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“Really?” Vivian looked at Finnick tearfully. He was her only hope.

“Of course.” Finnick wiped away her tears and stroked her cheek. “She’ll be okay. Just trust me, won’t you?”

“I-I will.” Vivian nodded vigorously. “If you say she’ll be fine, then she will be fine. I trust you.”

“Good. Shall we go see her first?”

“Absolutely not!” exclaimed Vivian, who was agitated again. “I haven’t told her anything, and I don’t want her to see me like this!”

“In that case, why don’t we head home?”

Vivian nodded weakly at that.

Then, Finnick turned around and gently escorted a weakened Vivian to the car that was waiting outside.

Throughout the ride home, Finnick held her in his arms.

She was probably emotionally exhausted. In a few moments, Vivian fell asleep on his shoulder. Her eyes were still wet with lingering teardrops, but Finnick thought that she looked particularly vulnerable.

When the couple arrived home, Finnick had to carry her out of the car and into the house. Given how the news took a toll on her, Vivian never woke up despite the commotion.

Finnick gingerly carried her to the bedroom and set her down on the bed. After he tucked her in, he lay down next to her in silence.

Although Vivian was in deep slumber, it was not a fitful rest. She felt herself weave in and out of dreams that passed into nightmares. Now and then, tears would wet the corners of her closed eyes.

Finnick could not sleep a wink when he saw how restless she was. With a thumb, he gently wiped Vivian's tears away and held her, hoping that he could provide some comfort.

He reflected on how recently, he seemed to have seen more of her tears than anything else. This is all my fault. All I can do is make my wife cry.

Slowly, he leaned over to kiss the top of Vivian's head as he gently patted her back as he would a child. Finnick hoped that the simple gesture would bring her some comfort in her sleep.

When Vivian awoke a while later in a dark bedroom, she was initially confused. Am I at home? What time is it?

She reached over to turn the lights on and gradually willed herself into sobriety. However, she recalled what happened at the hospital earlier and started to shed tears again.

Finnick happened to walk in on Vivian crying in silence, her fists bunched up in the sheets. With a low sigh, Finnick walked to the bed and held her in his arms. "Hey, don't cry. You're going to cry your eyes out if you don't stop."

With conscious effort, Vivian did her best to hold back her tears as she looked at Finnick.

He felt his heart sting when he saw that Vivian's eyes were swollen to the size of plums. "You haven't eaten all day, I think? Why don't you wash up, and we'll head down for some food?"

Vivian answered him with a very hoarse-sounding "yes" and padded into the bathroom.

After she washed her face and went downstairs, she found that the table was already set for a simple meal. Finnick had made her a simple but hearty chicken stew. The kindness and the gentleness of Finnick's gesture touched Vivian. This reminded her how things were before Evelyn showed up and ruined everything.

Over the next few days, Finnick did not go to work. Instead, he stayed at home and kept Vivian company, all while he actively put effort into placing inquiries. He had contacted several experts in leukemia research.

His actions had cleared all doubts Vivian had about Finnick not loving her. She found herself reveling in a bond that had only deepened much further.

The day came when Vivian finally received the much-awaited call from the hospital. She was to go there in person to get the full report and decide on her next course of action.

“Of course, I’ll be there right away.” She rushed to the hospital anxiously as soon as she hung up. Finnick, unfortunately, had some matters to oversee at the Finner Group. Thus, Vivian had to take a taxi to the hospital by herself.

The journey to the hospital was nerve-wracking. Vivian fidgeted restlessly in the car, unable to stop herself from thinking about the worst possible outcomes. What if my bone marrow does not match Rachel’s? Can Finnick really step in and help me find a donor? And if I really can’t find a donor, am I going to watch my mother die?

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The thoughts were enough to make Vivian tear up. She blinked a few times and tried to suppress the burst of emotion that threatened to overflow. At the same time, she willed herself to be strong for the sake of her mother. After all, she had yet to find out what the results were. There was no sense in scaring herself like that.

