even yet on the market. It's a creation from the designer, Myrna."

As she spoke, Mila carefully took out a coat from a paper bag, presenting it as if it were a treasure.

She had spent a significant amount of money and pulled many strings to purchase this piece of clothing, all to win Vivienne's favor.

Even though it cost her a pretty penny, thinking about the potential of becoming the matriarch of the Brooks family made all the money seem insignificant. She grudgingly accepted the cost.

Only those who could endure would succeed. She had to win over Vivienne's heart; that was the only shortcut to success.

"Oh? A piece from Myrna?" At this moment, Kala leisurely descended the stairs.

Chapter 304

"Ah, Kala's here too."

Mila spotted her, causing her face to falter slightly as she forced a smile. "You're not too busy with work these days, huh? Here you are, lounging around the house."

One by one, they came to spoil her plans.

Kala was notoriously blunt and straightforward. At home, she spoke her mind without regard for other people's feelings.

Baron would occasionally chide her, but it was always brief and never too harsh. Hence, there was a reason for Kala's candid and carefree nature.

"Ms Clark, since when do I need to report my work schedule to you?" Kala glanced at her and spoke in an indifferent tone.

Everyone in the Brooks family knew of Mila's interest in Scott.

Kala didn't particularly like this woman; she was always scheming and plotting. Moreover, hearing rumors of Mila and Calista Pendleton's efforts to harass Vivienne only made her more disinclined to show her any friendliness.

Mila's face stiffened for a moment. "What are you saying? Our families have been old friends for years, so, as an elder, it's only natural for me to show concern."

"Ha!" Kala scoffed. She walked over to the living room and sat between Vivienne and Mila, pushing Mila to the side. "Ms Clark, what brings you here again? Didn't you have enough of my grandfather's scolding last time?"

Mila felt as if she had been slapped in the face. Her entire body felt uncomfortable. "What scolding?

Kala, you must be mistaken."

If she had known Kala would be here, she would have brought Calista along.

Having her daughter, a medical genius, by her side would have given her more confidence and made her voice stronger.

"Really?" Kala laughed dismissively while looking down at the coat in her hands. "This design is a bit outdated, isn't it? It's not for Vivienne, is it? It would suit you just right."

Outdated?

It would suit her?

Upon hearing this, Mila instantly felt irritated.

Was this a roundabout way of calling her old?

"Kala, what do you mean by that?" Mila couldn't keep her composure any longer. "I bought this present for Vivienne out of genuine kindness. It's a limited-edition product that not everyone can afford. How could you say such things?"

As she spoke, she looked so hurt. She was even on the verge of tears.

Kala was dumbfounded.

Damn!

Was this a drama?

Kala rolled her eyes and spoke with a tinge of annoyance in her voice. "Ms Clark, Scott isn't here now, so who are you putting on a show for? Vivienne and me? Do you think we care about your cheap tears?"

Mila stiffened. She was ready to burst into a mad rage at any moment. Yet she held it back, saying,

"Kala, you're being very mean. I brought a gift for Vivienne, and you insulted it right in front of me. Is

this the kind of manners the Brooks family teaches their children?"

Mila, being a renowned pianist, was always surrounded by a halo of fame and adoration from her fans.

There was always a tinge of arrogance deep within her, which made her constantly display an air of superiority in front of Vivienne.

Kala was speechless. "Your coat is outdated, and I'm not allowed to say it?"

With that, she turned to Vivienne. "Vivienne, what do you say? Was I wrong in my judgement?"

Vivienne finally lifted her eyes slightly and glanced at the coat.

"The stitching is outdated; the embellishments are too cluttered, and the color is extremely dull." She scoffed lightly, then returned her attention to her phone. "Myrna is really falling behind."

Myrna had consulted her before, and she had given a few pointers.

But Myrna's work was always inconsistent. This time was no different; it was mediocre and lacked depth.

For a moment, Mila doubted her own ears. This was Myrna they were talking about here. She was a

world-renowned designer!

Many wealthy people lined up to buy her clothes, but here in front of Vivienne, they were dismissed as worthless.

"See, I told you it was outdated." Kala crossed her arms smugly, which infuriated Mila.

She gritted her teeth, wishing she could slap Kala right then and there.

But she couldn't. She knew Baron was resting in his room.

If she made a scene, she might be kicked out again.

Calista had warned her to endure. Without a hundred percent certainty, she couldn't act rashly.

For the power and status that came with becoming the legitimate Mrs. Brooks, she was ready to endure all the bitterness she was feeling.

Mila had made mistakes in the past due to her impulsiveness. She swallowed her anger and said,

"Vivienne, I didn't mean any harm. I know there are some disagreements between you and Calista, but I've always treated you as my own daughter. Even if I've said something or done something to upset you, it was all for your own good. I had no ill intentions."

Vivienne laughed coldly as she lifted her chin. "You think anyone can be my mother?"

She hadn't even become the true matriarch of the Brooks family, yet she wanted to dictate Vivienne's life.

Was she worthy?

Mila was getting very frustrated, but she suppressed her anger yet again. "I know your mother has been gone for a long time, but everyone needs to move on with their lives. We can't live in the past forever."

"Scott has been searching for you all these years because he can't let go of his feelings. He's a loyal person, and, as his daughter, you can't be a burden, can you?"

Vivienne's eyes turned icy cold. Her aura was chilling.

"Shut up!" Sensing Vivienne's displeasure, Kala picked up a cup of water from the table and threw it at

Mila's face. "If you want to join the Brooks family, you'll have to see if we agree!"

The whole cup of water splashed onto Mila's face, causing her to shriek and stand up in a hurry.

She was soaked with water from head to toe.

Even her expensive dress was stained with water.

"What are you doing?!" Mila yelled in anger.

Kala didn't even spare her a glance and turned to the maid instead. "Aurelia, see the guest out."

