

# Never Late, Never Away Chapter 276

Mark was the reason why Finnick pretended to be a cripple. Finnick suspected Mark had something to do with the accident which befell him ten years ago. Hence, she was also vigilant around Mark. I wonder what he wants to talk about.

Mark, on the other hand, was completely at ease as he offered Vivian to sit. "Have a seat. Let's have a chat."

He poured himself a glass of whiskey on ice and asked, "What do you want to drink? I have coffee, red wine, whisky and fruit juice."

Vivian replied, "Fruit juice is fine."

Mark appeared warm and endearing while speaking to her in a friendly tone. If Finnick had not warned her to be careful around him, she might have been cheated by Mark's facade.

Mark suddenly changed the topic and asked, "Did you have a fight with Finnick today? You don't seem to be happy around him."

"No, we are fine." Vivian didn't want to go into details about her relationship with Finnick.

Mark glanced at her. She is very reserved around me. I guess she doesn't really like me.

Mark decided to change the subject again, and said, "Did you know that Finnick was very playful as a child? He used to destroy Grandpa's furniture and Grandpa would always chase him with a stick to punish him. Finnick soon matured and did well in school. As a result, Grandpa doted on him. When he and Evelyn were kidnapped, I was extremely anxious..."

"Sorry, I need to go now," she interrupted. I don't want to stay here any longer. He makes me feel extremely on edge.

I don't want to listen to his lies as well. She was disgusted by Mark's behavior, especially when she knew he was the mastermind behind Finnick's kidnapping and the fact that he was blatantly lying to her now.

Mark curved his lips into a thin smile and said, "Stop right there. We rarely get to see each other. I want to talk to you."

Talk? To me?

Vivian couldn't tell what Mark was thinking—he was like a closed book. I don't think he just wants to have a simple chat with me.

Mark continued, "Sigh, Finnick has always been an aloof person. I know that he only married you because Grandpa was nagging at him, which is why you don't have a close relationship with him. Finnick must have always enraged you..."

Vivian didn't understand what he was hinting at. "What are you trying to say? You can give it to me straight instead of going in circles," she stated.

Mark was glad that she picked up on his hints.

He admitted, "Alright, I'm glad you are a smart person to converse with."

Mark gulped down his glass of whiskey. She is actually rather intelligent despite her soft-spoken personality. I can't believe she caught on so quickly.

He remarked, "Finnick isn't serious about your relationship. All he cares about is Evelyn and he has always relied on her. I can assure you that Finnick doesn't care about you at all. I hope you can consider what I said and think about whether you can help me with something."

"What do you need help with and how is it related to Finnick?" She enquired in confusion. "I don't think I can help you much. Why don't you just ask Finnick for assistance?"

Mark poured himself another glass of whisky. He had great alcohol tolerance and enjoyed his hard liquors. It could stimulate his brain, make him think quicker on the spot and calm him down during tricky situations.

Vivian had not taken a sip of her fruit juice and it remained on the table.

He said, "As long as you work with me in defeating Finnick, I will treat you very well. I'm a generous person."

Vivian's face instantly darkened.

He hasn't changed at all—he still wants to take revenge upon Finnick. I can't believe he would think that I would lend him a helping hand.

Is he crazy? Does he really hate Finnick so much? Finnick is also a member of the Norton family. Mark is somewhat alike to Ashley in this respect.

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Seeing as Vivian remained silent, Mark spoke again, "So what do you think? Money is the most important thing to a woman."

Vivian was disgusted by the fact that Mark wanted to defeat Finnick. He is like a poisonous snake. She intentionally asked, "How do you plan to take revenge on Finnick?"

"There are many ways to do so. We do not need to rush to think of a solution." He figured Vivian was willing to cooperate with him by asking the question. "So, I'm assuming that you are willing to cooperate with me?"

Work with you? What kind of person did he think I am?

Vivian suddenly felt like guffawing loudly.

"I would never work with you," she retorted coldly. "Let me give you a piece of advice—stop trying to exact revenge on Finnick. You guys are family."

"A family?" he scoffed. "Our family is not a tight-knit one. All of us have our own motives and plans. If you are willing to work for me, I promise you that I will let you and your mother live a lavish life."

"I don't need your help. I will not betray my husband nor my love for him just for money. You should extinguish any ideas you have," she asserted.

Mark's face instantly turned icy.

I can't believe Vivian is such a piece of work.

