

Million-Dollar 401

Chapter 401

Vivienne gazed at the text message on her phone, a gentle curve forming in her eyes as she smiled.

Unbeknownst to her, the live stream audience could see it clearly as day.

Her usually cool and collected profile was now brimming with unmistakable sweetness.

The kind of sweetness that screamed she was head over heels in love.

Screenshots of her expression flooded the internet in an instant.

Everyone was swooning.

Come on, what kind of angelic beauty was this?

But within half a minute, all those screenshots mysteriously vanished.

Matthew, who was in charge of erasing Vivienne's digital footprints, texted her in surprise.

[Vivienne, did you delete those screenshots yourself?]

She turned off the live stream. Her lips still curved in amusement. [Nope, my significant other took care of it.]

Matthew was speechless.

Meanwhile, said significant other had set the highly sought-after screenshots as their phone wallpaper,

chat background, and even Facebook cover.

The original focus of the reality show was supposed to be Stephen and Lucia, stirring up a romance for the fans.

But a single live broadcast had shifted everyone's attention to Vivienne and Kala.

With Vivienne's subtle steering, more eyes were on Kala, giving her career a fresh boost.

Lucia's scandals were dug up as the filming days passed, and her career plummeted.

...

Midway through, Vivienne returned to the hospital.

Anna had come around but was still recovering from her injuries, confined to ongoing treatment in the hospital ward.

When Anna saw Vivienne enter, she tried to rise, nearly wincing with pain.

"Stay put. I'm just here to check on you," Vivienne said, taking a seat beside the bed. "Why did you act on your own?"

Anna looked down, her face etched with remorse. "I... I found out the truth about my mother's death."

Vivienne frowned.

Anna's mother, Daphne, had been a trusted ally of her mother. After a mission failure, Karen had split the potion, keeping one part and entrusting Daphne with the other.

Afterward, Daphne vanished, only to resurface in Havenwood with a little girl in tow—Anna.

Then Daphne met an untimely death, and Anna disappeared.

Vivienne knew Daphne's death was no accident, just like her mother's.

"What did you find out?" She asked, her voice low.

Anna kept her head down. "My mom's death was indeed tied to GTO, but the key player was the Brooks family!"

"How did you find out?" Vivienne pressed.

Anna hesitated, then realized, "You knew? Is Lark also..."

Vivienne gave a slight nod.

It was why she had not left the Brooks family.

Scott had tried to kill her mother at their engagement party. After her mother fled, neither GTO nor

Scott ceased their pursuit. Scott had been lurking within the Brooks family, using his status as the

eldest son to do GTO's bidding.

But when Vivienne learned that after Judith's death, the reclusive Baron had taken the reins, she knew something was amiss.

Scott had been the head of the Brooks family, but Baron was suddenly in charge after his mishap.

That was when she realized the actual head of the Brooks family had always been Baron.

Her mother's persecution, though perhaps not directly by Baron's hand, was undoubtedly linked to him.

So, even with Scott's disappearance, Vivienne remained with the Brooks family.

From Vivienne's reaction, Anna realized she had been too impulsive.

Vivienne had long been aware of the Brooks family's schemes and was simply biding her time to strike.

"Sorry, Ms. Vivienne. I acted rashly," Anna said, filled with regret.

Vivienne did not blame her. She herself, upon discovering the true cause of her mother's death, would

have found it hard to stay her hand.

A mother's murder was an unforgettable vendetta.

"What have you uncovered?" Vivienne continued.

Anna took a deep breath, her cold eyes briefly clouded with sorrow.

"I was studying finance at Elite University. Ronald Brooks, an esteemed alumnus, gave a talk recently.

He quoted something my mother used to say—"To find out where your enemy is, let them know where you are."

"I was shocked, so I started digging into Ronald's background. He was clean, but one person drew my interest."

"Scott?" Vivienne guessed.

Though Ronald was Timothy's son, Scott practically raised him in the business world. Not just him,

Timothy and Melissa, the whole Brooks family looked up to Scott.

And without a son, Scott watched as Ronald, the family's eldest grandson, naturally followed in his footsteps.

Anna nodded. "Yes, him. But you had just returned to the Brooks family back then, and I didn't realize he wasn't your biological father. So, I started my own investigation. I discovered they were abducting kids under twenty. I took a chance and let myself get caught, but I overestimated my abilities."

Anna bit her lip and continued, "When I went in there, they wanted to run experiments on us. I thought I

could avoid it with my smarts, but I couldn't. They injected me with a virus, and it hit me fast—I had no chance to save myself. Thank goodness that little girl saved me."

Her voice dwindled as she spoke. Yesterday, Leopold had visited her and revealed Scott's true identity to her.

She realized she had been overthinking and narrow-minded.

Even if Scott really were Vivienne's biological father, she would not let him off the hook simply because of that connection.

Especially since he was an impostor.

Anna apologized again, "Ms. Vivienne, I was wrong to doubt you. I should have filled you in before taking any action. It wouldn't have caused you so much trouble then. I'm truly sorry, and I promise, from now on, any move I make will be communicated to you in advance, and I'll act only with your permission."

Vivienne gave Anna's head a gentle pat. "Right now, you just focus on your college life. When I need you, I'll let you know. Remember this lesson—next time, you might not be so lucky."

Anna understood. It was a good thing she had disguised herself when she acted alone. Otherwise, returning to Elite University and blending in would have been twice as difficult.

After checking on Anna, Vivienne went to visit Natalia and Yasmine. Zelda was there, caring for things, while Jasper played with his granddaughters.

Vivienne watched the family scene from a distance and felt a wave of warmth.

Zelda turned around and saw Vivienne, promptly inviting her in. "Vivienne, you finally made it. The old man has been asking about you for a while."

Vivienne smiled as she stepped closer. "Jasper, what have you been saying about me?"

Jasper chuckled affectionately, his pride evident. "Oh, quite a lot. You must be tired of hearing it, but that's all me talking about you."

Chapter 402

Every time Vivienne spent time with Jasper, she felt a warmth envelop her.

This warmth was different from the kind she felt in the company of Dorian.

Dorian's kindness stemmed from his affection for her mother and, by extension, to her, much like Cordelia had shown.

Though it was a case of loving the house and its crew, it was genuine through and through.

But with Jasper, it felt as if it was innate.

Especially when Jasper looked at her, his gaze held the same affection as when he looked at Natalia.

Vivienne had a long chat with Jasper in the ward, where Zelda had brought out an array of snacks,

fussing over her like a child.

When it was time to leave, Vivienne said her goodbyes, "I'll come see you again next time. It's going to

get colder in a few days. Make sure you wear more than just that thin shirt."

Jasper nodded vigorously. "Yes, yes, I'll go shopping for some warm clothes tomorrow; bundle myself

up nice and cozy."

Zelda sighed from the side. "You only listen to Vivienne. I've been telling you to dress warmer, but you

never pay heed."

They all shared a laugh, and with that, Vivienne got up to leave.

Once she was gone, Jasper's smile slowly faded, tinged with a hint of reluctance.

"Is everything collected?" Jasper asked.

Zelda nodded. "Don't worry, Dad. I've kept the cup Vivienne used. I'll hand it over to Yuri tonight and

have him personally supervise the paternity test."

Jasper sighed silently and sat back down, continuing to play with his granddaughters.

...

Meanwhile, Vivienne returned to the Brooks Mansion.

Pushing the door open, a chill swept through, prompting her to wrap her coat tighter. Just as she was

about to head to her room, she encountered Baron.