She grabbed the designer bag that once held a coat from the table and, with a look of disdain on her

face, tossed it toward the intruder. "Take your stuff and leave the Brooks family's property!"

Did she really think she could do as she pleased and push the Brooks family around? Showing up

uninvited every other day was wearing thin.

"You!" Mila was livid, and her face was flushed with rage. She didn't care about the coat she had just

bought. She was set on slapping Kala right then and there.

However, just as she extended her hand, someone gripped it, rendering her immobile.

"Let go of me!" Mila turned to rebuke the person holding her back, but as she pivoted, she found Scott

standing behind her.

She was momentarily taken aback. "Scott... Weren't you supposed to be out of town for a few days?"

Scott's face was stern; clearly, he had seen everything that had just transpired, and his anger was

palpable. "Ms. Clark, I believe I've made it clear that no one has the right to discipline my daughter.

Likewise, no one from the Brooks family needs your 'discipline'!"

Mila was shell-shocked. She began shaking her head in a desperate attempt to defend herself. "It's not like that, Scott. It's all a misunderstanding. I never meant..."

"Never meant what?" Scott curtly released her hand, as if even holding it was distasteful. "Did you not understand what I just said?"

Chapter 305

Once again, Mila had the audacity to stir up trouble with Vivienne, and Scott had had enough. Now, she even wanted to throw slaps in the Brooks household. He wondered who gave her such nerve.

"Scott, it was Kala who provoked me; I just..." Tears welled up in Mila's eyes as she spoke. "You know I would never ignore what you say. Whatever I do is for you and the Brooks family. You must believe me!"

Mila was sobbing uncontrollably, wishing she could melt Scott's heart with her tears.

Her strategy was obvious.

Unfortunately, her dramatic display didn't move a single soul in the Brooks household. They all watched her emotionlessly.

"Ms. Clark," Scott issued another eviction order. "I don't want to repeat myself. Please leave."

Kala, with her arms folded, chuckled. "Ms. Clark, you seem to be crying pretty hard. Do you need some eye drops? I have a ton in my room. They are guaranteed to make your cries more convincing."

Kala was fed up with Mila's theatrical antics. Who did she think she was fooling?

Mila's tears squeezed out, but Scott's heart remained unmoved.

Humiliated and frustrated, Mila picked up her tea-stained coat and left awkwardly.

After watching Mila leave, the furrow in Scott's brow finally relaxed. He then turned to Vivienne, who was sitting on the couch. "Vivienne, are you okay?"

He had planned to be away for five days, but he wrapped up his business in three and came home early.

Upon his return, he found Mila creating a ruckus in the Brooks household. She was even trying to assault someone.

Mila's constant disruptions were getting on his nerves, and her attempts to interfere in the Brooks family affairs were unsettling.

The Brooks family didn't need an outsider to make decisions for them. If Mila fantasized about being

the matriarch of the Brooks family, it was up to him to stop it.

Vivienne glanced at him nonchalantly. "I'm fine."

"Uncle Scott, are you really going to marry Ms. Clark?" Kala asked as soon as Mila left.

Scott glared at her. "Nonsense! When did I ever say I was going to marry her?"

Due to the friendly relations between the two families and Mila's good relationship with Paula, Mila often visited the Brooks household.

It was clear to everyone what Mila was after, but no one said it out loud.

"Uncle Scott, if you're going to marry again, you need to choose a suitable wife. Especially character-wise. You need to be careful. Ms. Clark has been treating the Brooks residence like her own. She comes and goes as she pleases, and she is always picking on Vivienne. Such a person is not suitable to be the matriarch of the Brooks family."

Scott didn't say much as a response; he only said, "I'll handle it."

While this statement was directed at Kala, it was also meant for Vivienne.

Ever since Vivienne returned home, she had been keeping her distance from him.

Although she never said it, Scott could feel that Vivienne was different from the other members of the

Brooks family. She had her own thoughts and was hiding many secrets.

"That's good." Kala nodded and smiled as she linked arms with Vivienne. "I can rest easy for Vivienne then."

"By the way," Scott looked at Vivienne. "The time we had your reunion banquet, your foster parents didn't come. Let's arrange a time to have dinner with them soon."

"Okay," Vivienne responded indifferently.

Dorian and Cordelia were supposed to attend Vivienne's reunion banquet, but they didn't show up that night.

She called Dorian many times and even sent Matthew to look for them. Before Matthew could find them, Dorian called.

He said they had something urgent to attend to and couldn't make it to the banquet. They told her that they would visit her another day.

But after so long, Dorian hadn't called, and she wondered what he was busy with.

It had been a while since she left Havenwood, and she wanted to see Dorian and Cordelia.

However, before she could call, Dorian called first.

They had finished their business and wanted to have dinner with her. So they agreed to meet the next day at noon.

Vivienne didn't invite Scott. She went to meet them alone.

They met at a private restaurant.

Astrid, who had mentioned transferring to Rivenwood for work, was also there.

After not seeing Vivienne for a while, Dorian looked at her with concern.

Cordelia held her hand as tears welled up in her eyes. "You have no idea how worried your father and I have been. We were afraid that you'd be bullied in the Brooks family and that you'd bear it all alone."

Dorian nodded in agreement. "You're always so stubborn. If you have any problems, let us help you.

We're always thinking about you. If it weren't for an emergency, we wouldn't have missed your banquet."

Astrid laughed at her parents' reactions. "You two are so dramatic. How could Vivienne be mistreated by the Brooks family? I'm sure the Brooks family treats her like a treasure!"

"What was the urgent matter that made you miss the banquet?" Vivienne asked them.

"One of Dorian's old friends fell seriously ill. We went to see him one last time." Cordelia explained.

Cordelia held her hand while looking at Dorian with a sense of sentiment. "Life can be so unpredictable. Your dad is also upset. Losing such a good friend so suddenly is very hard... We helped with the arrangements, and it took us a few days."

