

## **Million-Dollar 411**

### Chapter 411

Vivienne looked around at the grandeur of the Brooks Mansion one last time. The Brooks family, a name that once meant everything to her, had become a thing of the past.

Baron could not hold back but called out as she was about to leave. "Vivienne... what kind of punishment will he face?"

She paused, her beautiful eyes brimming with delight as she glanced back at the face that time had not been kind to. "The law will take care of his misdeeds. How severe the punishment will be depends on the gravity of his crimes."

With that, Vivienne looked at Baron, a playful smile tugging at her lips. "No wonder the Brooks have stood strong for a century. Baron, you sure have mastered the art of playing the fool."

Baron's eyes narrowed. "What do you mean?"

Vivienne's slender, pale fingers brushed a stray lock of hair behind her ear, her smile now bewitching.

"I'm not Scott's biological daughter. You knew that all along, didn't you?"

Baron's pupils shook, but then he slowly revealed his true cunning nature, mixed with a unique sharpness. "You're frighteningly clever, Vivienne. It's a shame you're not my blood. If you were, I'd

hand over the reins of the Brooks family to you.”

He believed the Brooks name could stand firm for another century with Vivienne in charge.

But Vivienne’s smile deepened. “It’s a pity, but the Brooks family doesn’t interest me.”

After a brief pause, she added, “Baron, sometimes ignorance is bliss. Otherwise, life can be quite exhausting, don’t you agree?”

She had to admit that Baron always had many roles up his sleeve. He could play the domineering patriarch, the affectionate father, or the carefree man hidden from the world.

Even his recent display of affection towards Scott was an act.

When had he ever stopped performing? Perhaps only when he spoke of Dahlia did a moment of genuineness shine through.

Baron watched Vivienne for a long while before he burst into laughter. “You’re right. Ignorance can be a blessing.”

He had never truly loved his so-called eldest son or his current children. They were all conceived through Judith’s schemes—drugging, intoxication, and more.

How could he harbor deep affection for them?

It was more a sense of guilt for not fulfilling his fatherly duties. When he was forced to send Scott away, and when Scott returned, he knew that the boy was no longer the child he once knew. But Scott held the fate of the entire Brooks family and its foundation in his hands.

If Baron had refused to hand over the position of head of the family, he might well have found himself dead by Scott's hand.

So, he had no choice but to pass on the mantle and keep control of the Brooks business empire as leverage to protect the family.

For years, he avoided meddling in Scott's affairs, choosing to spend his days in a nursing home. But he was not oblivious to Scott's actions, including the plot to use Paula to kill Karen.

At that time, he could do nothing but buy Karen some time at the engagement party, doing his duty as a father to avert some of the disaster headed Paula's way.

His performance for Vivienne today was also to ensure that she would not take action against the Brooks family in the future.

If he had not sold Scott to that organization back then, Scott and Karen might have become the perfect

couple people talked about.

However, he had not expected Vivienne to lack any real blood ties to Scott either. Indeed, he had known this for quite some time.

Someone had delivered a paternity test for Vivienne and Scott, which differed from the one in Scott's possession. His showed no blood relation.

Baron did not know who sent it, but being as shrewd as he was, he realized someone was targeting Scott and even helping Vivienne from the shadows.

That was why he stood up for Vivienne when the Brooks family gave her trouble, although she never needed his protection.

His support of Vivienne was not just because of her capabilities but also for Karen, the talented woman who came to investigate Scott but was willing to lend a hand when the Brooks family was in trouble.

Helping Vivienne was also a way to repay a favor. But...

No one knew that he had been aware for a long time that Scott was not his son.

How long had he known? He could not remember.

Vivienne glanced over at Timothy and Melissa's family. "If you ever need my help, just ask."

She would still look out for the Brooks family for her mother's sake.

With that, she linked arms with Percival and walked away.

Leaving the Brooks Mansion, Vivienne received a text from Astrid.

[Vivienne, got time? Fancy a shopping spree?]

A smile curled the corners of her lips, her slender fingers swiftly tapping a response on the screen.

Watching the light dance in her eyes, Percival playfully rubbed the corner of her mouth. "What's making you smile?"

She pocketed her phone, her eyes reflecting his handsome features. "Astrid wants to hit the shops."

He nodded, "Let's go. I'll drive you there."

Outside the mall, Astrid waited, donning a pair of stylish shades and a chic hunter-green trench coat, looking every inch the model she was.

She truly had inherited every bit of Cordelia's beauty.

Vivienne glanced back at Percival trailing behind and chuckled, "No worries, he's just my bag carrier today."

With a nod and a casual salute, Percival affirmed his role.

Linking arms affectionately, Astrid and Vivienne walked into the mall together.

Vivienne was not really in the mall for anything, while Astrid was mainly out to pick up some clothes for

Cordelia and Dorian.

After meandering through stores for a while, they settled into a cozy booth at a bustling buffet

restaurant.

"Being away from home so much, I can't help but feel like I owe my parents," Astrid mused between

bites. "Sometimes, the guilt just hits, you know?" New chapter available on [Dramanovels.com](http://Dramanovels.com)

Vivienne looked up, her eyes shimmering with unspoken thoughts. "Why didn't you invite Mom to join

us today?"

"Sure, they're busy," Vivienne replied, scooping up a spoonful of the creamy soup, her voice light.

Astrid bit her lip, seemingly on the verge of saying more, but hesitated in Percival's presence.

Catching the tension, Percival glanced at them and then stood up. "I'll grab some more food."

Once he was out of earshot, Astrid set her spoon down and leaned in. "Vivienne, I've been meaning to

talk to you about something, but I'm not sure if this is the right time."

"Just say it," Vivienne responded, putting aside her plate and meeting Astrid's gaze squarely.

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Vivienne did not reply immediately. Instead, she simply gazed at Astrid, waiting for her to continue.

Feeling a bit anxious, Astrid elaborated, "Don't get me wrong, Vivienne. I'm not saying that Percival

isn't treating you well. I'm just thinking, with the Ellington family being such a prestigious and influential

family, it's a complex world out there. If you had enough confidence and strength, you wouldn't need to

put up with any discomfort there."

Vivienne nodded slightly, "You make a good point."

Astrid let out a sigh of relief. "I'm glad you understand what I'm getting at. I hope I haven't

overstepped."

"Not at all," Vivienne replied, taking a sip of her drink, "I can contribute some innovative fragrance

formulas at the company, which could quickly build a reputation for us."

Astrid felt an awkward sense of being seen through and could only force a chuckle, taking a sip of her

water to cover her nerves. "You're right. It's a win-win situation, isn't it?"

Vivienne raised an eyebrow, a subtle gleam in her eyes.

After dinner, it was getting late. Alfred pulled the car up to the mall to pick up Astrid.

"Vivienne, let me drive you two back," Alfred called out, rolling down his window.

"No need, we drove here," Vivienne declined coolly.

"Alright then. Take care," Alfred waved and drove off with Astrid.

Watching their car disappear into the distance, Vivienne's eyes narrowed thoughtfully.