"Baron," Vivienne greeted him coolly.

Baron responded, his eyes hesitating on Vivienne.

She noticed, "Something on your mind?"

After a moment of silence, Baron asked, "Do you know where your father might be?"

Vivienne chuckled, her icy gaze briefly scanning Baron, "You don't know?"

"I don't. I'm a bit worried. Could you ask Percival to look into it? I'm afraid he might be in danger."

Baron's gaze dropped, making it hard to read his thoughts.

"Sure, if you think it's necessary, Baron," Vivienne replied with a hum, then retreated to her room.

Baron watched Vivienne's door for a long while before he left the Brooks Mansion.

Vivienne stood by her bedroom window, watching Baron's car slowly drive away, the corners of her lips

curling into a subtle, knowing smile.

Baron's car arrived at an apartment complex.

Upon entering, the heavy scent of blood hit him.

"Are you alright?" Baron stepped forward, eyeing the wounds.

Scott sat on the couch, with medical supplies scattered on the table before him.

Having escaped from Percival's men, he had managed to evade the Vanguard Agency's surveillance

and return to his apartment with Baron's help. This was their secret sanctuary.

Scott's lips were pale. The gunshot wound Vivienne inflicted on his wrist had almost crippled his hand,

and during his escape, Percival's bullets had riddled his body. His injuries, aggravated by a near

drowning, were on the verge of infection.

If not for Baron, he would either have perished at sea or died from the festering wounds.

"I'm not dead yet, to your disappointment," Scott responded coldly.

Baron, accustomed to Scott's demeanor, showed no surprise. "I didn't lead Percival and Vivienne to

you."

"I know."

Scott cut Baron off, clearly not interested in further conversation. After changing his bandages, he retired to his bedroom.

Baron listened to the resounding slam of the door, his expression darkening.

As Vivienne prepared for a relaxing bath and sleep at the Brooks Mansion, she received an unexpected call from Astrid.

"Vivienne, let's go out for dinner. Mom and Dad will be there too. Are you free?"

Since Scott's true identity was revealed, Dorian and Cordelia had moved out of Percival's apartment and bought their own place. Dorian was now keen to focus on their business ventures.

Standing by the window, her slender fingers tracing the spines of a succulent, Vivienne replied unhurriedly, "Sure, which restaurant? I'll head right over."

"It's right below Dad's office building. There's a place called 'Haven.' Invite your husband, too. Let's have a family gathering," Astrid suggested.

"I'll give him a call." Vivienne's gaze shifted to the window, her lips curling into an ambiguous smile.

After the call, she texted Percival to see if he was free.

Percival did not respond, so Vivienne assumed he would not join. Just as she was about to dress and leave, Percival's car pulled up.

Vivienne thought, "That's some enthusiasm."

To Percival, when the wife calls for dinner, only a fool would not be enthusiastic.

Descending the stairs, Vivienne's hair was still damp as she remarked, "You're early."

"Afraid you might be hungry." Percival touched her hair, frowning slightly, "Thomas, turn on the heater."

Vivienne was speechless.

Although autumn was nearing, it certainly was not cold enough yet for all this fuss!

Soon, Thomas pulled the car up to the front of the bustling steakhouse.

Percival helped Vivienne out of the car, and only then did she realize just how many presents he had prepared.

"Do we really need to make such a fuss?" Vivienne chuckled.

Percival nodded affirmatively. "When it comes to your family, it's important to make an effort."

Dorian's family was Vivienne's kin, and what mattered to her naturally mattered to him.

Inside the private dining room, Dorian's family was all gathered. Spotting Vivienne, Thaddeus bounded over with youthful energy.

"Sis, I've missed you so much!"

Vivienne scooped him into her arms. "Have you put on weight?"

A touch embarrassed, Thaddeus retorted, "Big sis said I'm growing, and I haven't gained much, honest!"

Vivienne pinched Thaddeus's cheek, which had rounded out, and smiled to herself.

Not much, huh? But this was a clear sign that Dorian's family was thriving lately.

Percival set the gifts down, greeting, "Dad, Mom."

Dorian and Cordelia were still getting used to being called mom and dad by Percival, but they were growing more comfortable with it.

"Ah, sit down," Dorian urged, his gaze lingering on Vivienne.

He had not seen her in days, yet she seemed to have slimmed down.

Cordelia also noticed Vivienne looked leaner than before and quickly told Thaddeus to get down.

"Come on, get down. Your sister can hardly hold you up anymore."

Chapter 403

Vivienne chuckled and set little Thaddeus on the ground before greeting Astrid and Alfred with a friendly nod.

No sooner had she sat down than Cordelia began to fuss over her with a mother's concern.

"Vivienne, dear, has the Brooks family been skimping on the meals? You look like you've slimmed down," she said, her eyes brimming with worry. "I'll have to fix you up with some extra helpings of meat to get you some proper nutrients.

If it's too much, you could always come back home. Your father's business is picking up, and we've got plenty of room. No need to stay with the Brooks and put up with any hardships!" Cordelia's voice cracked as she spoke, her eyes reddening at the thought.

She would never have let Vivienne suffer with the Brooks family if they had not been down on their luck when they arrived in Rivenwood.

With Scott missing, despite the Brooks family keeping a tight lid on the news, whispers had traveled through the business community. Without her biological father at home, the Brooks family likely treated

Vivienne like an afterthought.

Cordelia's heart ached just thinking about it.

Why did such a sweet child have to go through so much hardship?

Astrid quickly handed Cordelia a tissue, comforting her, "Mom, it's good that Vivienne is here. We should be celebrating being together."

Cordelia sniffled. "Yes, you're right. If you could come home more often, we'd have even more time together."

Astrid playfully stuck out her tongue. "Vivienne, I can't cheer her up. Your turn."

Thaddeus piped up from the side. "Mommy's crying! Does she want cake?"

Alfred ruffled Thaddeus' hair. "Looks to me like someone else is angling for cake!"

"I am not!" protested Thaddeus, though his expression gave him away.

Their banter lightened the mood considerably.

The family gathered for a lively dinner, opting for a hearty barbeque, and Dorian was in high spirits, perhaps indulging a bit too much in the wine.

Cordelia refrained from her usual matchmaking, but she still managed to hint at Alfred about taking his

relationship with Astrid seriously and not letting her down.

The same message was implicitly directed at Percival, though Cordelia did not dare meddle too directly. It was not out of fear but rather because Percival had an intimidating presence, almost as if he could wipe out the Brooks family with a word.

If Percival knew, he would have protested, "Me? Never! I'm a gentle soul!"

After the meal, a tipsy Dorian clung to Percival, saying, "You better treat our Vivienne right. If you hurt her, I'll bring her home and break your legs!"

The wine undoubtedly fueled Dorian's boldness. He would not have been so blunt otherwise.

Astrid steadied her father. "Dad, why would Mr. Ellington treat Vivienne poorly? Don't worry yourself over nothing."

Percival did not seem bothered, understanding that Dorian was just being a protective father.

He helped Dorian into the car, promising, "Don't worry, Dad. I won't let Vivienne down."

Once Dorian, Cordelia, and Thaddeus departed, an embarrassed Astrid glanced at Percival, "Sorry about that. Dad can get a bit loose-lipped when he drinks."

"It's fine," Percival replied with a light smile.

Astrid bit her lip and then glanced at Vivienne, hesitating for a moment before saying, "Vivienne, I owe you thanks. I can't always be here because of work, and Thaddeus alerted us to the situation. I'm grateful you're here."