The minute she arrived, Vivian hurried to see the doctor who had examined her before.

“What news, doctor? Is my bone marrow compatible with my mother’s?”
Heavens above, I really hope that I can save my mother. I have to.

“Have a seat,” said the doctor, who gestured at the chair next to him. “I’ll go into details.”

Vivian sat down nervously and eyed the solemn-looking doctor. She had a bad feeling that she couldn't quite place but fervently hoped that it was not what she feared.

"The results, doctor?" asked Vivian again. She was so nervous she could burst into tears again.

The doctor sighed, took off his glasses, and rubbed the bridge of his nose thoughtfully. "According to the results, your bone marrow does not match. Unfortunately, you are not a suitable donor."

As the doctor said this, Vivian's heart sank. She felt as if the very wind had been knocked out of her chest and found it difficult to breathe. "What can we do, doctor? Is there any other way to treat her?"

"Don't worry. Your mother is not in danger at the moment." The doctor did everything they could to comfort Vivian in the face of uncertainty. "This hospital is affiliated with the Red Cross, and we've already submitted a request. Once we find a suitable donor for her, we'll have her operation arranged in no time at all."

Vivian nodded at the doctor gratefully. "Thank you, doctor. I appreciate you going through all the trouble."

"It's okay, that's what we're here for. However, I would also suggest that your family look into other avenues privately and seek donors elsewhere. After all, surgeries like this are best attempted as soon as possible."

Vivian nodded again in understanding. "But doctor, if I may ask, how do I go about doing that? This is something I have never attempted before." Since Vivian had never had to consider something like this, she had no idea where to start.

"Usually, you can apply for assistance through the local Red Cross, or you can make inquiries at the National Marrow Bank. Given how the internet is so widely used now, you can also try making an appeal on social media platforms."

Vivian made a mental note of what she needed to do. "Thank you, doctor. I'll be in touch."

With that, Vivian bolted out of her seat and prepared to leave. She wanted to start looking for a compatible donor for Rachel as soon as possible. If she was lucky enough in her search, Vivian was prepared to do whatever it took to ensure that the other party would agree.

“Wait a moment, Ma’am.” The doctor stopped Vivian in her tracks, right before she could leave the office.

Vivian turned around to look at the doctor, visibly confused. “Was there something else we had to discuss?”

“Two more things, to be precise. But I need you to brace yourself.”

“What’s the matter? It isn’t about my mother, is it?”

“No, it’s about you this time.”

“Me?” Vivian did not understand what the doctor meant. “Is something wrong with me?”

The doctor hesitated. A slight hint of discomfort flickered across his face as he fidgeted with his glasses again. “The results of the examination have shown us not just the incompatibility of your marrow, but that your DNA is completely different from that of your mother’s. You are not your mother’s biological daughter.”

“How is this possible?” Vivian’s instinctive reaction was to not believe a word she had just heard. “Surely there must be some kind of mistake? How am I not my mother’s biological daughter?”

“The results don’t lie, Ma’am. I think it’s a conversation you should have with your mother.”

Vivian felt a myriad of emotions course through her body, from disbelief to anger, to a pang of intense sadness. This is impossible. How am I not her daughter? Yet, what if it’s true? And if I am not her daughter, who the hell am I?

“There is one other thing. You’re pregnant.”

“What?” Vivian absent-mindedly reached upwards and stroked her belly. “I’m... pregnant?”

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“Yes, you’ve been pregnant for about a month now. Congratulations, you’re going to be a mother.”

Vivian was stunned and overwhelmed by all the information that she had to process.

“Though I have to warn you that the fetus is still in an unstable condition due to your recent emotional ups and downs. You need to regulate and control your grief, or it will be a bit too much for the fetus to bear.”

“I understand. Thank you, doctor.” Vivian forced a smile at the doctor before departing, her mind completely numb.

As she made her way towards one of the vacant seats outside, Vivian felt as if her mind was swimming in jelly. Her emotions were a mess, and she could not think with a clear head. After taking a few deep breaths, Vivian closed her eyes and slowly tried to organize her thoughts.