Percival draped his jacket over Vivienne's shoulders, his fingertips lightly touching her cheek, "Getting impatient?"

She nodded. "More than I expected. It's quite dull."

He wrapped an arm around her waist and ushered her into the car, saying, "Then let's take our time. As long as you're happy."

A grin spread across Vivienne's face. "Sounds good to me!"

Meanwhile, Alfred pulled over to the side of the road.

"Did she agree?" He asked.

Astrid nodded, "Yes, she'll be joining the company soon. She's a natural at this, so coming up with a



few perfume formulas will be a breeze. Now, it's just a matter of how much she's willing to contribute."

Alfred smiled contentedly. "She's a genius. Having someone like her on our side is the best way to serve our nation."

Astrid looked at Alfred, her eyes curving into a smile. "You're absolutely right."

Indeed, Vivienne did exactly as Astrid had anticipated, taking an active role at Dorian's company.

Dorian was amazed. "Vivienne, are you sure about this? The company is just getting off the ground. It's going to be hard work. Why not wait until things are more stable before you join? It would be easier then."

"Dad, do you think I can't help stabilize the company?" Vivienne countered.

Dorian quickly reassured her, "No, no, I didn't mean that. I just don't want you to overwork yourself.

You're young. You should be enjoying yourself, not trapped in an office with no time to yourself."

"I'll rest when I need to. Don't worry."

With Vivienne joining the company, she also moved back into Dorian's home.

Dorian had always kept her room ready, furnished just how she liked it, so she could finally get a good night's sleep.

Just as Astrid had said, Dorian and Cordelia were indeed busy with company matters from dawn till dusk.

They were constantly discussing and verifying various reports, barely able to catch their breath.

Sometimes, Thaddeus would go hungry, waiting for his parents to return.

Vivienne's arrival lightened their load considerably, especially regarding fragrance formulation.

Although Karen's legacy of perfume formulas was enough to sustain the company, Dorian still wanted to develop more varieties to ensure continuous innovation.

"Vivienne's new formula smells like a fresh rainfall, rich and enduring. I like it," Cordelia announced, marking one of the formulas with a check.

"I think this one is also fitting. It has a natural, earthy scent." Dorian selected another.

Their opinions differed, and while they could launch both, the startup costs for two new perfumes were substantial for a fledgling company.

During the deadlock, Astrid stepped in, examining both formulas. The numbers of the formulas were very detailed, and the ingredients used were accurate. She carefully read both formulas, the gleam in

her eyes getting deeper.

Then, she suggested, "Mom, Dad, I think these two are both great. Why not ask Vivienne which one she prefers to launch first?"

Playing with Thaddeus and his Lego, Vivienne heard Astrid mention her and said, "Thaddeus, let's draw straws."

The boy excitedly picked one of the crumpled papers on the table.

Cordelia cheered as Thaddeus picked her favorite. "I win! We'll launch this one. I'll immediately discuss the launch strategy with the marketing team."

With the fragrance decided, Dorian also had to discuss production schedules with the factory. "Astrid, Vivienne, we're off to the company. Stay safe at home, and if you're hungry, order some takeout. Don't skimp on the good stuff!"

As he spoke, Dorian left some cash on the table and hurried out.

Astrid shook her head at their parents' workaholic tendencies.

Vivienne just smiled, saying nothing.

Astrid ruffled Thaddeus's hair, saying, "Isn't it time for you to hit the books? Didn't the kindergarten give

you homework?"

The boy stuck out his tongue in mock protest. "Alright, alright, off to study I go."

After Thaddeus trotted off to his room, the smiles on their faces gradually faded.

Picking up the formula from the table, Astrid turned to Vivienne, "You really are a genius. This perfume smells amazing. It's going to be a hit."

"Good to hear you like it," Vivienne responded nonchalantly.

Astrid scrutinized the recipe before her—the precise ingredient ratios were not something an average person could concoct.

Vivienne continued to fiddle with the Lego on the table, seemingly oblivious to Astrid's actions.

Vivienne responded nonchalantly, "Do you know how to get into one of those national-level research institutes?" Content belongs to Dramanovels.com

Astrid's heart skipped a beat as she looked cautiously at Vivienne.

But she found that Vivienne's gaze was still fixed on the mountainous pile of Lego, not once straying in her direction.

It was filled with all sorts of documents from the company, useful and otherwise.

Vivienne finally looked up. "Anything's fine."

"Alright," Astrid replied, slipping into her shoes and stepping out the door.

As she closed the door behind her, Astrid glanced at the perfume recipe in her hand, and a sly smile crept across her lips.

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Two days later.

Dorian's company had finalized their new perfume line, and Vivienne found herself with some free time to visit the hospital.

Anna had already returned to school, but Natalia and Yasmine were still hospitalized, though they had been moved from intensive care to a regular VIP ward.

Jasper sat beside the crib with two plush toys in hand, smiling at the sight of his granddaughters' joyful faces, an involuntary chuckle escaping his lips.

Vivienne knocked on the door. "Excuse me, sir."

Jasper's face lit up with excitement. "Ah, young lady, you've finally made it. I was beginning to think you had forgotten about me."

"How could I forget such a charming gentleman?" Vivienne teased.

It was the first time Jasper had been described as charming, and he basked in the novelty, "My, my, your words warm an old man's heart."

Vivienne smiled.

Just then, Yuri and Zelda came in, and Jasper immediately boasted. "Vivienne just called me charming.

Take that, you bunch of brats who always call me stern. She doesn't think so."

He then turned to Vivienne. "I can call you Vivienne, right? It feels more personal."

"Of course," Vivienne replied with a laugh.

Yuri sighed, "Vivienne, my dad's only ever this happy when he's chatting with you. When he talks to me, he's far from charming."

"Cheeky boy, go fetch Vivienne's gift, will you? That's all you're good for," Jasper scolded, glaring at

Yuri.

This boy was no good!

"Dad, I've brought everything. Don't look at him. He's useless," Zelda said, also shooting Yuri a teasing

glare.

Yuri muttered to himself, feeling like the black sheep of the family.

Zelda retrieved a mahogany box from the cabinet, its craftsmanship clearly that of a master's touch.

"Vivienne, this isn't much, but please accept this small token of my father's gratitude. Do not reject it."

Inside was a set of Hope Blue Diamond jewelry in gold, which had sold for 80 million dollars at an

auction the year before, the Heart of Hope! The rarity of the craftsmanship was what truly set it apart.

Not much?

Even in Vivienne's collection, there was only one such set.

"It's too valuable, I can't accept it," She declined. She had helped save Natalia and Yasmine as a

byproduct of trying to rescue the captured babies; it was all in a day's work. There was nothing she had

done that could justify her accepting such a valuable gift.

Jasper placed the box in Vivienne's hands, saying, "You can't refuse an old man's gift; it's bad luck."

Zelda added, "Please, Vivienne, take it. We can't imagine what our girls would have gone through

without you. Words can't express our gratitude."

"Come on, take it. Otherwise, my dad will insist on personally delivering it to your house," Yuri joked,

holding his twin daughters.