A little embarrassed, Astrid's eyes glistened.

Vivienne's smile was gentle as she replied, "We're family. No need for thanks."

"That's right, we're family," Astrid said, wiping away a tear and smiling.

Alfred wrapped an arm around her. "You're definitely your mother's daughter, always so quick to tears."

"You're so annoying!" Astrid teased, unable to hide her blush.

After some more casual conversation, Astrid said, "I'll stay in Rivenwood for a while. Let's go shopping sometime."

Vivienne nodded. "Sure, just give me a call."

After parting ways, Vivienne's expression turned contemplative. Sensing her mood, Percival gently ruffled her hair, his voice as soothing as a gentle stream. "What are you thinking about?"

She looked up into his deep eyes and suddenly smiled. "I was just thinking...someone is getting

impatient again, Mr. Wolf. My enemies seem to be lacking in intelligence. What should I do?"

Percival was speechless, thinking, "Aren't you just too clever?"

He wrapped his arms around her waist from behind, whispering close to her ear, "Let's see how long this enemy lasts."

Vivienne's laugh was radiant, like sunshine. She placed a hand on his tempting lips, her tone teasing. "I bet it won't last even one round!"

"That's not fun," Percival murmured against her fingers, his voice deep and magnetic. "Give them one round for free."

"Then, one round it is," Vivienne agreed, smiling brightly.

After such a filling meal, Percival suggested they walk it off nearby to clear their minds.

They had not gone far when they bumped into Aaron and his entourage.

"Vivienne, what are you doing here?" Aaron's excitement upon seeing her was palpable.

However, his mood soured as soon as he noticed Percival by her side.

Could this guy not take a hint?

Percival would have retorted at this thought, "It's you who can't take a hint."

"Just shopping, you?" Vivienne said.

Fergus sidled up to Percival, his eyes gleaming with admiration. "We're just shopping too. Percival, got time for a game?"

Apart from Aaron, the rest of the gang gazed at Percival like he was a rock star.

The man was a legend!

A true idol!

Everyone knew about Snake's enigmatic coach, who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Vivienne!

How could they not be starstruck?

Percival had not expected to have such a fan club among the Hawks, but gaming was the last thing on his mind today. He just wanted to spend some quality time shopping with Vivienne.

"Next time," said Percival, flashing a smile and casually wrapping an arm around Vivienne's waist.

Vivienne, busy chatting with Aaron, found Percival's hand a bit intrusive and swatted at it, "Let go."

Seizing the moment, Aaron tugged at Vivienne, "Vivienne, there's a bakery selling strawberry cheesecake over there. Let's go get some."

Vivienne's eyes lit up with excitement instantly. "Yes, let's go!"

Percival watched, crestfallen, as Aaron whisked Vivienne away, his mood turning sour.

That Aaron kid really did not know when to quit.

Percival hastened his steps, swooping in to buy all the strawberry cheesecakes in sight, and picked out

the most succulent piece to feed to Vivienne. "Try this, Vivienne."

She took a bite, "Delicious."

Aaron clenched his fists at the sight, nearly going insane with envy.

But what could he do?

Percival quirked an eyebrow, leading Vivienne forward, feeding her bites of the cheesecake, the

sweetness of the moment undeniable.

Grinding his teeth, Aaron said, "Vivienne, there's something I need to talk to you about alone. It's

important."

Vivienne turned around. Aaron seldom described things as important, so it had to be serious.

She nodded and said, "Let's go to the car."

Chapter 404

Since Vivienne had spoken, Percival, of course, could not object.

He could only watch with wide eyes as Aaron and Vivienne entered the car.

Aaron indeed had something he wanted to discuss with Vivienne.

“Vivienne, I’m currently studying finance management at Elite University. He decided to send me there, claiming it was to prepare me for taking over the Miller family,” Aaron divulged.

Vivienne glanced at Percival through the car window. He seemed a bit upset.

She withdrew her gaze and said, “That’s good news. You should give it your all since you’ve chosen to return home and take over the family business.”

Aaron was sharp. Things clicked quickly for him.

Even though he had just started his studies, he was anything but clumsy.

Aaron hesitated, then said, “He also mentioned that the success of the Miller family is all thanks to you.

He said you are the Nine...”

“Knowing is enough; there’s no need to spell it out,” Vivienne interrupted Aaron with a cool look in her eyes.

But since Mark Miller had even shared this with Aaron, it was clear he was sincere about wanting

Aaron to inherit the Miller family's legacy.

After all, the secret of her being the young master of the Nine Mystics Society was not to be disclosed to anyone except for the heir.

Aaron understood the gravity of it.

From the start, he knew Vivienne was more than just a girl a year his senior.

But he had never realized just how formidable she truly was.

That even the Miller family owed its rise to her support.

"Vivienne, what exactly is that organization?" Aaron asked, still somewhat confused. He figured it was easier just to ask her directly.

Vivienne finished her iced tea and said, "You'll know when it's time. Remember, some questions are better left unasked."

Her tone was mild, but Aaron could sense her displeasure.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to pry," Aaron apologized hastily, worry etched on his face.

"It's fine." Vivienne crushed the empty cup and continued, "Did Mark bring it up?"

Aaron shook his head, then nodded. "Sort of. He thought I knew about your identity and let it slip, then when he realized I didn't, he didn't elaborate. Just said he'd tell me after I took over the Miller family."

"Okay, got it." Vivienne's lips curled into a faint smile, the chill in her demeanor melting away.

Aaron also relaxed, adding, "Vivienne, this means we're actually quite close, right?"

Vivienne did not deny it. "If that's how you want to see it."

Aaron had been her disciple; now, with the Miller family connection, he was essentially her protégé.

And if he was her protégé, that certainly meant they were close.

Aaron beamed proudly, feeling a surge of triumph.

He knew deep down that Percival was nothing to fuss over.

Aaron said excitedly, "Vivienne, I've invested in the Hawk Club. Bennett's their coach now, and

Quentin's stayed on to train the junior team. Everyone says the club would have tanked if not for you,

so I was hoping to get everyone together for a meal if you're free. What do you say?"

Vivienne had not had much on her plate lately, so she agreed, though she mused that she had been invited out to eat quite a lot recently.

Percival, waiting outside, was growing impatient.

What were they talking about for so long?

Bennett and the others, who were around Percival, could almost sense the air pressure plummeting.

Clearly, Vivienne's husband was quite terrifying.

When Vivienne stepped out of the car, she bid Aaron and the others farewell.

As soon as Percival got into the car, he asked, "What did he say to you?"

"He invited me to a team dinner," Vivienne knew Percival would ask, her lips curving slightly. "Why?

Jealous again?"

Percival cleared his throat. "No, just wondering."

Vivienne hummed a drawn-out note. "Then I guess I'll go without you."

"No!" Percival's tone brooked no argument.

Vivienne laughed softly, "Mr. Wolf, you're so easy to tease!"

Percival was silent.

Tease him?

Well, then, he would not hold back.

The next moment, he leaned in for a kiss without giving Vivienne a chance to react.

Thomas, who was driving, quietly drew the curtain.

Next time, he was definitely assigning Leopold to drive!

...

On Aaron's dinner day, Percival brought Vivienne an outfit.

It was a matching couple's outfits.

Vivienne was somewhat exasperated. "Mr. Wolf, is this really necessary?"

"Yeah." Percival had to make it clear to Aaron that Vivienne was his girl.

Without further protest, Vivienne slipped into the matching outfit and set out with Percival.