My bone marrow is not a match, so I have to find a suitable donor for mom. I may not be Rachel’s biological daughter, and I’m also pregnant?

Instinctively, Vivian looked down at her stomach, which was still flat. Is there truly another living being in there?

She then placed both hands on her belly. Vivian was a little excited at the prospect that she and Finnick would soon have a child together.

Recalling what the doctor said earlier, if her calculations were correct, she should have conceived the night before the kidnapping.

Vivian shuddered. When she was kidnapped, she had struggled quite violently against her captors. This gave her some injuries which required hospitalization. This would not affect the baby, would it? The doctor had also mentioned that her emotional state needed regulation, yet she had been worried sick. Surely the number of tears she shed was not healthy for the baby.

Vivian could not help but blame herself a little. For one, she failed to notice that she was pregnant. She also made the baby suffer quite a bit together with her.

“I’m sorry, little one. Your mother has been a terrible protector. I promise that you won’t be hurt anymore in the future.” Vivian murmured the apology to the child in her belly and lovingly stroked her stomach.

I am definitely happy about this pregnancy. After all, Finnick and I have been yearning for a child. I just never expected the little one to show up out of the blue.

However, she could not bring herself to smile. Questions about her parentage had put a real damper on her spirits, which made her feel deeply uncomfortable.

No, I must ask mom about this.

Vivian stood up and began a slow walk towards Rachel’s ward. Throughout the entirety of her trip, she could feel nothing but discomfort. How was she going to pose such a difficult question to the only person she’d known as a mother?

She soon found herself facing the door of the ward. Vivian stood there impassively for a moment before turning around and walking away. At that moment, she had decided that she was not going to ask her mother anything.

Perhaps it was a mistake, after all. She was Rachel’s daughter, and Rachel was her mother. Nothing had changed. They were still family, and family needed each other.

However, the prognosis of Rachel’s condition made Vivian stop in her tracks abruptly.

Rachel needed to have surgery as soon as she could. If she was truly not her daughter, then perhaps her biological daughter could be a possible donor. It was likely the fastest way too.

Suddenly, her emotions became cloudy and muddled again. Vivian reflected on the fleeting impermanence of life and wondered why God was so cruel to her. Why did she have to make that choice?

In the end, reason finally bested emotion as Vivian returned to the ward, more determined than before.

When she opened the door, Vivian saw Rachel lying on the hospital bed. The tv was on, and she heard her mother laugh. Maybe she was watching something funny.

“You’re here again, Vivian!” Rachel beckoned to her with a grin. “Look at how funny this person is! I’m in stitches as we speak!”

An anxious Vivian walked towards Rachel’s bed and sat down next to her. She looked up at Rachel, who still grinned at her, and felt her heart sink. How am I going to broach the subject?

Rachel observed Vivian’s behavior and seemed to sense that something was off. Her daughter was not her usual jovial self. Vivian had walked in with her head hung low without a smile on her face, and it made Rachel wonder if her daughter had a bad day.

She then turned down the volume of the television before she looked at Vivian again. “You don’t look happy at all, Vivian. Did you quarrel with Finnick or something?”

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Looking up at Rachel, Vivian shook her head slightly and hesitated before speaking. “No, Mom. But... I have a question.”

“What is it?” Rachel found Vivian’s expression to be a little odd. “Silly girl, you can ask me anything. What are you finding so hard to talk to your own mother about? It’s not like I have anything to hide from my daughter.”

Rachel’s words struck a sour note in Vivian’s heart. She struggled to hold back her tears and still hoped that the doctor’s examination was a mistake.

“Mom, I... am... Am... I...” Vivian stammered, still unable to get the words out.

“What on earth is it that’s making you stutter like that?” asked Rachel with a smile.

Vivian tried to look Rachel straight in the eye as she enunciated every word. “Am I your biological daughter?” She poured every bit of hope she had as she silently prayed that her mother would at least give her some reassurance.