Jasper tapped him with his cane, but not too hard. "Who said you could hold my granddaughters? Put them down."

"Can't I hold my daughters? Dad, you're being too harsh. Vivienne, you have to back me up here," Yuri pleaded.

Seeing their persistence, Vivienne finally accepted, then said to Yuri, "Mr. Perez, they say you owe a favor to the hand that gives. I'm afraid I can't help you."

Laughter filled the room, and Vivienne felt a sense of peace settling in her heart. Unconsciously, she had come to think of this room as her sanctuary, where she could just be.

When Vivienne left the hospital, it was getting dark. Percival was waiting downstairs and approached her as soon as she appeared.

A gust of cold wind blew, and Vivienne wrapped her coat tighter around herself, asking, "Why didn't you wait in the car?"

"I wanted to see you sooner," Percival said, taking Vivienne's hand and noticing the bag she was



carrying. "What's that?" He asked.

Vivienne glanced at it and smiled. "It's an apology gift, I suppose."

They had secretly collected her DNA to conduct a paternity test back in Sea City but had not yielded the desired results.

Nevertheless, the gesture was seen as an offense, hence the gift as a form of apology.

Vivienne did not take much offense; she understood the Perez family's desire to find their daughter, perhaps noting some resemblance between her and their memories of their daughter.

But she was not the Perez child.

Her mother was not a Perez.

Though her mother was adopted, she never spoke of her biological family. Perhaps they had not been kind, so they had given her up.

At the hospital, Jasper stared at the paternity test report, a deep regret filling his eyes.

Vivienne felt so familiar, so much like his little Sasha.

But the test showed no genetic link between them at all.

How could this be?

Yuri sat down, taking the report from Jasper. "Dad, stop looking at it."

Yuri had also held out great hope for the test, feeling that Vivienne might be his sister's child.

But the results were clear, and they had to face the fact.

Jasper's eyes welled up with tears each time he thought of his daughter, his heart aching.

Yet he was convinced Vivienne must be related to his Sasha; his intuition was too strong.

"Isn't the Ellington family having a birthday celebration soon?" Jasper asked.

Yuri nodded. "Yes, Dad. Do you want to attend?"

"Yes, find a way to get the Ellingtons to invite us."

The Perez family, a powerhouse in Sea City, had never ventured to Rivenwood, and their stay had been discreet.

It was normal for the Ellington family not to invite them to their celebration.

However, as long as they put in a bit of effort, getting an invitation was not exactly rocket science. Read at [Dramanovels.com](http://Dramanovels.com)

Meanwhile, the members from the second branch of the Ellington family were discussing something.

Whenever he thought about the whopping 10 billion dollars given to Percival and Vivienne, he felt a pang in his heart.

That was 10 billion dollars! How long could he have lived it up with that kind of cash?

Fiona sat quietly on the side, her gaze fixed indifferently on the tablet in her hands.

Jeffrey felt like he was punching a pillow, his frustration finding no solid target.

"You good-for-nothing, say something!" Jeffrey snatched the tablet from Fiona's grasp and slammed it on the table with a thud.

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A flash of fury flickered in Fiona's eyes, piercing through Jeffrey like an unseen gust of frosty air, so cold it was almost freezing.

Jeffrey jumped, a bit cowed. "I was just asking for your input, you know?"

Heloise stepped in to smooth things over. "Fiona, your brother didn't mean anything by it. Don't be mad."

Fiona picked up her tablet again, saying indifferently, "I want to launch my latest design at Grandpa's birthday bash."

At this, the others in the household perked up.

Fiona was the head of the jewelry design department at the company.

Richard greatly valued her work, so her family branch received many privileges.

However, it had been a while since Fiona had released a new design, leading to a bit of a slump in sales.

Now, she planned to unveil a new collection at the birthday bash, which could certainly help cover the deficit!

"That's my girl," cooed Heloise, "Don't overwork yourself. I'll go fix you some supper."

"Yeah, sweetheart, have something to eat. Don't tire yourself out. If this works out, I'll buy you that sports car you've been eyeing," Henry said.

Henry and Heloise could not be happier. They were ready to give Fiona the moon and the stars if she asked for them, let alone cars and suppers. All that mattered was for their family branch to shine in front of Richard.

Used to her parents' doting, Fiona retreated to her room with her tablet to continue her work.

This design had consumed all of her time and passion, yet she felt it still lacked something compared to

master Jessica's work.

Jeffrey felt a twinge of jealousy.

It was just jewelry design. They had all studied art; it was nothing special.

But if Fiona wanted to grab the spotlight, he was not about to be left behind.

He needed to ensure Vivienne got a taste of her own medicine at the party, or else Fiona would hog all the attention.

Richard's birthday bash was fast approaching.

It was a big deal for the Ellington family, and Percival was swept up in the preparations.

He took charge of everything, even making sure to handpick the menu.

Richard, for his part, was looking forward to making a grand entrance with his granddaughter-in-law. He thought it would add prestige to the occasion.

Stealing a moment from the bustle, Percival relayed the news to Vivienne. "Grandpa has a few ideas for making an entrance. He's even thinking of rehearsing with you."

Vivienne could not help but laugh at the thought.

"I'll be picking up your folks the day after tomorrow, so just wait for me at home. I've also invited the

Perez family," Percival said as he slipped a piece of cake into Vivienne's mouth.

Vivienne was surprised by the mention of the Perez family.

"Their mining business isn't that closely linked with ours. Why the invite?" She asked.

Percival smiled. "Mr. Perez reached out a few days ago, wanting to discuss some business opportunities related to the mines."

"Jewelry?" Vivienne raised an eyebrow.

He nodded. "Exactly. They seem genuine, and it would be rude not to entertain the idea."

Who would complain about having too much money?

Besides, it was all going to his wife.

The more she had, the tighter her hold on him.

Otherwise, he would suffer a massive loss if she ran away.

Especially since he had nine meddlesome 'brothers-in-law' dreaming of breaking them up.

Not to mention that Aaron kid.

"The Perez family could be good partners," Vivienne said thoughtfully, finishing off all the strawberry

cake.

Strawberry cake was delicious. But too much sugar was not good. For Mr. Wolf's health, he should not have too much sweetness. So, the unhealthy indulgence would be her burden to bear. After all, being ten years younger, she could afford to shave a year or two off her lifespan for his sake.

She was a thoughtful fiancée indeed.

Percival could only smile wryly.

Thoughtful indeed! Too thoughtful to share!

He replaced the cake with a cup of refreshing water, saying, "The Perez family is a solid partner, but their animosity towards me, especially Jasper, runs deep."

Vivienne blinked, "What animosity?"

Had her intelligence dropped?

She had not noticed any hostility from Jasper towards Mr. Wolf.

Percival just laughed. "Maybe they think I'm not good enough for you?"

Vivienne was speechless.

Was that really what they thought?

Had Mr. Wolf been spending too much time with Leopold, picking up his odd habits?

Percival changed the subject. "At the birthday bash, things might get a bit turbulent for the Ellingtons.

Keep a close eye out, along with Dorian and Cordelia."