They had just arrived at the venue when Vivienne stepped out first, with Aaron waiting at the entrance.

"Vivienne..."

Screech!

A harsh sound of tires against the pavement echoed.

A red sports car came barreling towards Percival's vehicle.

Thomas quickly turned the wheel, but it was too late.

The car crashed into them with a thunderous bang.

The red sports car was sent rolling back several yards, leaving skid marks on the asphalt.

Percival's car flipped over, trapping both Thomas and Percival underneath.

They instantly blacked out.

"Mr. Wolf!"

Vivienne had never felt such panic; she did not even know how she managed to lift the car off them.

Aaron and the others snapped to their senses and quickly pulled out their phones to dial 911.

Vivienne dragged both Percival and Thomas out from the wreckage.

Their heads had both taken a severe blow, and Thomas's leg was fractured from the violent impact.

"Vivienne, the car's gonna blow! Come on!" Aaron dashed over, grabbing Vivienne's arm, ready to bolt.

No one mattered more to Aaron than Vivienne.

But in Vivienne's eyes, Percival was her world.

She violently jerked her arm away from Aaron, snapping at him, "Get lost!"

Aaron froze, stunned.

Vivienne's eyes were red.

In all the time Aaron had known her, he had never seen her cry.

Before he could even process the situation, Vivienne had already dragged Percival to safety, and

Thomas was being carried into the diner by Bennett and the others.

Quentin, pulling Aaron out of his daze, hurried back with him.

As they reached the diner, Percival's car burst into flames, the explosion shattering its windows!

Aaron threw himself over Vivienne, his back getting pelted with glass shards.

Vivienne held Aaron down, yelling, "Don't move!"

The pain in Aaron's back was unbearable, so he did not dare to shift.

"Bennett, find me scissors, some rope, and anti-inflammatory medicine!" Vivienne ordered while

stuffing what she called Life-saving pills into both Percival and Thomas's mouths.

Bennett rushed off to find the items.

Vivienne kicked a chair out of the way to stabilize Thomas's broken leg.

The paramedics arrived just then, and Vivienne helped load Percival and Thomas into the ambulance,

then instructed Quentin and the others to look after Aaron.

On the way to the hospital, Vivienne realized her hands were shaking.

With one hand, she held onto Percival's, and with the other, she shakily took out her blood-stained phone.

She steadied her nerves and quickly tapped out a message.

[Draven, immediately issue an Order of Nine Mystics Society. Find the owner of that red sports car and bring them to me!]

Chapter 405

The Order of Nine Mystics Society announced that the owner of the red sports car was located in less than ten minutes.

However, the person was already dead.

Due to driving under the influence of alcohol, he was dead on arrival!

By the time the coroner and the police arrived at the scene, Percival's car was nothing but a charred shell, and that red sports car was not in much better shape.

The vehicle had exploded due to the accident, and the owner, having lost consciousness from the drunk driving, met his end in the flames, burned alive.

The identity of the owner of the red sports car was also investigated.

A laid-off factory worker, just fired yesterday, drowned his sorrows in alcohol at noon today, only to end up in a fatal crash.

No money had been received by family or friends.

It all seemed like a tragic accident.

Vivienne listened to Draven's report, a cold glint in her eyes.

The less trace there was, the more suspicious it seemed.

"Keep digging. I want to know everything about everyone he could have possibly come into contact with, from his ancestors to his descendants. Leave no stone unturned," Vivienne commanded with an icy tone.

"Yes," Draven responded, with no further comment. He knew that this time, his boss was truly furious.

At the hospital, the entire Ellington family had gathered. Fiona was the last to arrive, her expression nonchalant as if the person in the operating room had nothing to do with her.

Ryan, however, was a mess of tears, wailing as if Percival were his son.

"Why is life so hard on him? He's already been through so much, and now, if he's brain-injured, what then? Dad, it looks like we'll need Paul to step up for the family in the future."

Ryan sat in the hallway, sobbing, but the actual tears shed were fewer than that from a yawn.

Previously, when Paul was arrested, he had a rough time under Vivienne's orders, getting "invited for coffee" punctually every day.

Unable to endure it, he begged to see Ryan and his wife, pleading for their help to get him out.

Ryan tried many ways but could not convince Richard to bail Paul out.

It was only when Ryan offered to renounce his son's inheritance rights that Richard relented, asking Vivienne for a favor, allowing Paul to be free.

But renouncing his claim was one thing; genuinely giving it up was another.

The heir to the Ellington family had to come from his branch.

Now, with Percival's fate uncertain, opportunity knocked.

Everyone present was savvy enough to see through Ryan's clumsy ploy, but they held their tongues out of respect for Richard's presence.

Enraged, Richard's face turned a shade of steel blue. He grabbed his cane and swung it at Ryan. "You

disgrace, crying for what? My grandson isn't dead yet! What nonsense are you spouting? I tell you, even if something does happen to Percival, his wife will inherit the Ellington family, and it will have nothing to do with you!"

After Richard said this, Ryan could no longer keep up the act and erupted. "Dad, Vivienne is an outsider. How can you let her inherit the Ellington family? Have you lost your senses?"

"Me, lost my senses? I ought to beat some sense into you, you ungrateful child!"

Already irritated by Percival's predicament, Richard could not contain his anger at Ryan's scheming for the family inheritance.

Raising his cane, he struck.

Seeing this, Fiona rushed to pull Richard away, "Grandpa, please, don't be upset. Percival is still in surgery. He'll be alright."

Richard calmed down a bit, sitting back down and looking at Vivienne. "My dear, did this scare you?"

Vivienne shook her head, "No."

Scared?

Sure, her heart had skipped a beat when she heard about Percival's accident. She feared losing him.

She did not know when she started feeling this way. Perhaps it had been a while.

She prided herself on her extraordinary medical skills, but when faced with life or death, she was

unsure she could outwit the Grim Reaper.

But what did it matter?

What Vivienne wanted, be it person or object, not even the Reaper could interfere.

So, scared?

Not a chance.

With her words, Vivienne slowly lifted her gaze to meet Fiona's.

A flicker of surprise passed through Fiona's eyes, but she did not look away.

Vivienne stared intensely at her.

In the entire Ellington family, the only one who would want Percival dead was her!

But Fiona simply curved her lips in a faint smile, her gaze steadfast, a mix of rightful expectation and

joy out of Percival's misfortune.

It was the unmistakable look of someone reveling in an unexpected boon.

Vivienne narrowed her eyes.

Fiona and Percival were cousins only in name, and her delight was unsurprising with Percival's fate hanging in the balance.

However, if Fiona was the culprit, could she really remain so composed? Vivienne doubted it.

Just then, Kenneth rushed over. "How's my brother?" He hastily asked with concern.

Kenneth's eyes were red, his steps unsteady as he collapsed in front of Richard, "Grandpa, where's my brother?"

"He's still in surgery. Stand up." Richard understood that among those present, only Kenneth truly cared about Percival.

Kenneth wiped his tears, his youthful emotions getting the best of him.

He looked up at Vivienne, and all his anger landed on her.

"It has to be your fault! If it weren't for you, my brother wouldn't have had that accident, you jinx!"

Vivienne's gaze shifted from Fiona to Kenneth, her voice cold as she said, "Shut up."

"You think I'll shut up just because you say so? Vivienne, my brother's accident is on you. Get out of

here now!"

Kenneth had always been salty about Vivienne dating Percival. Now convinced that Percival's car accident was because he was rushing to meet her, Ken's disdain had solidified into a bitter preconception.