He added, "Stop being so stubborn. Finnick is a piece of trash. He will never trump my abilities. What do you think will happen to you and your mother then?"

Vivian knew he was lying about Finnick. He wouldn't be bragging if he knew how muscular and fit Finnick was.

Vivian taunted, "You shouldn't be so arrogant."

"Looks like you are not going to work for me then. Are you really ready to give up such a promising reward?" he asked. Did she think that I'm offering too little of a reward?

Vivian lost her last shred of patience.

"Mark, I'm done talking to you," she informed him. She then stood up and said, "I'm going to take a rest now. Goodbye."

As soon as she finished her statement, she left the room.

Mark gazed at her retreating figure with an indifferent look on his face. He laughed coldly and commented, "I can't believe how troublesome she is. She is persistent and very different from Evelyn..."

...

Finnick was alone in the room, waiting for Vivian. A million thoughts were running through his head.

He recalled her furious expression and realized that she was displeased with him.

Indeed, it was natural that she would be crossed with him as he was absent for the whole night.

Unfortunately, he was not good with putting his feelings into thoughts. Hence, he didn't know how to coax Vivian.

After mulling over this, he decided to phone Xavier.

Xavier was in the midst of an intimate affair when he picked up his phone. He asked, "It's so late. Why are you calling me and not cuddling Vivian?"

"I need your advice on something," he said.

Xavier choked on his beer and end up coughing when he heard what Finnick said.

Finnick moved the phone away from his ears as if Xavier had spluttered beer all over his face.

Xavier started chortling and commented, "Oh my! Don't scare me! When did you ever need my advice? Are you crazy? This is the most hilarious thing I've heard all day."

If Xavier were standing in front of him, Finnick would have given him a good beating.

"Enough!" exclaimed Finnick.

"Ok, fine. What do you want?" enquired Xavier.

"I found the person who saved my life. It's Vivian's younger sister," Finnick replied.

"Ashley? Are you referring to the one who manipulated Vivian ruthlessly? She is now a popular social media influencer," he commented in disbelief.

"Yes. I couldn't believe it initially as well," Finnick replied.

Xavier felt that Finnick's tone was abnormal. He questioned, "Why are you unhappy if you found her? Did she threaten you or did she force you to marry her?"

Finnick recounted everything that had happened to Xavier, including the fact that Vivian was angry with him.

Xavier finally understood why Finnick came to him for advice and why he was so miserable. It's all because of Vivian.

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“So that’s what happened,” Xavier mused. “I can’t believe you spent the whole day with Ashley after what she did to Vivian. No wonder Vivian is annoyed with you. If I were Vivian, I would have given you two tight slaps and given Ashley a good beating.”

Finnick threatened, “Do you want me to shut down your factory?”

“Alright, stop making false threats. I’m the one in the wrong,” he begged. “Mr. President is always right. I’m not criticizing you but I’m just standing up for Vivian.”

Finnick sighed and lamented, “I don’t like Ashley as well. However, she saved my life and I promised her that I would repay her favor.”

“Well, you are in a very tricky situation,” Xavier quipped. “I think you should have a nice talk with Vivian to prevent any further misunderstanding. Women can be easily coaxed. That’s my solution.”

“How do you coax women?” he queried.

This is probably the first time Finnick had to coax a women. He had never done so before.

“How to coax a woman?” Xavier chuckled. “You have to be romantic. Every woman loves that. They are very emotional. You should prepare a bouquet of flowers, perfume or jewelry... I’m sure she would love that. Do I still need to teach you all of this?”

“But Vivian doesn’t like any of those,” Finnick muttered.

Finnick is right. Vivian was different from the type of women Xavier dated. Such cliché items will not move her.

“Then think about it yourself,” Xavier replied and let out a loud yawn. “Anyway, no woman can resist romantic gestures. It’s just that Vivian likes a different type of romantic things. I’ve never met someone like her, so I can’t help you. Maybe you can try searching it up on the Internet?”

Finnick was irritated and the veins in his forehead were bulging.

Xavier felt Finnick's annoyance and immediately continued, "Well... I'm very busy right now. Just try searching it up on the Internet. I have to go!"

With that, Xavier's phone line went dead.

Finnick hesitated for a moment but decided to take up his advice.

He typed in the search box: How to give your girlfriend a romantic surprise?

A bunch of unique search suggestions popped out.

A webpage wrote that romance could only be achieved through sincere gestures. There was no need for inventive ideas, a once-in-a-lifetime scenery or luxurious gifts. If both parties were deeply in love, anything would be romantic. Even a kiss on the lips could be extremely passionate.