"Sure," Vivienne nodded.

Lately, she had been overthinking things. Now, she just wanted to relax.

So, the brain work would be left to Mr. Wolf. She had heard the food at the bash was excellent. She

had lost some weight recently. Time to indulge!

...

On the day of the birthday bash.

Percival personally drove to pick up Dorian's family.

The company was thriving, and Dorian's family had upgraded, donning bespoke formal wear.

Thaddeus, once groomed, looked even more dashing.

Astrid, now at Rivenwood, was, of course, joining in.

Early in the morning, she arrived with Alfred, waiting for Percival to pick them up.



Vivienne nodded and cast a meaningful glance at her. "Okay!"

Then she took Dorian's family and Thaddeus and headed out first.

After they left, Astrid let go of Alfred's arm, her eyes gleaming. "Make a good impression at the bash."

"Don't worry," Alfred replied with a smile.

"Hey there," Kenneth said, giving Mark a nod. Read at [Dramanovels.com](http://Dramanovels.com)

Aware that Kenneth was mainly there to see Aaron, Mark replied briefly and, after giving Aaron a few instructions, went off to mingle and chat with some familiar business associates.

Kenneth glanced around and then whispered, "Are you all set?"

Aaron looked at Kenneth with a hint of disdain. "Set for what?"

"I know, I know," Aaron said, shaking off Kenneth's hand and heading towards the banquet hall.

Kenneth followed closely. He needed to stick to Aaron like glue until they encountered Vivienne to ensure the plan unfolded perfectly.

Aaron felt annoyed but had no choice but to let Kenneth tag along.

Before long, Percival drove up and parked in the hall's lot.

"They're here, they're here!" Kenneth exclaimed, tugging on Aaron's sleeve energetically.

Aaron, annoyed, kicked at Kenneth's shin. "I can see that."

"Then get moving!" Kenneth urged, pushing Aaron forward.

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Aaron had barely taken a few steps when he caught sight of Vivienne on Percival's arm, accompanied

by her family and Richard, heading in the opposite direction.

Frustration bubbled within him. "Weren't we supposed to split them up from the get-go? What now?"

Equally taken aback by his grandfather's intervention, Kenneth sighed. "The first step of the plan is a

bust. What else?"

The two young men exchanged a look of mutual disdain before parting ways.

From a distance, Vivienne was surprised to see Aaron and Kenneth together.

"Are those two playing nice again?" She asked.

Percival found Aaron's presence irritating, but he could not show it too openly, given that Aaron was a

friend of Vivienne's. Thus, he said calmly, "Who knows? Let them be."

Vivienne did not press any further.

Richard followed the rehearsed plan to the letter, entering with Vivienne at his side, ensuring she was

the center of attention.

Vivienne, albeit reluctantly, complied. After all, the birthday boy calls the shots.

While they waited, Fiona approached them.

"Grandpa, Vivienne," she said, holding a box that contained her latest jewelry design. "Grandpa, after your speech, I hope Vivienne can wear this set to showcase it. What do you think?"

Richard's displeasure was evident, though he remained silent.

He intended for Vivienne to be seen purely as part of his entourage, to underscore his status, not as a billboard for the company.

Fiona hastily added, "I just think the jewels would look stunning on Vivienne. That's all."

Since Fiona's motivations were for the company's good, Richard could not bring himself to reprimand her. "Vivienne will simply accompany me for the entrance. You can wear the set yourself—it'll be more convenient. I'll give you a moment to speak later."

Upon his refusal, Fiona had no choice but to let it go.

She had hoped to leverage Vivienne's identity as Master Charles, combining it with her jewelry concept to create a buzz for her product.

Vivienne glanced at the finished jewelry piece in Fiona's hands. It was eye-catching at first, but she knew it lacked staying power and could quickly become an ornamental burden.

"Let's go, Vivienne," Richard said, leading her into the ballroom to deliver his speech.

Jeffrey emerged from the shadows, his mocking gaze on Fiona. "How did that go? Got shot down, huh? Looks like it's up to me now."

Fiona's gaze turned icy as she warned, "Don't you dare mess up my jewelry debut, or you'll regret it!"

The birthday gala was supposed to be an excellent opportunity that could have been used to take Percival down.

However, after the art exhibition, Fiona sensed Percival was onto something. She was confident that any move she made during the gala would end in utter defeat.

So, this time, her focus was not on taking Percival down. Instead, she aimed to cement her position in her grandfather's heart and lower Percival's guard.

Jeffrey snorted. "With your tacky jewelry, you think you can win Grandpa's favor for our family branch?

You spend your days fiddling with those trinkets; it's messed with your brain. If you keep at this pace,

Percival will take over the Ellington family sooner or later. Then, let's see if you'll still have the mood to fiddle with those things?"

When Percival was deemed a 'lost cause,' Jeffrey had not taken him seriously. What could a good-for-nothing do, after all?

So, he had focused on battling Paul, which had left both of them weakened.

Although Paul was now released, he had lost his standing in their grandfather's eyes.

And Jeffrey, compromised by the art exhibition debacle, had to bite his tongue.

But recent events within the Ellington family had given him clarity.

Percival, a lost cause? It had all been an act.

It was all to pit him against Paul, to reap the benefits of their feud.

Jeffrey was not about to let that happen. If he did not act soon, the Ellington family would be Percival's for the taking.

This gala was an opportunity he could not miss. He had to drag Percival down. At the very least, he had to ensure Percival and Vivienne did not have it easy.

Fiona shot him a chilling glance, her eyes momentarily flaring with malice before she turned away.

"This is your last warning. If you ruin my plans, you'll get it from me."

She then walked away, leaving Jeffrey to spit after her in disdain. "Pretentious much? The Ellington family won't ever be yours."

But Fiona was out of earshot.

As guests filled the room, the master of ceremonies delivered the opening remarks, inviting Richard to speak.

Richard took the stage with only Vivienne by his side, signaling the importance he placed on her, while even Percival waited below.

After the speech, Vivienne's standing in Rivenwood's high society skyrocketed.

At least now, the influential families knew she was Percival's fiancée, Richard's cherished future granddaughter-in-law.

Anyone thinking of crossing Vivienne would now have to weigh their stature against the might of the Ellington family.

Dorian's family watched from their seats, their hearts filled with contentment.

As long as the Ellington family treated Vivienne well, they could rest easy.

After his speech, Richard casually mentioned Fiona's designs, giving her the cue to take the stage.

As she presented her jewelry, the ladies in the audience gasped in admiration.

"Wow, what stunning jewelry! Is this the set the Ellington family previewed earlier?"

"I knew Fiona Ellington wouldn't let us down. I'd like to reserve a set!"

"I've been in need of some new jewelry myself; count me in for one too."

The cheers in the room were deafening, and Richard was clearly pleased. Putting Fiona in charge of the jewelry department had been a wise decision.

Suddenly, Jeffrey's voice cut through the buzz, "Cordelia, do you fancy this set of jewels?" Updated at

[Dramanovels.com](http://Dramanovels.com)

The crowd turned to look, and Cordelia was taken aback. Why was she being singled out?