Dorian bowed his head and covered his face with his hand, as if he didn't want to discuss this heartbreaking matter. "Who could have foreseen..."

"Dad, please don't be so sad." Astrid handed over a tissue as her face also filled with sadness.

"Let's not talk about this anymore." Vivienne passed over the menu. "You guys look at what you want.

Just order anything."

"Of course we should choose what you love!" Dorian and Cordelia still put her first, insisting on choosing what she liked.

"All right." Vivienne nodded and then propped up her chin. "Then help me order some tangy BBQ ribs and a mango mousse cake for dessert. Anything else is up to you."

Dorian and Cordelia would always agree to unconditionally eat whatever Vivienne wanted to eat. They

then hurriedly called the waiter to place their order.

They even specifically asked for the BBQ ribs to be made tasty.

The waiter left to fulfill the order, and the four continued their casual conversation, which naturally turned to Astrid's work.

"Astrid, have you transferred to Rivenwood while still being in charge of the same work?"

"I'm sorry, Vivienne. My work is confidential, so I can't say too much." Astrid explained with a sense of regret. "When there's a chance, I'll tell you more."

If she wasn't willing to discuss it, Vivienne didn't want to force the issue and just took a leisurely sip of her coffee.

"Vivienne." Dorian rubbed his hands as he glanced at Cordelia and then looked at Vivienne. "Actually, we came here with another purpose as well." Dorian hesitantly said. "Cordelia and I don't have many friends in Rivenwood, and this time we came especially to see you. Could we possibly stay at the Brooks Mansion for a few days?"

Upon hearing this, Cordelia pulled at Dorian, whispering in reproach, "We could stay at a hotel. You can't ask for such a thing. It's putting Vivienne in a difficult position."

Dorian was momentarily at a loss for words, but he still looked at Vivienne and continued speaking

awkwardly. "You know our relationship with the Brooks family hasn't been good. We've had little contact

over the years. I wanted to take this opportunity to resolve past grievances and have a good talk."

"Vivienne, I know this is a tough request." Astrid also chimed in. "For my dad's sake, could you do us

this favor?"

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Vivienne held her cup of coffee and took a slow sip with an inscrutable expression on her face.

After what seemed like a contemplative pause, she lifted her gaze and spoke softly, "Alright."

Dorian was visibly elated when she agreed. Cordelia patted his hand and chuckled. "See, Vivienne

always has our backs. No matter what we ask, she will never refuse us."

As they spoke, their ordered meals gradually arrived.

Dorian and Cordelia specifically placed Vivienne's favorite spicy ribs and mango cake in front of her.

"These are your favorites, Vivienne. Dig in; don't be shy."

Vivienne remained silent. She simply offered them a meaningful glance before reaching for her fork.

The meal went smoothly, and afterwards, Vivienne offered to drive them back.

"You're still staying in a hotel now, right?" Vivienne turned to look at Dorian and Cordelia. "Which one?"

Let me drop you off."

"No, no, no!" Cordelia quickly waved her hands as she laughed. "You've already treated us to dinner,

so we can't possibly ask you to drive us back as well."

This private restaurant, despite its unassuming appearance, was infamous for its extravagant prices.

Some of their dishes even cost thousands of dollars.

Even though Vivienne was now the heiress of the Brooks family, they had no intention of exploiting her generosity.

"Being part of the Brooks family isn't easy. Just take good care of yourself, and we'll be content."

Dorian shared the sentiment and patted Vivienne's shoulder lovingly. "As parents, seeing our children doing well is all we could ask for."

Vivienne gazed back at them, then suddenly asked, "How is Thaddeus doing? Why didn't he come along?"

Dorian and Cordelia were momentarily taken aback. "Poor Thaddeus caught a cold. He's been unwell

for a few days now, so we left him with his aunt." They said while sighing helplessly.

"Yeah, he was still coughing when we called him the other day. We'll have him visit Rivenwood once he's better."

Astrid chuckled nostalgically. "Vivienne always becomes protective when it comes to Thaddeus."

Vivienne responded with a cool acknowledgment, bid them farewell, and got into her car.

Once in the car, she pulled out her phone, watching the retreating figures of the trio as she dialed Matthew's number.

"About the family reunion banquet that my foster parents didn't attend. I asked you to investigate what they were doing, so what have you found?"

She was direct and to the point.

Matthew was momentarily taken aback before answering, "After receiving the invitation, Mr. and Mrs.

Hawthorn bought tickets to Rivenwood. Upon their arrival, they went to visit a friend at First Care Hospital."

Vivienne knew Matthew was reliable, and his information matched what Dorian and Cordelia had told her.

"Alright, noted."

Matthew discerned something deeper in her tone and cautiously asked, "Vivienne, are you suspecting something?"

Vivienne didn't answer, and she simply gave him a few orders. "Investigate their every move since they arrived in Rivenwood."

"Do you need 24-hour surveillance on them?" Matthew didn't quite understand why Vivienne needed this, but he trusted her judgement.

Vivienne held her phone as she watched the figures gradually disappear into the distance and said calmly, "No need."

After the meal with Dorian's family, the Brooks family quickly learned about their presence in Rivenwood.

Judith suggested inviting them over for a home-cooked meal.

Vivienne also told her about Dorian and Cordelia's plan to stay with the Brooks family for a short while.

However, upon hearing this, Paula was the first to protest.

"That is unacceptable. The main Brooks family and the branch Hawthorn family cannot be mixed up like this. It's outrageous!"

She and Eddy had been taken away by the police. However, because she was the matriarch of the Miller family, due to public pressure, Mark Miller had managed to bail her out.

However, Eddy wasn't as lucky.

Moreover, Mark, in his attempts to legitimize his illegitimate son, was intentionally making it difficult for Eddy, and this time, he deliberately didn't bail him out.