A flicker of impatience crossed Vivienne's face as she flicked her wrist.

Suddenly, Kenneth realized he had lost his voice.

Enraged, he lunged to oust Vivienne, but Richard hauled him back with a firm grip. "Sit down and shut it. If I hear you disrespect your sister-in-law again, you'll have me to answer to," Richard roared.

Ken slumped back into his seat, seething silently, unable to speak or chase away Vivienne, forced to wait in frustration.

Cecilia arrived with Isolde in tow, both flustered and the last to make it. They were supposed to be off on an overseas tour to clear their minds but had rushed back upon hearing the news of Percival's hospitalization.

Isolde burst into tears at the sight of Vivienne and hurled herself into her arms. "Vivienne, I'm so scared..."

The icy facade Vivienne usually wore softened, and she stroked Isolde's back reassuringly. "Your brother will be fine. Trust me."

Assured by Vivienne's renowned medical expertise, Isolde's fears began to subside.

Cecilia's eyes were swollen from crying, her voice lost to her sobs. Vivienne took Cecilia's hand in a silent show of support, squeezing it gently. Somehow, that small gesture fortified Cecilia's spirit.

Finally, the operating room doors swung open, and Vivienne stepped forward first. She was confident in her medical skills and the Life-saving pill she had administered to Percival, but worry clawed at her.

Each second that Percival remained unconscious was agony for her. She knew her intervention had likely saved him, but the fear did not ebb until she could see him breathing, alive, and on the road to recovery.

Chapter 406

After the surgery, Vivienne asked the assisting surgeon to go out and inform the family while she stayed behind to stitch up the patient.

The surgeon nodded and pushed open the doors of the operating room.

The Ellington family immediately swarmed around.

“How is he? Is my grandson alright?” Richard asked anxiously.

The doctor removed his mask, “Mr. Ellington is out of danger now. He should wake up once the anesthesia wears off.”

Cecilia and Isolde clung to each other, weeping with relief. Richard and Kenneth also exhaled in relief while the reactions of others varied.

Percival was safe, and Thomas’ leg was saved, although he needed rest.

Aaron had minor injuries, with glass shards having been removed from his back.

All was well at last.

Once Percival was settled, Vivienne made her way to Aaron's room.

Mark had been waiting outside the door, and upon seeing Vivienne, he quickly stood up, "Ma'am."

Vivienne waved a hand. “Has Aaron not woken up?”

Mark nodded, “Yeah, the doc said the anesthesia was strong. He'll be out for a while.”

“Hmm, and the car accident, any leads?”

She had asked Draven to investigate, but sometimes news from the various elite families could present a different clue.

Mark stepped closer, his voice a whisper. "Mr. Ellington's car was checked. The explosion was caused by a new type of bomb, not by the accident!"

Vivienne's eyes narrowed.

Just as she had suspected!

A simple car flip could not possibly cause such a massive explosion.

With this new bomb as a lead, the Ellington family could not be ruled out.

Those with access to such a bomb were GTO, but it was not beyond the realm of possibility that someone from the Ellington family had dealings with GTO.

It might have been Scott or even a direct Ellington family member.

Mark continued, "The new bomb leaves no trace, just like the one used during the baby rescue. That's why the police have ruled the incident an accident."

Vivienne frowned. "Keep looking. We must find this bomb research lab!"

This bomb was not even on the black market.

It was GTO's latest secret weapon.

After the last incident, she and Percival had been searching for the bomb's trail.

To no avail, and now it reappeared.

“Yes, ma'am,” Mark replied.

Just then, Isolde came running over, and Mark stepped back to maintain a discreet distance,

pretending not to know Vivienne well.

“Vivienne, my brother's awake!”

Vivienne’s heart tightened, and she hurried back to Percival's room with Isolde.

The entire Ellington family was gathered around the bed, with Cecilia sobbing breathlessly at the

bedside.

Vivienne entered and saw Percival with his eyes open, and her anxious heart began to settle.

She felt a sudden lump in her throat. Suddenly, she realized she did not have the strength to approach

him.

Percival's gaze was fixed on Vivienne, who stood at the door. His head was bandaged, and his

complexion was still pale.

After a long stare, he parted his lips. “Who are you?”

His voice was hoarse and deep, imbued with a masculine charm.

But everyone was stunned!

Percival did not recognize Vivienne?

Amnesia?

And amid the shocked gazes, the happiest was Kenneth.

Perfect!

Percival had forgotten Vivienne!

The engagement could finally be broken off!

Vivienne slowly approached Percival, a faint smile playing on her lips. "I'm Isolde's nanny. I came to resign. I'm heading home to get married."

"You wouldn't dare!" Percival's face darkened immediately.

Vivienne raised an eyebrow. "Funny, I dare do quite a lot. Wanna see?"

"Vivienne, cut it out." Percival immediately pulled her hand, drawing her close. "I'm sorry."

Kenneth's jaw dropped.

His brother just apologized to Vivienne!

He actually apologized!

What kind of spell had this woman cast on him?

Vivienne pulled her hand back, serious. "No joke, I'm really going back home to marry!"

Percival was silent.

He only wanted to cheer her up, and now he had almost turned her into someone else's bride.

He could not let that happen!

He pulled Vivienne into his arms, whispering, "Then I'll go back with you. Otherwise, who are you going to marry?"

Richard, seeing this, motioned for everyone to leave.

The young couple had just endured a brush with death; it was not suitable for them to intrude.

Cecilia glared at her son; she had been crying for so long without a shred of sympathy from him.

Clearly, being good to a daughter-in-law was better than to one's own son!

Kenneth was the first to leave, unable to bear the sight of his "shameless" brother.

One by one, the others followed suit.

Finally, the room was quiet again. Vivienne lay on Percival, holding him tight.

Percival gently patted her back, soothing her restless emotions.

"It was just a minor car crash. I'm not that fragile."

"Yes, comforting my lucky star," he teased, tapping her nose, his eyes still filled with relief.

After a long embrace, Vivienne spoke again. "Mr. Wolf, there was a bomb in your car."

"It's gotta be some kind of new bomb, isn't it?" Percival mused, his eyes narrowing into slits, voice as cold as ice.

To place a bomb on his car without a sound, undetected by any checks, it had to be the product of the latest tech.

And the person who managed to plant it was no ordinary foe.

Vivienne sat up straight. "Got any suspects in mind?"

Percival's lips curled into a wry smile, "The Ellingtons are prime suspects, but... It's not them."

He had every member of the Ellington family under his watchful eye.

Vivienne chuckled softly. "Since they have made their move, let's play this game with gusto."

...

Meanwhile, in Aaron's hospital room.

Aaron was awake, and Mark had gone to fetch the doctor, leaving only Bennett and a few others

standing guard. Content of Dramanovels.com

Unexpectedly, before the doctor arrived, Kenneth walked in.

"Kenneth, what are you doing here?" Quentin asked with a hint of hostility.

"What's it to you?" Kenneth replied as he sat down, his gaze cold upon Aaron.

He was just there to see if his only worthy adversary was still among the living.

And perhaps, to propose a deal.

Aaron exhaled. "Guys, head back. I'm alright now."

He could tell by the look on Kenneth's face that he had something serious to discuss.

It was that unspoken understanding between rivals.

"What's it to you?" Aaron shot back, mimicking Kenneth's tone to a tee.

Kenneth was momentarily taken aback, wanting to lash out, but he held back seeing Aaron swathed in

bandages.

After all, he was a scion of the Ellingtons; he would not kick a man when he was down.