But with all eyes on her, she had no choice but to respond, albeit reluctantly, "Of course."

"Then why don't you give us your critique?" Jeffrey said with a sneer, aiming to embarrass Vivienne through her relative.

Everyone knew Cordelia was related to Vivienne; putting her on the spot directly hit Vivienne's prestige.

Cordelia pressed her lips, glanced at the jewelry set, and said earnestly, "They're quite lovely, very dazzling in design."

#### Chapter 416

On the surface, Jeffrey was criticizing Dorian's family for lacking proper lineage. However, he was clearly mocking Vivienne for not having a reputable background—a nobody taken in from the wild.

Cordelia's eyes brimmed with tears, and Dorian was fuming, but this was the Ellington Mansion's grand hall, and he could not very well throw a fit and ruin the birthday celebration.

Vivienne's brow furrowed. Messing with her family was akin to poking a sleeping bear.

But this was Richard's milestone birthday, and despite her irritation with Jeffrey, she gave Richard the respect he deserved by not causing a scene.

She stepped forward, slipping her arm through Cordelia's, saying, "Mom, Dad, as long as you'll have me, I'll always be your daughter. As for the barking of some dogs, we needn't bother with them."

Her voice was just loud enough for everyone to hear clearly.

Jeffrey bellowed, "Vivienne, who are you calling a dog?"

"The one responding," Vivienne replied coolly.



"You think I don't dare to slap you for that?" Jeffrey, unaccustomed to such disrespect, advanced towards Vivienne.

Before he could lay a hand on her, Richard's cane came crashing down.

"You little bastard, what nonsense are you spewing? You think you can hit Vivienne? I'll whip you myself! Useless trash!" Richard brandished his cane, chasing after Jeffrey.

Fiona cursed under her breath. She thought he might have some sense, but this was his grand idea—to infuriate Vivienne into lashing out. Yet he was the one to lose his cool first.

Both Percival and Richard treated Vivienne like a treasure—how could they let her be humiliated?

Even if it meant causing a scene at the birthday event, they would not stand by and let Vivienne be scorned!

This useless fool, always botching things up!

Nevertheless, she stepped forward, taking hold of Richard. "Grandpa, please calm down. Jeffrey didn't mean any harm. He just doesn't know how to speak. Jeffrey, aren't you going to apologize to Cordelia and Vivienne?"

Richard stood on the stage, fuming, and even shouted at Jeffrey, "Let me tell you, Vivienne is my

beloved granddaughter-in-law. Her family is my family. Now go apologize to my in-laws, or I swear I'll break your legs today!"

Jeffrey was reluctant, unable to believe that Richard would actually humiliate him in front of so many people.

He could not accept this!

"Vivienne, even if you claim this commoner as your mother, your ignorance is still apparent. Pretending to be high society? You think a fancy dress makes you one of us?" Jeffrey scoffed at Vivienne, "Not to mention jewelry. You have no clue about it!"

Fiona frowned, scolding Jeffrey inwardly, "Idiot, will you never stop?"

"Jeffrey, Vivienne just has a different expertise. You can't talk like that," Fiona tugged at Jeffrey, apologizing to Vivienne, "I'm sorry, Vivienne. Maybe you should take your family and leave for now."

Percival's stern face showed a flicker of coldness as he looked at Fiona and suddenly smiled, "Fiona, did you just suggest that the guests I invited, my in-laws, should leave? Are you joking?"

His smile did not show the slightest joy.

Fiona's expression changed, realizing Percival was truly angered.

"That's not what I meant. I just thought continuing like this wouldn't look good, so I suggested... I'm

sorry, it's my..."

Before she could finish, Percival interrupted with a cold voice, "The ones who should leave are you, not

my in-laws. Right, Sis?"

Percival's anger was palpable, an invisible frost surrounding him, particularly when he addressed her

as 'Sis,' sending a shiver down Fiona's spine.

As she was about to explain further, Jeffrey spoke up, "Vivienne's just a country bumpkin! What's

wrong with what I said? She can't even afford proper jewelry, let alone understand it!"

Fiona's hand flew and struck Jeffrey across the face, "Shut up!"

Fool!

Such a low-level tactic! How could his pig brain even come up with it?

She tried her best to salvage the situation, and he was fanning the flames!

He was a complete idiot!

Jeffrey looked at Fiona in disbelief. "You hit me?"

But before he could react further, Percival grabbed Jeffrey by the collar and tossed him out of the hall.

A sound of bones breaking echoed.

Percival's deep, cold gaze turned to Jeffrey outside the hall, his eyes as sharp as knives.

If it were not for Grandpa's birthday today, he would make Jeffrey learn the consequences of insulting

Vivienne.

"Anyone who disrespects Vivienne or my in-laws in the future, don't blame me for not being polite!"

Percival swept a cold glance across the crowd, his commanding presence silencing them.

Henry was about to explode in anger but saw Fiona shake her head at him, signaling him to back

down.

They could not afford to sacrifice the whole family branch for Jeffrey.

Fiona moved to smooth things over, "Percival, Vivienne, I apologize on behalf of my brother. We're

sorry."

Vivienne remained silent, simply comforting Cordelia.

With Mr. Wolf taking charge, that was enough. And indeed, having someone in her corner felt pretty

good.

In the crowd, Jasper nodded silently. "He's got her back. That's a real man."

Yuri chuckled. "Indeed. So, do we join the fray now?"

"Let's wait. That little miss from the Ellington family, she's not as simple as she seems," Jasper said

with a hint of meaning, glancing at Fiona.

The words had barely left Fiona's lips when she made a goodwill gesture. "Cordelia, to express my

sincerest apologies, I would like to gift you this jewelry set for your collection."

Fiona clenched her fists in frustration, thinking that no one seemed to have an ounce of sense! Content

of Dramanovels.com

Vivienne had been holding her tongue, not wanting to cause a scene during the birthday celebration.

But with the continuous provocations, she was no longer about to remain polite.

She looked coldly at the so-called Signature Collection jewelry set. "A flawed set like that is worthy of

my mother's collection?"

Vivienne's blunt comment took Fiona aback, her pride stung.

This jewelry set was the result of her dedication and passion. It was her favorite design to date and had

garnered gasps of admiration from all the ladies upon its debut.

Yet, in Vivienne's mouth, it was reduced to a flawed product. How could Fiona stand for that?

Vivienne's eyebrows arched slightly, her eyes simmering with anger. "Since when do I need you to

teach me how to speak?"

Chapter 417

The moment Vivienne's words cut through the air, a wave of whispers began to ripple through the crowd.

"Oh, Vivienne's really pushing it with Mr. Ellington's favoritism."

"What can you do? She's pretty, and that goes a long way."

"What goes around comes around. She'll get hers eventually."

The murmurs of discontent piled up as Fiona's gaze darkened.

Vivienne just chuckled and said calmly, "Fine! For Richard's sake, why don't you just apologize?"

"Why should my daughter apologize? You were the one who smeared her design first. You're just a country bumpkin. Do you think marrying into the Ellingtons will change that?"