Upon her return, she was walking on thin ice in the Miller family. Even worse, she was given a house arrest order by her husband, forbidding her to visit the Brooks family.

Infuriated, she snuck back home while Baron wasn't at home.

The Brooks family had their sources, so getting this information wasn't difficult for Paula. Upon her return, she immediately sought out her mother, Judith, to protest against Dorian's family moving in.

The people present were Vivienne, Judith, Paula, Kala, and Carl.

Timothy and Cheryl, Kala's and Carl's parents, were also sitting on the side.

Aside from Vivienne, everyone else was more or less looking at the reaction of the old lady, Judith.

"It's just a short stay, and they're part of the Brooks family already. They are Vivienne's foster parents. I

don't see the problem." Kala naturally sided with Vivienne, rebuking Paula. "It's a minor issue, Paula.

There's no need to make a mountain out of a molehill."

"A minor issue?" Paula, infuriated, pointed at Vivienne, who was sitting on the couch, and yelled,

"She's practically inviting the branch Hawthorn family into our home! Is she trying to force our family to

abdicate? Everyone knows the main family and the branch family have always been at odds. Now she

wants us to live under the same roof? She's practically inviting people to laugh at us!"

Seeing the situation, Timothy glanced at the old lady's expression and tried to calm things down.

"Vivienne means no harm. She just wants to make things comfortable for her foster parents."

The more he explained, the more Paula became upset, feeling like he wasn't even comprehending the

situation.

"Timothy, have you lost your mind?!" She crossed her arms and looked coldly at Vivienne, wishing she

could go up and rip off her 'mask.' "This brat had this intention from the moment she stepped into the

Brooks household."

Thinking that acknowledging kinship could turn one into a swan overnight was simply too naive.

“And you all were fooled by her. You’re spinning around her finger like puppets. If it weren't for her, my

Eddy wouldn’t have ended up at the police station?!”

Thinking of the events that day made her feel sick to her stomach.

“Enough!” Sitting quietly at the side, Judith finally spoke up. “Eddy ended up at the police station due to

his own actions; no one else is to blame! This matter has been settled, and you are not to bring it up

again!”

“Mother!” Paula was immediately agitated, and she began shouting in frustration, “Aren't you being

biased?! She's about to bring strangers into our house! And you're still siding with her?!”

Carl had become a staunch supporter of Vivienne. He couldn't bear to hear others slander her. “We are

all family. So, what strangers are coming into our house? Aunt Paula, you're being unreasonable.”

“Unreasonable?” Paula widened her eyes as she looked at everyone in the room. She felt like

everyone was siding with Vivienne.

Although Timothy and Cheryl remained neutral, they didn’t seem to be of any help. They made her feel

like she was the only one going mad.

“Vivienne, come here.” Judith waved at Vivienne, signaling her to sit next to her. “Grandma knows you're filial, and your foster parents have treated you well. We are not ungrateful. We will certainly repay their kindness.”

Vivienne rarely made requests after she moved in, so, as her grandmother, she, of course, would meet her demands.

“Tell them that the rooms are all set up. They can come and stay as long as they like, without any worries.”

Vivienne looked at Judith, who was treating her kindly, and felt a little touched.

“Thank you.”

Chapter 307

"No way! Absolutely not!"

Paula was adamant about refusing to accept the current turn of events. "This is a big deal, Mom! It's not right for you to make all the decisions on your own! We're part of the Brooks family too! We have a right to voice our opinions!"

The thought of Vivienne bringing Dorian's family into the Brooks Mansion was unbearable. She would

rather be killed than have to endure such humiliation.

Baron had forbidden her from returning home, and each visit was a tightrope walk of fear and caution.

Now, she always had to avoid her father.

Why should outsiders be allowed to waltz right through the doors of the Brooks Mansion?

Judith gave her a stern look, and there was a hint of authority in her voice. "This house isn't yours to

rule. I'm old, but I can still make decisions on trivial matters like this."

Paula was livid. She almost collapsed onto the couch. "Mom! Have you lost your mind?! You're actually

siding with strangers! Do you want to watch as the Brooks name is stolen from us?! Is that what will

satisfy you?!"

She yelled hysterically, but no one took her seriously.

Timothy was a weak-willed man who always followed the orders of his parents. He didn't dare to speak

up now.

His wife, Cheryl wisely said, "Let's listen to Mom. Dad's health isn't good. We need her to take care of

things."

Kala and Carl agreed wholeheartedly. They basically raised both hands and feet in support.

"Very well." Judith nodded in approval while patting Vivienne, who was sitting next to her. "It seems we all agree. Not just about this, but for the future as well. Vivienne is now family. Anyone who dares to harm Vivienne will be harming me. I don't want to hear any complaints!" Her gaze swept across the room. It was quite sharp and intimidating for an old woman.

Timothy quickly nodded in agreement. "We'll listen to Mom. Of course, we have no other ideas. We're glad that Vivienne is back; we wouldn't dare harm her."

Judith's strong presence kept the situation under control. "Then this weekend, let's have Vivienne's parents move in. We'll have a proper meal together as a family, as a way to welcome them."

Despite Paula's strong opposition, Dorian and his wife, Cordelia, smoothly moved into the Brooks Mansion.

That evening, Judith personally ordered the staff to prepare a lavish dinner. She invited all the members of the Brooks family to attend.

Aside from Baron, who was not feeling well, and Scott and Ronald, who were busy with work, everyone else was present.

It was clear that Judith attached great importance to this gathering.

Ashley couldn't help but laugh as she looked at the grand arrangement. "Grandma really values our cousin. Who else has received such special treatment? Even her parents are allowed to stay at the Brooks Mansion. Who wouldn't be envious?"

Paula had been looking for someone to vent her frustration to. She had begged for half the day to attend this dinner, and naturally, she wasn't pleased.