"Listen up, I've got something serious to talk about," Kenneth cleared his throat, trying to regain his composure.

Chapter 407

Aaron eyed Kenneth with a frosty gaze.

"Spit it out. I don't have all day for your blather," he said, not in the mood for Kenneth's usual nonsense.

Kenneth fell silent momentarily, then muttered, "Word on the street is you played the hero for Vivienne.

Right now, my brother Percival is probably playing doctor with her in the hospital room; might as well be swapping spit already."

Aaron bolted upright, nearly tearing his stitches. "What did you say? Vivienne is so young. Has Percival no shame?"

"Oh, don't pin it on my brother. It's Vivienne who's been throwing herself at him!" Kenneth's face darkened instantly.

"Bullshit!" Aaron snapped back.

"I don't spout crap like you do!" Kenneth retorted coldly.

Aaron took a breath, trying to keep his cool. "What exactly do you want to tell me?"

Kenneth glanced back at the closed door of the ward, then leaned in closer to Aaron as if sharing a secret.

Aaron pushed him away, disgusted. "We're alone in here. Just get to the point."

"What if we team up to keep Vivienne away from my brother? What do you say?" Kenneth was not skulking around anymore; he had had this idea for quite some time.

Aaron's actions had proved his deep feelings for Vivienne, making him the perfect ally in Kenneth's plot to break her away from Percival.

Aaron eyed Kenneth skeptically. "Team up? How?"

They whispered back and forth until Mark strolled in with a doctor.

Kenneth's presence surprised Mark as much as Bennett and the others earlier.

"Kenneth, here to see Aaron, are you? Thanks for caring," Mark said, the picture of warmth.

With Mark's return, it was Kenneth's cue to leave without making it awkward.

He slapped Aaron on the shoulder, "No need for formalities, we're all brothers here!"

Aaron shoved him off, eager for him to leave. "Get out of here."

Kenneth pulled back his hand, shooting Aaron meaningful glances, his eyes saying, "Don't forget our plan!"

Aaron exhaled heavily, suddenly wondering if teaming up with Kenneth was too hasty.

"I'm off then," Kenneth said, exiting Aaron's ward.

After he left, the doctor gave Aaron a thorough check before Mark finally relaxed.

Sitting beside the bed, he looked at his son with concern. "Don't be so reckless next time. What if something serious had happened?"

"But didn't you say our family's top priority is to ensure Vivienne's safety? That's what matters most,"

Aaron said nonchalantly, seeing his father more as a means to an end to become the Miller family heir and secure the power to stand against Percival.

Mark's brow furrowed. "Still, you're not the one to protect her. No more dangerous stunts."

Aaron did not argue further, as he never intended to heed Mark's words anyway.

"Next month is Richard's birthday bash, right?" Aaron changed the subject.

Mark's temper softened. "Yes, what about it?"

"Take me with you," Aaron said, a subtle gleam in his eye.

Mark paused, surprised. "You want to go?"

"Yes, I can't just stick around school forever, can I? You said networking is essential, right?" Aaron challenged, "Or do you think my status as a bastard son isn't fitting to accompany you to such an important event?"

Richard's birthday was a grand affair in the Ellington family, with many clamoring for an invite.

Only Rivenwood's elite made the list, and many business deals were sealed at the event.

Aaron had never shown interest before, but now he was keen to attend, surprising and delighting Mark, who said, "I didn't mean that, Aaron. I'm happy you want to join the celebration."

Seeing Mark agree, Aaron closed the topic and rested his eyes.

Mark wanted to talk more, but seeing his son's disinterest, he stayed silent, aware that Aaron was not quick to forgive.

...

Meanwhile, Percival was discharged from the hospital after only two days, and he would have left

sooner if Vivienne had not insisted he stay.

Thomas needed more time to heal, and even though Vivienne had mended his leg, proper rest was critical to avoid future complications.

With Thomas indisposed, Leopold took over his duties.

"I'm driving? I'm your chauffeur now, Mr. Ellington? Are you short on chauffeurs?" Leopold bristled at the assignment.

Percival glanced at him coolly. "What's the problem? You used to drive before, didn't you?"

"That was different!" Leopold fumed, "Back then, I didn't know you were whisking away Vivienne. Now that I know, you expect me to..."

He suddenly stopped, not finishing the thought.

To watch them kiss each day?

His patience had limits!

He was already showing restraint not to confront Percival.

And now to be their chauffeur?

Besides, Thomas had mentioned how often those two kissed in the car. Every ride was guaranteed to

have at least one smooch.

He was not a masochist, seeking out agony willingly!

"Oh," Percival casually remarked, adjusting his cufflink. "I hear there's an opening on Fariana Isle..."

Before he could finish, Leopold stiffened and squeezed the words out of clenched teeth. "I'll drive!"

And he meant it—his teeth gnashed audibly, yet he was powerless against Percival.

Fine!

Percival was not the priority!

Vivienne was all that mattered. He would consider it protecting her.

Percival internally thanked him.

Leopold grabbed the car keys with a grin, "So, where to, Vivienne?"

Vivienne rubbed her neck, saying, "The Brooks Mansion."

"You got it!" Leopold fired up the engine and floored it, pulling up to the Brooks Mansion in no time.

Percival looked at Leopold with disdain. It was clearly not his turn to play the speed demon.

As they parked, Leopold finally asked, "Vivienne, what's got you wanting to head back to the Brooks

Mansion?" Content belongs to Dramanovels.com

"Zip it," Vivienne muttered coolly.

"Vivienne, you're back! Come and see, it's our reality show!" Kala exclaimed, still laughing.

Vivienne glanced at her, lips pursed, "Where's your dad?"

Today was going to be another one of those days.

The laughter on Kala and Carl's faces faded as they saw the look on Vivienne's face.

That expression, they had not seen it since the day of Judith's incident.

Kala stood up. "My dad? He's still at the office. Is something wrong?"

Chapter 408

Kala felt a ripple of anxiety; she certainly did not want the Brooks family to become tabloid fodder again.

It was not about her rising career but the desire to preserve the harmonious unity of the Brooks family from fragmenting into scandal.

Vivienne's gaze dropped slightly before she spoke softly, "There's a bit of an issue."

Kala's heart clenched with worry. "Vivienne, please tell me it's not something to do with Dad..."

Her words stumbled out of her, knotted with nerves.

No, it could not be!

Her father was the epitome of kindness, incapable of harming a soul.

Though she tried to reassure herself, Kala's palms were drenched with sweat from her mounting tension.

"Let's discuss it when he gets back," Vivienne said as she sat down and pulled out her phone to call Timothy, telling him to return home.

Meanwhile, with Cheryl's support, Baron made his way out of his room.

Kala rushed to help Baron down the stairs, her mind racing with apprehension.

She had no clue what would unfold next.

But she was certain that whatever was about to happen would once again turn the Brooks family upside down.

"Vivienne, what's on your mind?" Baron asked, his aged eyes betraying a hint of guilt.

Vivienne smiled faintly. "Let's wait until everyone's here."

Baron did not press further, but his grip on his cane tightened, his hand slick with anxious perspiration.

Soon, Timothy and Ronald returned, and alongside them walked Ashley with her brother Darren and Melissa in tow.

With the Brooks family gathered, silence fell, all eyes on Vivienne and Percival.

Darren kept glancing at Leopold, seeking clues as to what was happening.

Leopold simply shrugged; he was clueless about the announcement Vivienne was about to make. After all, he was just the chauffeur!