Heloise could not hold back any longer. Her son had just been rushed to the hospital, his condition

unknown, and now her daughter was being humiliated, too? They were shown zero respect!

Fiona remained silent. Even if Richard and Percival were on Vivienne's side, they could not silence the court of public opinion.

The tide of sentiment was turning in her favor.

Vivienne glanced disdainfully at Heloise. "What? Your daughter's design can't stand criticism? Heloise, who do you think you are to say my mother should wear flawed jewels?"

Heloise was about to retort when Vivienne cut her off coldly. "Or do you think I can't provide my mother with better jewelry than this?"

"You don't understand anything! Master Jessica personally endorsed my daughter!" Heloise blurted out in her defense, invoking the renowned name.

Fiona's expression darkened, but she said nothing in return.

The words were out. What good would contradicting them do now?

Unexpectedly, Richard said, "I haven't heard about Fiona being endorsed by Master Jessica. Has anyone here actually seen Master Jessica?"

Fiona's face flushed with embarrassment.

Her grandfather had publicly called her out, leaving her humiliated.

She had to face the music, explaining, "Grandpa, it wasn't a big deal, so I never mentioned it to you. I met with Master Jessica recently, and this jewelry set was designed under her guidance."

The crowd gasped.

Anyone who knew anything about jewelry recognized that Master Jessica was the pinnacle of the craft.

Years ago, she had designed a set called 'Dazzling Stars' that took the world by storm.

After it had been auctioned off for 100 billion dollars to a mysterious buyer, it had never been seen again.

From then on, Master Jessica became a legend.

Nobody expected Fiona to meet Master Jessica and receive her advice.

Fiona's jewelry set was suddenly elevated to divine status!

Vivienne's brow furrowed. Fiona was good at seizing opportunities.

With a single reference to Master Jessica, she had set the standard for her jewelry line.

Vivienne smiled faintly and slowly approached the showcase displaying the original prototype jewelry.



All eyes were on her, curious about her intentions.

To their surprise, she took a silver needle and disassembled the jewelry set!

"Vivienne, what are you doing?" Fiona yelled, stepping forward to stop her.

Percival held out his hand to keep Fiona back, "What's the rush? It's just a set of jewelry. If it gets damaged, I'll compensate you."

Fiona clenched her teeth.

Knowing she was no match for Percival, she stood her ground.

In less than half a minute, Vivienne stopped and turned around. The set of jewelry looked normal again.

But on closer inspection, it was slightly different from before.

"Why did she take it apart and put it back together... Wait, she removed two diamonds and rearranged them. It looks more refined now!"

"I can't quite put my finger on it, but I like it better now."

"The original design was a bit cluttered and dull, but after this tweak, it's just perfect!"

Fiona was stunned. This was exactly what she had envisioned!

How could this be?

Then, a deep voice from the crowd said, "It has Master Jessica's touch."

The crowd exclaimed again, "Yes, the last time I was this impressed was with 'Dazzling Stars.'"

"This set doesn't have the same wow factor as 'Dazzling Stars,' mainly because the original design wasn't as impressive. If it were redesigned, it would be so much better."

Vivienne glared at Fiona, "This is what a piece touched by Master Jessica looks like. It's a shame it's another blemish on my life."

Fiona looked at Vivienne in disbelief.

Was she hearing things?

Did Vivienne just imply that she was Master Jessica?

Impossible!

Absolutely impossible.

Vivienne could not possibly be Master Jessica. That was ridiculous!

The others also picked up on the hint from Vivienne's words.

"Are you really Master Jessica?"

"No way. How could Master Jessica be a young woman? Besides, isn't Vivienne known as Master Charles?"

Vivienne's identity was so multifaceted it seemed unbelievable.

How could one person be so omnipotent?

She was not a robot!

Jasper tapped his cane, drawing attention to the sudden silence.

He walked slowly to Vivienne and asked, "'Dazzling Stars' necklace has two initials on the back. What are they?"

Vivienne's eyes twinkled as she stepped forward and smiled, "Sir, it's the central diamond of the necklace that bears my mother's name."

That jewelry was designed with her mother's eyes in mind.

So, she had engraved Karen's initials on the back of the necklace.

Only those who had seen 'Dazzling Stars' would know this detail.

"What about the font?" Jasper inquired further.

"It's in French script, with a solid little star at the end of the 'K,'" Vivienne replied calmly.

Jasper nodded as Yuri presented the 'Dazzling Stars' collection. New chapter available on  
  
Dramanovels.com

"Vivienne is Master Jessica, and this 'Dazzling Stars' collection is proof of that."

Once the jewelry box was opened, the long-hidden 'Dazzling Stars' jewels were revealed to everyone  
  
present.

Jasper chuckled. "I had thought about gifting it to you, but now, I've had a change of heart."

Vivienne nodded as if it was the most natural thing. "Of course, I don't need a return of property. The  
  
money's been taken."

Jasper laughed heartily. He was really growing fond of Vivienne.

But what did Yuri's words imply?

Could it be...

Percival glanced at Fiona and then said to Yuri, "Mr. Perez, the Ellington Group also does not need  
  
such a designer."

"Then, the partnership continues," Yuri said with a satisfied nod.

#### Chapter 418

Fiona's gaze flitted towards Richard, her eyes betraying panic for the first time.

Richard looked at Fiona with disappointment. "Fiona, you should stay out of the company's affairs."

"Grandpa..."

Fiona could not believe it. In less than half an hour, the career she took pride in, which secured her a place in the prestigious Ellington family, had just vanished.

However, Richard could not be bothered with her and turned to encourage the rest of the guests to continue the festivities.

"Jasper, let me introduce you to my family," Vivienne said, guiding Jasper through the introductions to Dorian's family and Richard, among others.

After a brief moment of silence, the party resumed its lively atmosphere.

Fiona was left standing alone, ignored by everyone.

A server removed the set of original prototype jewelry she was so proud of under Percival's orders.

Watching Vivienne chat happily with Richard and Jasper, Fiona clenched her fist tightly.

"Vivienne, Percival, I swear I'll get my revenge! I'll kill both of you!" She yelled inwardly.

Suddenly, someone bumped her shoulder, and she found a note and a remote control device in her hand.

Fiona was stunned but opened the note to read, [Close the door, catch the dog.]

She scanned the room but could not find the person who had given the note to her.

Though she did not want to cause a scene at the party, she knew this was her chance.

Blinded by rage, she did not stop to consider why Vivienne and Percival's attitudes towards her had changed so suddenly.

They used to get along so well.

Percival had always respected her as his cousin. But today, his gaze was indifferent, as if she were a stranger.

Elsewhere, Kenneth was fuming, munching on pastries, and glowering at the sight of Vivienne and

Percival holding hands.

"Aaron, can you do anything about this or not?"

Aaron rolled his eyes. "Do you think I have any reason to take Vivienne away from here?"

Kenneth gritted his teeth. "Follow me! I refuse to believe we can't split them up."

With that, Kenneth handed Aaron a glass of wine.

Reluctantly, Aaron followed.