Why should she have to tread carefully around her own family while Vivienne and her parents could stride confidently into the Brooks Mansion?

"Anyone would think that the Brooks family had fallen on hard times. Why were they letting any Tom, Dick, or Harry in?!"

"Paula!" Judith's stern gaze silenced her instantly.

Melissa, too, hurriedly hushed her outspoken daughter.

As long as Baron and Judith were still around, they were the ones who called the shots. Anyone else had to know their limits, even if they were unhappy about it.

Dorian and Cordelia, sitting in the middle, were clearly uncomfortable.

"We didn't mean to intrude. We just wanted to see Vivienne and clear up any misunderstandings. We didn't expect to cause such a commotion."

Dorian glanced at the silent Vivienne, then said, "As long as Vivienne is doing well, it doesn't matter if we're here or not. After all, she is a Brooks. Seeing her return to her roots makes us happy."

"Of course, you're happy!" Paula was outraged. "Vivienne has returned to the Brooks family and assumed the role of the heiress. Now you can enjoy the benefits by clinging to her! Today, you move into the Brooks Mansion. What's to keep you from claiming it as your own tomorrow?"

Paula was being very harsh, but Vivienne seemed unfazed. It was as if she were watching an entertaining show.

"Paula, Vivienne is part of the Brooks family. Her adoptive parents have done a great deal for her, and she wants to repay their kindness. Is there something wrong with that?" Kala, unsympathetic to Paula's attitude, asked pointedly.

Paula glared at her, then stood up abruptly. "If she wants to repay them, fine! But why use the Brooks family as a way to do it? Haven't we given her enough already? She's even brought strangers into our

home! Her reach is becoming far too long!"

"Enough!" Judith, who had been listening quietly, could no longer stand it. She slammed the table

forcefully as she yelled at her good-for-nothing daughter. "Do you think I'm not here?! Your gossip has

reached my ears!

Inviting Vivienne's parents to stay here was my decision. No one is allowed to object! If not for their

care and attention, would Vivienne have been able to return safely to the Brooks family?"

She turned her gaze towards Dorian and Cordelia, who were sitting next to her. Her tone changed. It

was now gracious and gentle. "Thanks to you two, Vivienne is back with the Brooks family. It's not just

Vivienne who's grateful; it's the entire Brooks family. This 300 thousand may not seem like much, but

it's my token of appreciation. You must accept it."

The maid brought forward a check and placed it on the table.

Dorian and Cordelia looked taken aback and refused the money with a wave of their hands. "We didn't

do anything extraordinary. Vivienne is such a bright and sensible kid. We just enjoyed having her

around. We can't possibly accept this money."

300 thousand was no petty cash for them. Dorian was a regular salary worker, and this amount was a

fortune to him.

Vivienne lifted her gaze and let it slide over the couple before resettling on the side. "No need for modesty."

Since her grandmother was trying to give Dorian and Cordelia money, Vivienne shamelessly encouraged them to accept it.

Paula was fuming. She was ready to explode. "Why on earth should they get the money?! The Brooks family has treated them with nothing but kindness. They should be grateful already! What do they think they are? How could they accept money from the Brooks family?!"

For the rest of the Brooks family, 300 thousand was trivial.

They could spend millions on a whim without batting an eyelid. They wouldn't even spare a thought for a mere 300 thousand.

This 300 thousand was a gesture from the family matriarch, and no one would be foolish enough to challenge her decision.

"Sister, if this is what Mom wants, let's just go along with it." Melissa chimed in while glancing at the old

lady's expression.

Paula's face turned beet red. It was as if she wanted to overturn the entire table of food.

Dorian and Cordelia exchanged a look and then spoke up. "Well, if Judith insists, we won't turn down her goodwill."

How shameless!

Paula huffed and plopped down onto her seat. She didn't even bother to give them another glance.

Everyone had their own thoughts during dinner; only Vivienne seemed unperturbed. She was seemingly indifferent to Paula's furious glares.

Chapter 308

After dinner, Vivienne led Dorian and Cordelia to the guest room.

Judith had already arranged for the room to be tidied up. It was spacious and comfortable.

Furthermore, everything inside was brand new.

Dorian looked around and let out a few sighs of relief. "After seeing Vivienne living well, I can finally feel at ease. I was worried about her being mistreated by the Brooks family."

Cordelia chuckled. "With Vivienne's capabilities, who would dare bully her? Don't worry too much."

Dorian sighed. "You don't understand. As a father, how can one not worry about their daughter? Even

though Vivienne has now been recognized by her biological family, in my eyes, she will always be my own daughter."

Vivienne lifted her eyes subtly and cast a glance at him without him noticing. Her smile seemed to deepen with every passing moment.

After a moment, she collected herself and spoke evenly. "Mr. Hawthorn, did you take leave from your job at Havenwood to come to Rivenwood?"

Dorian was taken aback, then frowned. "No. I quit!"

Vivienne raised her eyebrows. "Quit?"

"Yes." Dorian nodded. "At first, I thought the job was fine. It was decent, and it gave me a high salary.

But you wouldn't believe how the chairman of Alliance Enterprises treats his employees. Despite my projects being flawless, he would always find faults. He even insulted me in front of my colleagues. I

was so angry that I resigned."

Vivienne found this amusing. "You mean, the Chairman of Alliance Enterprises publicly berated you?"

Interesting.

"Yes!" Dorian's face was grim. "So we came to Rivenwood not just to mend our relationship with the Brooks family but also to seek new opportunities."

Vivienne arched her eyebrow. "What do you want to do?"

Dorian hesitated while looking at Vivienne. "Vivienne, I've been thinking about this for a while, but I need your approval."

Vivienne listened with a placid expression. "Let's hear it."

"I want to start my own business using your mother's perfume formula." Dorian paused and observed Vivienne's reaction.

Vivienne lifted her eyes, signaling for him to continue.