The question Vivian asked wiped the smile off Rachel's face in an instant. She trembled in fear and turned away from Vivian. At that point, she could not bring herself to look at her daughter.

Rachel's reaction served to confirm her worst fears, and immediately, her heart sank all the way into an abyss. Vivian anxiously grabbed onto Rachel's hand and asked her the same question again. "Mom, answer me! Am I your daughter?"

All Rachel could do was cry as she beheld Vivian. The tears fell onto her sheets and quickly covered them with wet stains. Rachel shook her head slightly and kept crying without saying a word.

"Mom, I'm not your biological daughter then?" Vivian's voice finally cracked into a loud sob. It would seem that God favored his other children more. What the doctor said was true, after all.

Rachel shook her head more vigorously this time before stopping to weep bitterly. She covered her mouth to mask the sounds and dared not look at Vivian at all.

So it's true? I'm not my mother's daughter. Vivian felt every last bit of strength leave her body as she sank into the chair behind her. With this came other revelations.

All this while, she wondered why Harvey took her to have a paternity test done. As it turned out, he was not her father after all. If she was not Rachel's daughter, how could she possibly be his daughter? Nothing made sense.

Then who the hell am I? Vivian immediately felt a furious ache in her temples. The more she thought about this, the more confounded she became.

It took a while for her to finally muster up the strength to look at Rachel, who lay in her bed trembling and crying. But Vivian also remembered everything Rachel did for her when she was a child.

Being in a single-parent family, Vivian grew up poor and could barely afford her tuition. Hence, Rachel did what she could to put food at the table and went to the extent of working up to two or three jobs at once.

To her knowledge, Rachel was never a materialistic or selfish person. Whatever the other children had, Rachel would do her best to obtain so that

Vivian never felt left out. She did what she could so that nobody looked down on their family.

As she recalled all of this, Vivian knew that she could not find it in her to blame Rachel even if this was a heart-breaking revelation. She was not even Rachel's biological daughter, but Rachel did whatever she could to provide the best for her.

As such, her gratitude towards Rachel grew even more. Vivian could only thank Rachel for treating her as one of her own. If not for this, who knows where I'll end up today? Would I still meet Finnick? Would I have the life that I have right now?

"Mom?" Vivian held back her sadness and wiped her tears before gently pulling Rachel closer to her. "Can you tell me who your biological daughter is?" She needed to obtain this information so that Rachel could be operated on as soon as possible.

However, Rachel could not stop crying. "Vivian, I'm sorry... I... I don't..." She then trailed off into an incoherent babble of words that Vivian could not understand.

Seeing Rachel so upset, Vivian could only assume that her daughter was dead. It was also possible that her daughter died at childbirth, which would explain why Vivian ended up in the picture.

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"Did your daughter pass away?" asked Vivian tentatively. She did not think it was an unreasonable guess.

Rachel only wept harder and shook her head. In her distress, she kept mouthing the word "No."

Vivian did not understand what Rachel meant by "no," so she did what she could to coax the truth out of Rachel. "Mom, the doctors have diagnosed you with leukemia, and you are in dire need of a bone marrow donor. Can you please just tell me where I can find your biological daughter?"

Vivian had assumed that Rachel's daughter was no longer alive, based on her reaction alone. But what was Rachel refusing to tell her?

Rachel then looked at Vivian in shock. "Leukemia? How? How is this possible?"

"A while ago, the hospital called me and said that you had been diagnosed with leukemia. They said I had to find a compatible bone marrow donor so that they can operate on you as soon as possible." Vivian sighed and took Rachel's hand in hers. "I figured that since I am your daughter, I could be your donor instead. But I never expected to find out..."

Vivian trailed off and choked back a sob. Suddenly, words failed her.

She struggled to hold back her tears before continuing. "The reason why I kept it from you was that I didn't want you to feel depressed. It would take a toll on your body. Your only hope now is to locate your biological daughter and ask her to be your donor. Can you tell me where to find her?"