Baron exhaled deeply. "Vivienne, the family's all here. Whatever you need to say, go ahead."

Vivienne scanned the room, finally fixing her gaze on Percival, her clear eyes shimmering with feigned confusion. "Mr. Wolf, am I bad at counting? It seems like not everyone's present, right?"

Percival could not help but chuckle at her expression, playfully pinching her cheek. "Indeed, not everyone."

Ashley frowned. "Vivienne, what are you up to? We're all quite busy, and frankly, we don't have time to watch you two flirt."

Ashley and Vivienne's relationship had never been overly warm, but certainly not as strained as it was with Arabella.

Since Vivienne's return, she had not caused any trouble for Ashley, allowing a peaceful coexistence.

But ever since Vivienne aired some family secrets about her grandmother, Ashley found her increasingly irritating.

Ashley hated how Vivienne always seemed to look down on them as if she considered herself better than them.

Vivienne turned her gaze to Baron, her stare unwavering.

Suddenly, she lifted a finger, pointing towards the wardrobe behind Baron, "Why do I feel like there's someone there?"

Baron straightened up instantly, cold sweat breaking out despite his age.

He pushed down the fear in his voice, "That's just a liquor cabinet. How could someone be in there?"

Ashley thought Vivienne was being ridiculous. "Can you stop with the theatrics? If there's something to say, why can't you just say it?"

Darren quickly pulled his sister back, worried she might provoke Vivienne further.

"Vivienne, don't get upset," Darren said with a nervous chuckle, trying to defuse the tension, "Ashley's

just suggesting the liquor cabinet can't be hiding someone, that's all."

Vivienne ignored the comments and simply looked at Leopold.

Leopold understood immediately and approached the cabinet, dismantling it swiftly.

Baron attempted to intervene, but Percival spoke up, his tone detached, "Rivenwood suburb apartment

36, South Ridge Community villa 5, East County Villa 17, Sovereign Community 19-3... Timothy, do any

of these addresses ring a bell?"

The direct question took Timothy aback.

He had no knowledge of these properties.

He glanced at Ronald, who also shook his head in ignorance.

After a moment, Timothy replied, "The Brooks family mostly resides in the Brooks Mansion. Even if we

own other properties, they're usually nearby. The houses you mentioned are unfamiliar to us."

Percival smiled. "Of course, you wouldn't know. But Baron, he knows very well."

Leopold had dismantled the liquor cabinet as they spoke, revealing a hidden passage. "Vivienne,

there's a secret tunnel here!"

The Brooks family members were stunned. Behind the cabinet was a solid wall; how could there be a

tunnel?

They crowded around except for Baron, who remained as still as a statue.

Sitting on a dismantled plank, Leopold said, "Vivienne, what now?"

Vivienne's lips curved into a sly smile as she fixed her gaze on Baron and said to Leopold, "You have something quite interesting in your pocket."

Leopold was puzzled.

Interesting? What could that be?

He did not recall having anything of the sort.

Yet, when he reached into his pocket, he found a brand-new tear gas grenade.

Typical Vivienne, always prepared.

Leopold weighed the grenade in his hand and tossed it into the tunnel.

Baron could not stop him in time.

In the next second, a figure emerged from the tunnel, eyes streaming with tears.

The sight of the newcomer shocked everyone.

"Scott!" Melissa gasped, "What are you doing in there?"

To think he would be found at home!

Timothy was just as shocked, "Scott, how did you end up hiding here? What is this place?"

Ronald quickly handed Scott a tissue to wipe away his tears as smoke wafted out of the hidden room, also causing him to tear up.

"What the heck is going on?" Ronald asked Scott.

Scott dried his eyes, though they remained red, and looked at Vivienne with a grave voice, "You found me after all."

Ronald was taken aback, never having heard such a cold tone from Scott's mouth before.

He incredulously stepped back. Updated at Dramanovels.com

Timothy pulled his son, Ronald, close and stood to the side in silence.

Carl and Kala looked at Vivienne, clueless about what had transpired.

Sitting in the head chair, Baron sighed deeply and slowly stood up. "Vivienne, Percival, I am responsible for all this, not Scott."

Vivienne quietly observed Baron, a flicker of sorrow passing through her eyes.

Although Melissa said this, she knew in her heart that this was not going to end well.

However, apart from Baron, no one had a clue what had happened.

Why was their family head hiding in a secret chamber in the house that no one knew about?

Why was Baron apologizing to Vivienne?

What on earth was going on?

Chapter 409

Vivienne's face betrayed no emotion as she smoothly withdrew her hand from Melissa's grasp, offering

no reply. Instead, she turned to face Baron, her voice cool and even. "Do you have anything to say?"

Baron's gaze narrowed slightly, and he spoke without hesitation. "No explanation. The bomb installed

in Mr. Ellington's car and the person who drove into you—that was all my doing."

Percival's car accident was still making headlines, and everyone knew about it.

But what they did not know was that Baron was behind it!

"Dad, do you realize what you're saying?" Melissa exclaimed, her voice tinged with disbelief.

How was she supposed to accept this?

Her mother was a murderer, and now her father, too?

Timothy saw right through Baron and turned to Scott with eyes brimming with anger. "Bro, are you really going to let Dad take the fall for you?"

His words further shattered the Brooks family's younger generation's belief in their world.

In their eyes, Scott was their kindest elder and uncle. No matter what they did wrong, they could always turn to Scott and escape any punishment.

Ronald was the first to regain some semblance of composure. "Dad, do you know something we don't?"

Timothy did not respond, his gaze fixed on Scott, desperate for the truth to come from his lips.

But all they got was silence.

Baron stood his ground. "Vivienne, take me in. I need to atone."

"Dad!" Melissa could no longer contain her emotions and collapsed, sobbing on the couch.

Vivienne's lips curled into a faint smile; she had anticipated this scene.

With a calm demeanor, she turned to Timothy. "Uncle, you needn't beg Scott for the truth. After all, he's not the Brooks' flesh and blood."

The room fell into a stunned silence.

Scott was not a Brooks?

What was going on?

And how did Vivienne know?

Everyone's gaze shifted to Vivienne, utterly at a loss for words.

They could not believe it.

Scott was Baron's firstborn. Even though he and Judith had no love, he was still deeply invested in his children.

If Scott was not Baron's son, Baron should have been the first to know.

Yet, by the look on Baron's face, it was clear he was clueless.

Baron was utterly stunned. It took him a moment to process the revelation.

When he finally regained his composure, disbelief filled his eyes. "What did you just say? Scott isn't my son?"

Before Vivienne could respond, Baron continued, "No, that's impossible. How could he not be my son?

I..."

He stopped mid-sentence as something dawned on him, sending a shiver down his spine.

At that moment, Vivienne handed Baron a paternity test report. "This is his paternity test."

She then passed him another document, saying, "This is the evidence of how Judith bribed the doctor back then. Take a good look at it; your bedfellow has deceived you about more than just the murders."

Baron's hands trembled as he took the documents, unable to believe that the child he had raised for so many years was not his own.

If it were not for that child, he would not have married Judith, and Dahlia... Dahlia would still be alive.

Scott stopped pretending and pushed away Ronald's supportive hand, his voice laced with sarcasm.

"No need to read it. Indeed, I'm not your son, Baron Brooks. Thank you for all the 'kindness' you've shown me over the years."

But his gratitude was heavy with resentment.

Melissa shivered involuntarily, clutching her hands tightly. "Bro, are you still upset about what happened back then...?"