"Grandpa, I want you to meet my good buddy, Aaron. He's here to wish you a happy birthday," Kenneth said, slinging an arm around Aaron's shoulders to emphasize their close friendship.

Aaron was annoyed but could not push Kenneth away.

He braced himself, saying, "Sir Richard, may you live long and prosper."

Richard smiled warmly. "You're the FPP from that championship game, aren't you? Quite the looker.

You should teach my little grandson here sometime."

Kenneth blushed. "Grandpa, it's FMVP, and I don't need his coaching. I'm way better than him!"

Aaron pinched Kenneth hard, warning him with a glare not to forget their real purpose.

Kenneth cleared his throat and said to Percival, "Bro, I need to talk to you for a sec."

Aaron chuckled awkwardly, realizing how forced it sounded, but they had no choice.

"Vivienne, I need to discuss something with you as well."

Vivienne and Percival exchanged a glance, assuming it was team business, and stood to leave with the

two men.

However, to Percival's surprise, Kenneth led him to a back lounge room filled with beauties!

"Mr. Ellington, nice to meet you."

Kenneth grinned like a sly pimp. "Bro, they're all my fans, they..."

With a kick, Percival nearly broke Kenneth's leg.

"You're too young to be up to no good. You think I'm giving you this much freedom?" Percival did not wait for a response and dragged Kenneth out of the lounge room by the ear.

Amid the screams, the beauties were left wondering what to do.

Meanwhile, Aaron, figuring enough time had passed and Percival would be seated by now, knew he could not dawdle.

Kenneth had mentioned Percival was not interested in other women, and if they took too long, he'd leave.

"Vivienne, over here, Kenneth's got something for me." Without further ado, Aaron led Vivienne towards the lounge.



Upon opening the door, the women were drinking and eating, with no sign of Percival.

Aaron cursed silently, wondering where Kenneth had gone.

He turned to see Vivienne smirking. "So this is your hobby? Just turned legal, and you're already

playing this game? And ten at once, no less. Quite the stamina!"

Just as Aaron tried to explain, Kenneth, beaten and barely able to speak, was dragged back by

Percival.

"Vivienne," Percival called out, his presence as chilling as an iceberg, "Did these two arrange this?"

Vivienne nodded. "Looks like they need a lesson."

They were too young to be misbehaving. It would be her reputation on the line if word got out.

That simply would not do.

Pride was at stake.

"No, Vivienne, it was Kenneth..."

Before Aaron could finish, Vivienne interjected, "A hundred frog jumps. If you can't finish, don't call me

coach!"

Percival tossed Kenneth out as well. "Ringleader—two hundred."

Vivienne leaned into him. "Sure, let's go."

As they walked away, Aaron could not help feeling resentful.

Kenneth began his frog jumps, nudging Aaron, "Hurry up, didn't Vivienne say you can't call her coach if you don't finish?"

Kenneth started jumping, but halfway through, he suddenly collapsed.

Aaron thought Kenneth had twisted his ankle and stopped to check on him. "What's wrong?"

Aaron deflated. "If I don't finish the routine, I can't call her 'Coach' anymore."

Kenneth felt like his blood pressure was through the roof. Read at [Drqmanovels.com](http://Drqmanovels.com)

Aaron looked at Kenneth like he was an alien. "Didn't your brother tell you? He even made a bet with her."

"Holy smokes!" Kenneth bellowed, his entire worldview shattering.

Vivienne was his idol!

As the birthday bash wound down, Vivienne and Percival saw off all the guests and personally escorted Jasper and his son to the exit.

Jasper and Richard had hit it off, chatting away and even making plans to go hiking the next day.

After exchanging pleasantries for quite some time, they finally left.

Percival was also due to drive Dorian's family home, so they all headed to the parking lot together.

But just as they were about to enter their cars, Astrid's vehicle suddenly burst into flames.

Then came the sound of countless bullets raining down!

Vivienne and Percival reacted instantly, shoving Dorian's family into the car.

Chapter 419

Percival's car was bulletproof, a rolling fortress that ensured their safety amid the chaos.

Hunkered down beside the vehicle, Vivienne and Percival awaited the right moment to make a break

for it.

But Astrid and Alfred were left without adequate cover, squatting behind another car that was riddled

with bullet holes and leaking oil, a ticking time bomb waiting to ignite.

Inside the car, Cordelia was in hysterics, but Vivienne had locked the doors for safety, trapping her

within.

"Astrid! Vivienne!" Dorian shouted, rolling down the window halfway, "What in the world is happening?

Why are there gunshots?"

Vivienne pushed Dorian's head back inside, yelling, "Get down!"

Observing their surroundings, Percival realized they were sitting ducks - they had come for a birthday celebration, not a gunfight, and were unarmed against the hidden assailants. Their only chance was to pile into his car and get out of there.

However, Astrid and Alfred were at a distance, and rescuing them was no simple task, not to mention the car was already packed to the brim.

As the gunfire continued, Vivienne took charge, instructing Dorian through the window, "Dad, get Thaddeus down by the passenger side footwell. You hold Mom and squeeze in. Hurry!"

Dorian nodded rapidly, thankful Thaddeus was small enough to wiggle into the tight space. Once settled, Vivienne swung open the door and slid into the driver's seat, with Percival following and shielding Thaddeus.

Vivienne honked twice, signaling to Astrid, who pointed out a route to save them with a circular hand motion.

With a twist of the ignition, Vivienne floored the accelerator, using the bulk of the car to block incoming

bullets as Astrid and Alfred dodged the remaining gunfire.

Reaching a rendezvous point, Dorian, flustered by the chaos, forgot to open the door. Astrid leaped through the window, opened the door, and yanked Alfred inside before slamming it shut.

Vivienne glanced in the rear-view mirror to see several assailants emerge from the shadows, grenades in hand, hurling them at the car.

"Hold on tight!" She yelled, spinning the car around with a deft wheel flick.

The throttle hit the floor, charging towards the attackers. The grenades exploded behind them as

Vivienne's vehicle careened toward the scattering foes, not sparing a single one. The car struck with such force, sending them tumbling through the air before crashing to the ground.

"Ah!" Thaddeus gripped Percival tightly, witnessing a man sprawled across the hood.

"Vivienne, drift left," Percival instructed, sheltering Thaddeus's head as he spotted a straggler on the left.

The alley was too narrow for the car to pursue, so Vivienne blocked the entrance with the car.

Percival opened the car door, carrying Thaddeus and covering his eyes.

Seeing Percival approach, the last man standing fired his pistol. However, Percival evaded swiftly,

arrived before him in the blink of an eye, and knocked him out cold with a single punch.

Then, the chaos finally ended.

In the aftermath, Vivienne jumped out, dragging the groggy assailant off the hood and swiftly applying pressure points to subdue him and the others. They would not die, but they would not be going anywhere either.

Dorian and Cordelia clung to each other, shaking uncontrollably. They had never experienced anything like this, and they were terrified.

Astrid, however, was very calm and collected. She even helped Alfred attend to his arm wound.

Vivienne knocked on the window and said, "Come on, help us out."