Seeing no change in her expression, Dorian continued. "The Hawthorn family is in the past now, and I don't want to work for someone else forever. Thaddeus is still young, and his future education and living expenses will be costly. Working at Alliance Enterprises alone won't be enough to support our family.

But as you know, the Hawthorn family got their start in the perfume business, and I don't know much else. Your mother left her perfume formula, so I thought I could develop it and start my own company.

However..."

Dorian paused, then continued. "When Cordelia was tidying up, she accidentally tore the formula. I tried to piece it together, but it was no use. So..."

Vivienne lifted her eyes slightly as her slender fingers played with a trinket on the table. "You want me to provide the perfume formula?"

Dorian looked a bit embarrassed. "I know this might be difficult for you, considering it's something your mother left behind. But I thought that if I could start a successful business, it would be a great help to you, wouldn't it?"

Vivienne smirked. "Fine! I'll give you the formula!"

Dorian was delighted. "Vivienne, you're wonderful. I knew all the care I've shown you wasn't in vain."

Vivienne looked at him with a cold gaze and an inscrutable expression.

"By the way, there's one more thing." Dorian suddenly remembered.

Vivienne lifted her eyes, signaling for him to continue again.

"We don't have any startup capital." Dorian looked embarrassed. "Right now, I only have the 300

thousand that Judith gave us. If we want to start a company, 300 thousand is far from enough.

Vivienne, could you talk to your father and ask him to invest in us?"

Vivienne's fingers, resting on the table trinket, paused. Her gaze was thoughtful as she asked, "How much do you need?"

"For startup capital, we'd need at least 2 million to begin with." Dorian said.

Vivienne withdrew her hand from the trinket and casually said, "Fine! I'll give you the 2 million. There's no need to involve the Brooks family."

Dorian and Cordelia were shocked.

Neither of them expected Vivienne to agree so readily. They were momentarily speechless.

After seeing their surprised expressions, Vivienne arched an eyebrow. "What?"

"Nothing." Dorian quickly gathered his thoughts and laughed awkwardly. "I just didn't expect the Brooks family to be so good to you. Giving you 2 million just like that?! If your mother knew, she'd be so happy."

Vivienne's lips curled slightly as she looked at Dorian and Cordelia. "You two should rest now. Don't worry about anything else."

"Alright."

Vivienne nodded and returned to her room.

As the door closed behind her, Vivienne's eyes narrowed, and an aura of sternness radiated from her.

She took out her phone and quickly dialed Matthew's number.

The call connected quickly. "Vivienne."

"Did you find anything?" Vivienne's voice was cold and devoid of any warmth.

"Thaddeus is currently staying at his cousin's place, near Capital Elementary School. Dorian had him

removed from school. There's no suspicious activity around the cousin's place, but..." Matthew

hesitated, unsure if he should continue.

"Go on." Vivienne commanded him to continue. Her face, however, remained expressionless.

"Thaddeus isn't doing well. His cousin feeds him only one meal a day. It's just some greens and bread.

The two kids there bully him constantly. When we arrived, Thaddeus was all bruised and noticeably

thinner. To avoid detection, I secretly treated his injuries and gave him some food."

Vivienne's icy gaze didn't waver as she replied, "Has Dorian been found?"

After a pause, Matthew replied, "I've thoroughly traced Dorian's movements in the past two months.

There's nothing unusual, and there were no unfamiliar faces around him. Vivienne, could you be mistaken?"

"Did you check on Astrid?" Vivienne asked as she settled into a chair and reached for a framed photo on the table.

The photo inside the frame was of her with Dorian, Cordelia, and Thaddeus.

It was taken before she was engaged to Percival, just before she left for the Emerald Mountain.

Cordelia had suggested they take the photo.

Ever since it was developed, she kept it with her. She even brought it to Rivenwood.

"I did." Matthew replied, "She's not suspicious either. After you left Havenwood, she came to Rivenwood with her boyfriend. The last time you had the family reunion, Dorian and Cordelia met with her before heading to the hotel. They then made a detour to the hospital to visit a friend."

Vivienne didn't reply; instead, she traced the faces of Dorian and Cordelia in the photo as a faint smile appeared on her face.

After a moment, she put the photo back. "Bring Thaddeus to Rivenwood. As for his cousin's family...

They would fit very well in the coal mines below Emerald Mountain."

"Understood." Matthew then hung up the phone.

Chapter 309

...

After leaving the Brooks Mansion, Paula was still seething as she returned to the Miller household.

She was full of anger, and upon opening the door, she saw Eddy sitting in the living room, engrossed in a video game. She paused. "Eddy, when did you get back?"

Eddy was so absorbed in his game that he didn't even lift his eyes. "Dad bailed me out."

Paula froze, then scoffed. "At least he has some sort of conscience."

She turned to Eddy. "Now that you're back, you better pull yourself together. Don't forget, there's a bastard child lurking around our house."

Eddy was so engrossed in his game that he didn't even respond.

"Eddy!" His nonchalant attitude left Paula fuming. "How can you still be in the mood to play games?!

The whole Miller family is laughing at us! You better pull yourself together and show them that you're the rightful heir to the Miller family!"

"Mom, can you stop nagging me? They're just making a fuss over nothing. At the end of the day, all the Miller family fortune will be mine. That's a fact!"

His mother's presence was clearly annoying him.

He was the oldest son of the Miller family, so he was the first in line to inherit the fortune. If he didn't take over, who would?

Even if others had different ideas, it wouldn't change this fact.

Paula was furious. If Eddy weren't such a failure, Mark wouldn't have brought Aaron back home.

That illegitimate child was now living in their guesthouse. Mark was parading him around and clearly preparing him for the future.

"Yours?" Paula grabbed the game controller from his hands and threw it on the ground. "If you don't shape up soon, your dad is going to give everything to Aaron!"