Scott let out a cold laugh. "No, I don't hold a grudge. Without him selling me out, I would never have discovered my true heritage!"

The younger generation was clueless about past events.

But Timothy and Melissa knew.

Kala's mind was in turmoil. She approached Vivienne and pleaded, "Vivienne, you know everything,

don't you? Just tell us straight, can you?"

Kala bore no hate or resentment; she just wanted the truth to come swiftly.

The slow reveal of secrets was too painful.

One revelation after another left them unsure of how to cope.

Vivienne looked indifferently at Baron. "Baron, you tell them."

Baron took a deep breath, his eyes void of spirit.

"Years ago, the Brooks family business suffered a severe blow. We were on the brink of losing the

Brooks Mansion. The bank was constantly hounding us for money, and with no options left, I took a

gamble."

Timothy and Melissa closed their eyes, remembering the fear they felt as children when the bank came

to seize their family's assets.

It was not a dramatic method, but it was still terrifying.

"I sought help from a loan shark, and they agreed to bail out the Brooks family. The price was for Scott to become a hostage."

Kala gasped, covering her mouth.

This was not just a loan shark; selling a child as a hostage—how was it different from human trafficking?

Scott remained impassive as if the conversation did not concern him.

Melissa sniffled, "But the Scott who came back was different."

Although Scott seemed just as gentle, Timothy and Melissa knew their brother had changed. They could not pinpoint exactly how, but they felt it. Content of DramaNovels.com

Timothy remembered that day when his older brother returned and spent the entire afternoon in the study with their father.

When they emerged, their father announced that Scott would henceforth manage the Brooks family affairs.

None of the younger siblings objected; after all, in their hearts, their big brother was an admirable

figure, someone they looked up to and adored.

As Baron recounted the story, his expression inevitably turned sorrowful. "But who could have known that bargaining with a tiger would eventually lead to one's own demise."

Scott burst into laughter. "Baron, you should be grateful you agreed to my terms from the get-go.

Otherwise, you'd be nothing but a lingering spirit, incapable of standing here today."

Even with his back to Scott, Baron could still feel the chilling aura emanating from him.

This was also why he had suddenly wrested the role of family patriarch from Scott's grasp.

Chapter 410

Although he did not know the specifics of that organization, the fact that Scott was second-in-command was a testament to his high status.

And from the moment Vivienne began to settle scores with the Brooks family, he knew Scott's deeds would one day come to light.

Vivienne was somewhat of an enigma to him. Their interactions had been few, and it was hard to say they shared a close bond, but he could tell that the face she presented to the world was not her true self.

Her arrival at the Brooks family was driven by Karen's death and possibly by the organization lurking behind Scott.

So, he stripped Scott of his position as head of the family, hoping to distract Vivienne and Percival while secretly aiding Scott.

All these actions were his way of making amends.

Scott's smile froze on his face, and perhaps it was the way the light hit him, but his usually calm and composed features now seemed twisted and terrifying. "Offset? Haha, offset, you say?"

Scott's gaze followed Baron's retreating figure, a glimmer of hatred flashing in his eyes.

"You have no idea what I've been through, so you have no right to speak to me of forgiveness!"

Scott would never forget the poison injected into his veins, the whip marks that had scarred his flesh, and the relentless crushing of his spirit.

These were cold memories that still sent shivers down his spine.

Vivienne, observing Scott's expression, could imagine what he had endured.

Some choose to either perish or be reborn in the Abyss, but others, like Scott, only continue to drag more innocents into its depths.

He inflicted the pain he had suffered on others, finding satisfaction and validation in their torment.

Baron slowly stood up, using the back of the sofa for support, and approached Scott.

"If you harbor hatred, I won't blame you. I have failed you regardless of whether you are my flesh and blood. If you want to kill me, go ahead."

"Grandpa!" Ronald stepped in front of Baron, his voice desperate. "Uncle, if you must kill, then kill me, but don't harm Grandpa, please!"

Scott pushed Ronald aside fiercely and wrapped his arms around Baron in an embrace.

Through the shoulder he was leaning on, Scott stared deeply at Vivienne. "Vivienne, I placed the new bomb in Percival's car and crafted it, too. I know you're here today for my life, so here, take it."

Suddenly, a bomb remote appeared in his hand, his thumb pressing hard on the red button.

"No!!"

Melissa's scream pierced the silence, but the explosion that everyone anticipated never came.

Scott pressed the button repeatedly, but no blast followed.

Vivienne's laughter broke the silence, sounding remarkably crisp.

"Surprised?" She looked at Scott, a faint smile playing on her lips.

Scott stared at her in shock. "How? What did you do?"

Her smile deepened. "I overestimated your intelligence. Hiding the bomb inside Baron's cane? Such a lame trick. How did Mr. B ever see your potential to be his double?"

Scott looked at Vivienne as if she were a monster. "How did you know?"

He had considered every possible way Vivienne could discover his plan and had taken precautions against them, yet she had still found out.

"The bomb wouldn't have caused a significant explosion. At most, it would've been enough to kill the two of you," Vivienne said as she walked forward and picked up Baron's cane.

She glanced at Scott, her voice steady. "You made a mistake using a remote device. If it were like the old times, requiring a physical trigger, I would not have been able to reprogram the remote."

It dawned on Scott that Vivienne had known about the new bomb all along.

He had lost.

Swiftly, Scott pushed Baron away and drew a knife, charging at Vivienne.

Leopold was quicker, intercepting Scott and restraining him.

"Think you can sneak up on Vivienne?" Leopold held Scott, only to realize Vivienne had not budged.

Not only that, Percival remained calm and collected.

Something was off.

Scott cursed under his breath, realizing he was immobilized.

Vivienne had drugged him!

With the last of his strength, he lifted his head to look at Percival. "Why won't you kill me?"

Percival shrugged nonchalantly. "My Vivienne won't let me."

Scott paused, then understanding washed over him, and a tear trickled down as he laughed softly.

"Vivienne, you and your mother are so sure that I couldn't truly bring myself to kill."

Could he ever truly harm the daughter of the woman he loved?

Vivienne only found what Scott said laughable. "You're right. You didn't kill my mother. However, you

had the intention to. You think you have the right to act like a devoted lover? How laughable."

Scott remained silent. He had no rebuttal.

Indeed, he loved Karen deeply and was willing to spend the remainder of his life with her.

To him, Karen was a ray of light that shone into his life, bringing hope to all the darkness within him.

Thus, he could never kill Karen himself in the end.

Vivienne, the living reminder of Karen, how could he possibly harm her?

His earlier action was nothing more than a ploy to provoke Percival into killing him to avoid capture by the Vanguard Agency.

But he had not anticipated Vivienne seeing right through him.

Vivienne looked coldly at Scott. Her hatred towards the man had never waned.

No matter how much he tried to hold back against her, in the end, it was nothing but a self-delusion.

Did he really think he had the heart to finish her off?

Leopold yanked off his belt and used it to bind Scott's hands.

With the belt serving as makeshift handcuffs, he was left to carry Scott with one hand and hold up his pants with the other. Updated at Dramanovels.com

However, turning around, he saw several officers from the Vanguard Agency at the door, handcuffs in hand, staring at him wordlessly.

Percival just stood there, speechless.

Who brought this embarrassing man here?

Scott was finally apprehended.

After the Vanguard Agency took him away, Vivienne began packing her things to leave the Brooks

Mansion.

Her mother's death was tied to Scott in some way, but not significantly so.

She believed that once she uncovered the head of the GTO, she would finally get the answers she

sought.