Method 1—Combine your past and present. Travel to the places you visited together and write down such memories.

Method 2—Wake her up with a lovely home-cooked breakfast and tell her you love her when she wakes up from her sleep.

Method 3—Take a short video of yourself everyday or multiple videos expressing your love for her!

The suggestions he found were so corny that he couldn't continue reading them. A layer of goosebumps had even formed on his arms.

After browsing the Internet for a long while, he finally found the perfect solution.

Hmm, I think she will be able to accept this.

When Vivian entered the room, Finnick was talking to someone on the phone. However, when he saw her, he immediately hung up his phone.

He must be helping the Miller family and doesn't want me to find out. I think that's the reason why he hung up his phone so hurriedly.

She had wanted to inform Finnick what Mark had just told her. However, when she realized that Finnick was hiding things behind her back, her heart immediately sank and she didn't feel like talking to him.

Vivian sat on the sofa and started reading a magazine.

Finnick asked, "Why were you gone for so long? What did Grandpa say to you?"

"Nothing much. He just wants us to..." she trailed off. Vivian suddenly felt awkward in front of him and she wasn't in the mood to speak to him anymore.

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At the sight of Vivian's hesitation, Finnick could tell that she must have misunderstood him and chose to give him the cold shoulder.

If this went on unresolved, Vivian's anger would boil over sooner or later.

"Vivian, I—" Finnick wanted to explain everything to Vivian, but the moment he opened his mouth, he realized he couldn't exactly tell her everything now. It was still a secret, after all. He couldn't just ruin the surprise.

He was forced to change the subject. "I was just settling some company stuff."

After he finished his sentence, the two of them fell into an uncomfortable silence.

The air simmered with reproach.

Vivian started flipping the pages of a magazine, but it felt like she was reading a foreign language.

Deep down, she firmly believed that Finnick was calling to help Ashley and the Miller family. He had once promised to protect her and always stand up for her. What is this all about, then? How could he break his promise?



Finnick was thinking of telling Vivian about how Ashley had saved him when they were younger. After all, the misunderstanding was caused by a lack of communication.

Besides that, he also wanted to apologize to Vivian. He had to admit that it was unfair to her.

Finnick coughed lightly, breaking the stiff silence. "Vivian, to be honest, I actually have been busy with the Miller family's matters for the few days."

"I know. You don't have to explain anything to me." Suddenly, Vivian no longer felt like listening to him. The moment she heard 'the Miller family,' she became nauseous.

She could already imagine how pleased Ashley looked. When they met at the door just now, she had already spotted Ashley's arrogant expression.

"Vivian, you don't get it." Finnick started panicking at Vivian's indifference. "Actually, Ashley—"

Abruptly, Vivian put her magazine down and stood up. "Sorry, I have to use the bathroom."

At this point, Finnick felt like giving up. He hadn't expected Vivian to hate Ashley so much. Why can't she just let me explain?

It was already bad enough without Vivian knowing that Ashley was the mastermind behind everything that happened two years ago. If she knew about it, she'd definitely hate Ashley even more.

Vivian locked herself in the bathroom, her eyes stinging with tears.

She felt that Finnick would never understand her point of view.

"Vivian," Finnick called in a low voice. "Please hear me out. There's a reason why I treated Ashley that way."

A reason?

What could the reason possibly be? It'll just be a bunch of excuses.

Vivian chuckled bitterly.

He had simply let Ashley walk free and even gotten back the money that the Miller family had lost. Those were the facts.

If he really cared for Vivian and wanted to protect her, how could he let Ashley and the Miller family go without teaching them a lesson? What if they came back and caused more trouble?

She was still hurt by what happened two years ago. Did he want to let her go through the same thing again?

When she thought of that, her heart immediately filled up with resentment.

She wasn't a vengeful person, but she could no longer forgive everything Ashley had done to her. The latter had almost ruined her entire life.

How could Finnick, who always talked about how he would help her gain justice, help the culprit who caused her problems?

It was bad enough that Finnick had let Ashley go, but now he was also clearly concerned about her and even helped her.

Vivian felt sadder the more she thought about it.

"Vivian, please just open the door. We need to talk." Finnick's low voice piped up once again, this time laced with a sense of urgency.

Vivian bit her lip.

She knew that this wasn't the right way to deal with the issue. Right as she was thinking of opening the door, she heard knocks coming from outside.