After hearing that his father might give the fortune to Aaron, Eddy finally looked up, but he was still skeptical. "To that bastard? Impossible! He's nothing but a half-baked E-sports player. How could the Miller family agree to that?"

In the past, the elders of the Miller family may have had objections. But now, with Eddy's recent

displays of incompetence, their opinions were changing.

They'd rather have a young and talented Aaron, who had made a name for himself in E-sports, than an inept eldest son who was always causing trouble.

After all, Aaron was still young and had great potential.

Paula was disappointed in Eddy. "Do you want to watch as our fortune is taken away from us?"

"That Aaron is not as simple as he seems. Who knows what he's planning behind our backs? If your dad listens to him and leaves everything to him, it'll be too late for you to cry!"

Just as she was saying this, Mark came home. When he saw the game on the TV screen, his expression darkened.

"Honey!" Paula rushed to greet him and take his coat. "You must be tired. I'll have the maid make you some tea. You should rest."

"No need." Mark's attitude was unusually cold.

It seemed that every time he saw Paula and Eddy, he was reminded of their misdeeds.

He didn't even want to look at Eddy and went straight to his study.

Paula was hurt by his coldness. She was even more determined to fix the situation.

She was already ousted from the Brooks family. She couldn't afford to be sidelined in the Miller family as well.

Paula turned to glare at Eddy. She was thinking about how to salvage the situation when her phone rang.

She answered the call irritably, only to hear the best news ever. "Mrs. Miller, we've found traces of your daughter. We found evidence that she was in Havenwood."

Paula was shocked.

Her daughter?!

Her Katara?!

Paula was so surprised that she almost dropped her phone. "Is it true? My daughter was really in Havenwood?"

Over the years, Katara had always been a painful subject for Paula.

She had always blamed Scott for not watching over her daughter, leading to this great tragedy.

Even after all this time, she never gave up searching for her.

Now, finally, she had a lead.

"We're certain. I'll send you the detailed information soon."

The caller sounded confident, so Paula chose to trust him and nod. "Good, good! I'm going to

Havenwood right away! I'm going to find my daughter!"

After hanging up, Paula bought a ticket for the earliest flight and packed her bags.

Eddy watched her, feeling perplexed. "Mom, are you crazy? You're going to Havenwood this late?"

He didn't understand why Paula was still holding onto the hope of finding Katara after all these years.

When Scott and Mark had used all their resources to search for Katara and found nothing, she should

have given up.

"Katara is waiting for me! I have to go now!"

The thought of her daughter possibly being in Havenwood made Paula wish she could fly there

immediately.

She had waited for so many years, and she didn't want to wait any longer. She wanted to bring Katara

home and touch her precious daughter again.

Eddy just rolled his eyes as he thought about how his mother was delusional.

Whenever Katara was mentioned, Paula would go off like a firecracker. One moment she was raging like a thunderstorm, and the next she was crying a river.

"Mom, don't get your hopes up too high. It's not like we haven't received false news before. After all these years, what are the chances of us finding her?"

Eddy tried to throw cold water on her hopes, but Paula was beyond reasoning. She grabbed her suitcase and hastily left the Miller family's home.

...

The next day.

Scott returned home after a busy day at the office, only to find out that Dorian and Cordelia had moved in.

It was Judith who had agreed to this. Although Scott was somewhat uncomfortable with the situation, he didn't voice his concerns.

Just as Scott retreated to his study, Judith got wind of his arrival and followed him in.

"Scott." Judith pushed open the door and settled herself on the couch in his study. Her demeanor

suggested that she had something to discuss.

Scott, understanding her intentions, took the initiative. "Mom, whatever it is, just say it."

"Vivienne's foster parents are now staying here. I've thought it over and decided it's best to let you know."

Judith gave him a look before letting out a deep sigh. "You know how much they've cared for Vivienne and how close they've become. I didn't want to upset Vivienne by refusing them."

"I understand." Scott nodded and set aside the files in his hands. "You're just looking out for Vivienne. I have no objections."

Relieved that he was being so understanding, Judith lightened up a bit. "You've been so busy with work that you've hardly had time to share a meal with Vivienne. No matter how important the business is, it can't be more important than Vivienne, right?"

"Take out more time to be with Vivienne. We've been lucky to have found her again; we must cherish her."

"Mom, I get it."

Judith felt relieved after seeing how well Scott was taking everything. "That's good. I won't bother you anymore. You should rest too. Don't work yourself to the bone."

Outside the door, Vivienne's eyes narrowed slightly as she turned and headed back to her room.

Chapter 310

It was the weekend.

Vivienne was tending to some tasks in her room when she received a call from Percival.

"Vivienne, come on down. Let's grab a bite to eat." Percival's voice dripped with affection.

He hadn't seen Vivienne for several days now, and he was missing her terribly.

Vivienne was multitasking. Her fingers were moving swiftly over her keyboard as she responded. "I

can't. I'm busy."

"Vivienne! It's been almost a week since we last saw each other." A hint of petulance appeared in

Percival's voice.

Vivienne was a bit taken aback.

So, he was whining because they hadn't seen each other in a week?

"I'll take you out for a strawberry cake." Since Vivienne remained quiet, Percival dangled this as bait in front of her.

Sure enough...

Vivienne's eyes lit up. "Strawberry cake?"

Percival's lips curled into a tender smile. "So, are you in?"

Vivienne pursed her lips. She contemplated for a moment and then said, "Only if you make it."

Percival smiled gently. "Alright, I'll make it."

After hanging up, Vivienne tidied up a bit and headed downstairs.

Downstairs, Scott was giving Percival a disdainful look. He was seemingly trying to deter him from stealing away his precious angel, but he couldn't openly object.

"Vivienne, come back soon. Come home right after you eat. Don't stay out too late." Scott emphasized before Vivienne left.