Alfred and Astrid exchanged glances before joining Vivienne and Percival, tying up the attackers.

Percival's call to Leopold had him rushing to the scene, arriving with his usual flair, "Holy smokes, that was like a scene straight out of an action movie! You alright, Vivienne?"

With an eye roll, Vivienne responded, "I'm fine. Take these guys away and leave the car."

"Roger that," Leopold replied, then paused and said, "Wait, if I leave the car, how am I supposed to get

back?"

"Walk," Percival retorted with a smirk. This Leopold was really dull. He had already told him many people were here, yet he came alone!

Leopold grunted and called for backup. While waiting, he could not help but notice Astrid's and Alfred's composure amid the panic.

Once Leopold's men arrived, they took care of the scene, allowing Percival to offer his parents some water. "Mom, Dad, drink this. I'll take you home."

Dorian took the bottle with trembling hands, offering it to Cordelia, who waved and rejected it because she was too dizzy to drink.

Vivienne handed them each a calming pill, noting the need for later counseling. Otherwise, what had happened today would certainly traumatize them for life.

"Mom, Dad, get in the car with Thaddeus. Mr. Wolf will take you home," Vivienne softly said, ready to wrap up the night's harrowing events.

"No worries, I'll be right behind you with them," Vivienne reassured him, pointing towards Astrid and Alfred at her side.

Dorian's eyes darted between the two, his expression a complex tapestry of emotions.

Even to the untrained eye, it was evident that Astrid and Alfred's recent display of skill was far from ordinary.

After all, not just anyone could leap through a barrage of bullets into a moving car.

Percival glanced at Vivienne, who gave him a reassuring nod, signaling him to go ahead.

Without further questioning, he escorted Dorian and his family back home. Content belongs to

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Once they were gone, Vivienne climbed into the car left behind by Leopold and honked twice.

Astrid and Alfred made their way over and settled into the car.

Vivienne did not ask any questions; she just drove in silence.

Vivienne pulled the car over at an intersection, leaning back in her seat, her clear eyes fixed on the rear-view mirror.

"So, the people today came for you two?" She asked calmly.

Chapter 420

Astrid nodded affirmatively. "Yes, I've checked their IDs. They're agents from M State, probably here



because they wanted to steal top-secret bio-weapon intel. As for Alfred and me, we're the heads of the lab."

Vivienne pressed her lips, glancing back at Astrid, who looked slightly guilty. Then, Vivienne asked,

"Why would you tell me something so critical?"

Astrid glanced at Alfred, who sighed, saying, "Tell her. She has to know sooner or later."

"Vivienne," Astrid continued, "We've been keeping an eye on you, recognizing your brilliance in medicine."

"We've been cooped up at home because the agency tasked us with a mission. They want you to join our lab and contribute to the nation's latest bio-weapons project."

Vivienne's interest piqued. "Bio-weapons?"

"Yes. Even in these peaceful times, M State is lurking, concocting various viruses to disrupt world peace. We need to be prepared, and this bio-weapons program has been ongoing for years, just without significant progress."

"Why do you think I'd make a difference?" Vivienne raised an eyebrow, her gaze laden with meaning.

Astrid pulled a document from her bag - Vivienne's perfume formula she had given to Dorian!

"I took your perfume formula to the lab for analysis. The head researcher said the data aligns closely with our bio-weapon experiments. Your formula led to a breakthrough, so I sincerely invite you to join us and lend your expertise to our national defense."

Vivienne flicked her earlobe dismissively. "Not interested."

Astrid was taken aback by Vivienne's blunt refusal that did not have even a hint of diplomacy.

"I know today's events have you worried about your safety, but rest assured, if you join us, we'll ensure you're fully protected."

Vivienne snorted. "If it weren't for us today, would you two even be alive to have this conversation?"

Astrid nearly bit her tongue, looking awkwardly at Vivienne. "Sorry, my oversight today."

Alfred said, "We've managed to shake off some tails recently. We didn't suspect any agents in action, our apologies."

"Speaking of which, I find it strange. With all the commotion, not one of the Ellingtons' bodyguards showed up until Mr. Ellington called them over. Aren't we close to the banquet hall? Wasn't the explosion loud enough for them to hear?" Astrid frowned, her features half-shadowed in the dim light as

she pondered.

Alfred also furrowed his brow. "Vivienne, I suggest you avoid the Ellingtons for now. I'm concerned..."

"Spare your concerns for explaining this to our parents," Vivienne said, turning away from the

'righteous' duo.

Mentioning their parents brought a flicker of guilt across Astrid's face. "Vivienne, Alfred and I aren't

really a couple. It's just a cover for our mission, so we're not married. But could you keep this a secret?

I don't want to worry Mom."

"Fine." Vivienne nodded.

Reaching Dorian's home, Vivienne and Astrid stepped out of the car.

"Vivienne," Percival said as he emerged from the shadows.

Astrid understood they needed to talk and, after a brief greeting, helped Alfred into the house.

Back in the car, Percival removed a bug from the back seat.

With a snap, Vivienne crushed it.

Meanwhile, back in the house, Astrid, in agony, removed her hidden earpiece and tossed it on the

table, "We need to push harder, or she won't agree."

Alfred nodded. "Indeed."

In the car, Vivienne tossed the remains of the bug out the window. "Mr. Wolf, this time, I gave them one round for free like you suggested, but that's it."

Percival caressed Vivienne's cheek, his fingers savoring the silky touch like cream on sugar, "Next time, we play by your rules."

At this moment, Leopold called, and Percival activated the Bluetooth. "Speak."

An exasperated voice came through, "These tough nuts need a taste of their own medicine. I say we go off the books!"

Percival replied coolly, "Treat the prisoners with care."

Then, the sound of Leopold punching someone came from the other side of the line.

"Damn, did you just try to bite your tongue off? You think I approved that? Cap, this isn't going off the books."

"Good job, keep the interrogation tight."

"Will do."

After Leopold hung up, a chill danced in Percival's eyes. "These men might not know the truth. We still need to find him."

Vivienne nodded. "Don't worry, I've got it covered."

At the Ellington Mansion, Percival opened the door to find Fiona in tears beside Richard.

When Fiona saw Percival, she turned away, dabbing at her fallen tears. She had only processed the situation after confirming Percival and Vivienne's safety.

On the surface, everything had seemed fine. They were still the model cousins of the household.

But Percival's attitude toward her today was unexpectedly cold.

"Percival, come here," Richard called.

Percival loosened his suit jacket and tossed it on the couch. "Grandpa, what do you need?"

"Fiona, you tell him." Content of Dramanovels.com

Her plan had failed, and she was forced to continue playing the role of Percival's doting cousin.

"I am still an Ellington, and over the years, I've contributed more than just 300 million dollars to the company. Are you saying that you're willing to discard our family ties just because I offended Vivienne today?"

Percival lifted his eyes slightly, his gaze landing on Fiona's slightly angered face. "Yes, if you offend them again, I'll make sure you won't even be able to stay in Rivenwood."

Fiona looked at Percival coldly, pausing for a few seconds before replying, "You..."