Knock, knock, knock.

Someone was outside the room.

That person called, "Mr. Norton, please open the door. This is the butler."

Finnick's expression darkened, and he opened the door unhappily.

The butler looked inside but failed to see Vivian. With a smile, he said, "Mr. Norton, there are a lot of people outside who're here to celebrate elder Mr. Norton's birthday, so he wants you and Mrs. Norton to come downstairs."

"Okay, I got it. We'll be down in a second," Finnick replied.

Vivian opened the door upon hearing the butler's words and kept her head down, unwilling to look Finnick in the eye.

"Vivian—" Finnick said as he reached out to grip her arm a little bit too tightly.

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Vivian's eyes were reddened and her tone had already softened, but she still wouldn't meet Finnick's gaze. "Let's go downstairs. We shouldn't keep Grandpa and the others waiting."

Finnick felt bad seeing Vivian's sorrow written all over her face.

Still, it wasn't the time to talk about such things. They had to go downstairs since everyone was waiting for them.

Once they got downstairs, Vivian noticed the sheer number of guests.

News of elder Mr. Norton's birthday celebration had gotten out, and plenty of people had arrived to give their blessings.

Everyone who was anyone in Sunshine City had made an appearance, much to Vivian's surprise.

The crowd was full of smiles as they exchanged glasses of wine and chatted with each other.

The Norton Residence, which had always been rather quiet, was bustling with life after the arrival of these guests.

Vivian wasn't that used to such a lively atmosphere. Having to constantly put on a bright smile despite her bitter mood drained her immensely.

As she watched Ashley chat happily with other guests, she felt even worse.

Occasionally, Ashley would glance at Vivian with eyes full of mockery and self-satisfaction.

However, Finnick's gaze never left Vivian. Even while he was in a conversation with someone else, his eyes were still fixated on Vivian.

He noticed how every single one of her expressions was laced with exhaustion and boredom.

Then, Finnick wheeled himself toward Vivian and asked her in a low voice, "Vivian, do you not like it here?"

Vivian nodded. "Can I head home first? I'm not used to being here."

Finnick's eyes lit up as he thought about the phone call he just received whereby he was informed that everything was ready. "Okay, we can go. I want to take you somewhere."

Take me somewhere?

Vivian recalled all the places Finnick had ever brought her to. If it wasn't an auction, then it was a cold storage facility. Neither was that fun of a place.

"Let me go this once. Come on. Can I just go home for now—"

"Nope." Finnick cut Vivian off.

What a bossy guy!

Still, Vivian liked the idea of staying here with all these phonies even less, so she ended up agreeing to Finnick's idea.

With that, Finnick told his grandpa that he had some business to carry out.

Before they left, elder Mr. Norton whispered to Finnick, "Good call! Make good use of this opportunity, alright? I can't wait to see my great-grandchildren! Go ahead. You don't have any reason to stick around anyway."

After Finnick got his grandpa's approval, he and Vivian left the party.

There wasn't much conversation going on in the car, only casual talk but nothing practical.

While the car sped on steadily, the passersby slowly lessened.

Then, Finnick said, "We're here. Let's go."

As the sky slowly darkened, the streets began to come alive with bright neon lights. The city was lit up brightly as if it were telling its own story. The autumn night sky was still bright enough for them to spot fluffy white clouds against a cerulean background.

The moment Vivian got out of the car, she was taken aback.

Why did Finnick bring me here?

They were in front of a theme park.

The lights were still on, but the park was completely devoid of tourists. It seemed as if only the two of them were there at this hour.

Shouldn't all theme parks be closed by now?

Vivian looked at Finnick in confusion, waiting for him to explain.

Finnick looked at her with dreamy eyes. "I've booked the whole place. It's just the two of us now. Let's go in."

Booked the whole place? Vivian didn't understand why Finnick had to fork out so much money for this.

Is he trying to share his childhood memories with me or something? Vivian mused randomly.

Leading the way in his wheelchair, Finnick brought her to the largest Ferris wheel in Sunshine City.

The Ferris wheel looked exceptionally gorgeous amidst the dark night sky. It glowed with a mystical, otherworldly halo.

The flashing lights blinked on and off, sending irregular waves of light over Finnick and Vivian's faces. They looked at each other, suddenly feeling a sense of calmness washing over them.

Vivian recalled the first time she met Finnick.

He was still in a wheelchair then, but when their eyes met, Vivian felt as if he were the one looking down at her.