Vivienne responded with an indifferent "okay" and then left with Percival.

In the car, Percival buckled Vivienne's seat belt and started the car, asking, "I didn't see Mr. Hawthorn today?"

He had found out a few days earlier that Dorian had moved into the Brooks Mansion. He had intended

to invite the Dorian's family over for dinner, but Vivienne said they were busy, so the plan was momentarily shelved.

"They had something to take care of." Vivienne answered casually.

Percival glanced at her. "Something's on your mind?"

"No."

Percival looked at her exquisite face for a moment, then broke into a smile. "Vivienne, did you know that whenever you're troubled, you carry this 'keep out' aura around you?"

Vivienne was taken aback. "Do I?"

"Yes."

Vivienne chuckled. "Perhaps I didn't sleep well."

She didn't want to tell Percival about Dorian's situation until she had confirmation.

Since she wasn't willing to talk, Percival didn't press her further. "Grandfather asked me to invite Mr.

Hawthorn to the Ellington's for dinner tomorrow."

Before Vivienne could say anything, Percival added, "We should extend some hospitality to Mr.

Hawthorn now that he's in Rivenwood."

He noticed a subtle change in Vivienne's emotions whenever Dorian was mentioned.

Although he wasn't sure what had happened between them, he had faith that Vivienne could handle it.

Vivienne paused for a moment. "Okay, I'll pass on the message."

...

At Percival's private apartment.

Percival parked the car and brought the freshly bought ingredients into the kitchen. As he tied on his

apron, he said to Vivienne, "Vivienne, sit back and relax. I'll handle this."

Vivienne nodded. "Do you need my help?"

Percival hesitated for a moment, then laughed. "No, you just focus on eating."

He remembered all too well the disaster that was Vivienne in the kitchen. None of her dishes were

edible.

Since Percival had said so, Vivienne didn't bother arguing.

She settled down on the couch, making herself comfortable as if she were at home, and began to play

a game.

It was a rare sight to see Percival busy in the kitchen.

Two hours later, a meal of four dishes and a soup was served.

Vivienne, attracted by the aroma, put down her phone and came to the dining room.

Although she had tasted Percival's cooking before, she was still impressed by the flavor and presentation of his dishes.

Percival smiled at her. "All the ingredients are fresh. I know you like spicy and sweet food and dislike sour, so I modified the menu accordingly."

He then served a piece of strawberry cake. "This strawberry cake is for you."

Vivienne's eyes lit up at the sight of the cake. She scooped up a spoonful and popped it into her mouth.

Her mood instantly brightened up.

"Mr. Wolf, are you doing this on purpose?" She squinted her eyes as she exclaimed, "You've made all my favorites! Are you trying to win me over with food?"

"Of course." Seeing Vivienne enjoy her meal satisfied Percival. He leaned in and gave her a gentle peck on the nose. "If I want to win over your heart, I have to first conquer your stomach."

Percival looked at her and laughed. "Feeling smitten yet?"

Caught off guard by the sudden kiss, Vivienne's cheeks flushed a faint pink. She cleared her throat and

mumbled, "Maybe a little."

He was handsome, well-built, considerate, and a great cook.

Mr. Wolf was indeed perfect, to a fault.

Percival sat down and enjoyed the sight of Vivienne eating.

Watching her was pleasing to the eye, and he felt satisfied even without eating anything.

He just wished that time could slow down a bit. He was reluctant to send her home so soon.

"Vivienne." Percival propped his chin on his hand, smiling as he asked, "How about staying the night?"

Vivienne looked up at him and saw the burning desire in his eyes. She smirked. "Mr. Wolf, are you

trying to seduce me?"

Percival took her free hand in his, and his cool lips moved closer to hers. "Yes, Vivienne, I am trying to

seduce you."

Their temperatures gradually rose.

Moments later, both Percival and Vivienne were struggling to keep their emotions in check. They were

on the verge of crossing a line they shouldn't.

Percival quickly pulled himself together and reached out to gently touch Vivienne's head. "Vivienne, you need to grow up a bit more."

Last time, he almost lost control with Vivienne, which led him to feel guilty for quite a while.

He almost forgot that she was still a nineteen-year-old girl.

Vivienne, with her heart fluttering due to his touch, was a bit disappointed when he pulled away. "You're

doing this on purpose!" She swiftly accused him.

Percival, faced with her seemingly predatory gaze, felt a bit awkward. "Sweetie, just wait until you're a little older. Wait until we can legally get married."

Vivienne found herself wanting to pounce on him again as she looked at his thin, attractive lips.

On second thought, she better not.

Mr. Wolf was right!

She was still a child.

Children shouldn't do what adults do.

Yes! That was how it should be.

...

After dinner.

Since it was still early, Percival decided to take Vivienne for a stroll in the nearby mall.

Vivienne didn't need anything, but Percival was always in the mood to buy her something.

No matter how much he bought, it seemed never enough. Nothing seemed to adequately express his affection for Vivienne.

As they were wandering around the mall, just as they entered a luxury brand store, a surprised voice called out to her.

"Mr. Ellington?"

Percival and Vivienne turned around to see Mila and Calista. The mother-daughter duo just happened to be shopping there too, huh?

Calista stared at them. For a moment, she doubted her own eyes.

They were only engaged, yet they acted like a newlywed couple while strolling around the mall. How could she not feel envious?

Mila looked even more upset. Each time she had visited the Brooks Mansion, she had been turned away. All because of Vivienne.

Now, seeing Vivienne felt like a bad omen. It made her uncomfortable, even at a glance.

Percival glanced at them without a second thought and turned back to Vivienne. "Vivienne, is there anything you'd like?"

Vivienne glanced at the items on display, but she wasn't particularly interested in any of them. "Nothing special. They're all pretty ordinary."

Calista felt awkward when she realized that she was being ignored.

When had she ever been treated with such disregard?