Vivian did not expect Rachel to react that poorly after hearing her justification. Rachel shook her head and barely breathed out the words "I can't!"

However, Rachel's reluctance only worried Vivian further. "Mom, this is serious. Your child might be the only one who can save your life. Please tell me where she is? I'll go look for her."

"Vivian! You mustn't go looking for her!" In a panic, Rachel suddenly held Vivian's arm as tightly as she could.

"But why not?" Vivian was now certain that Rachel knew exactly where her child was but seemed reluctant to disclose her whereabouts.

Why won't she let me go? Did something bad happen? It has to be it. Why would she abandon her own child and raise me instead?

However, the only thing on Vivian's mind at the moment was to track down Rachel's long-lost daughter.

"Don't ask me anymore, please. I beg of you!"

Vivian was even more puzzled by Rachel's actions. "If I don't, how will we treat your illness? Your life is in danger, Mom!"

"I don't care! I don't need a cure! I don't need to be cured!" Rachel cried and shook her head. "You needn't worry anymore. Just leave me be!"

"Mom!" Vivian was dumbfounded. "I'm not your biological daughter, but you raised me. You're still my mom, and nothing will change that. If you die, what will I do?"

Rachel then hugged Vivian close to her. "Oh, I'm sorry, Vivian... I'm so sorry!"

Patting Rachel on the back, Vivian sobbed and said, "It's okay, Mom. You raised me, and I'm only doing what's right. Now please tell me where she is! I can't lose you!"

"Vivian, stop. Don't ask me anymore. I won't tell you." Rachel slowly pushed Vivian away and wiped her tears. "If I've only got a few days left, so be it."

"Mom, how can you think so? What is it that's so bad that you can't even tell me? I'm begging you."

But Rachel still refused to let it slide. "I'm tired, Vivian. You should stop asking me about her. I... need to rest now, so maybe you should leave me alone for a bit."

Before Vivian could say anything further, Rachel had already turned towards the other side.

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Vivian stubbornly refused to take no for an answer. She walked around to the other side of the bed to plead her case, but she saw that Rachel had clamped her eyes tightly shut. Despite this, tears continued to fall and wet the corners of her pillow.

Vivian was visibly upset by this. Perhaps her mother did have a valid reason why she could not say anything. The younger woman felt guilty and knew that it was wrong to have pushed her thus.

With that in mind, Vivian grabbed some tissue from the side table and squatted down to dry Rachel's tears. "I'm sorry, Mom. I won't ask anymore. I'm going to leave now, so rest well."

Rachel did not open her eyes or answer Vivian. Instead, she lay there in her bed and continued to cry. All Vivian could do was turn around and leave the ward.

Today's emotional display had left her with a bitter taste in her mouth. The trip back home was one taken in despair, and Vivian felt all of the mixed feelings she had well up near the surface.

Why didn't Mom even reached out to her child or even looked for her after all these years? The fact remained that she would rather die than seek help from her own child. Vivian could only surmise that there were more secrets to be uncovered behind this. Secrets that likely had to do with her own identity as well.

In the ward, she was so intent on discovering the whereabouts of Rachel's child just so that they could proceed with the operation. However, Vivian forgot to ask Rachel about herself – Where had she come from and who she was.

She was also so immersed in her thoughts that she had not realized that she'd wandered onto the sidewalk. Without looking, she decided to continue walking and did not even pay attention to the lights at the pedestrian crossing.

A loud horn and the sound of screeching brakes suddenly pulled Vivian back into reality. When she looked up, what she witnessed had given her quite the fright.

A car had swerved out of the way to avoid a collision with her. The angry driver leaned out from his window to yell at Vivian for her carelessness. "What the f*ck are you doing? Do you have a death wish?"

Vivian apologized profusely and hurried over to the other side of the road.

"How about you use your eyes next time?" yelled the driver at her again before he drove off.

Vivian let out the breath she had been holding and patted her chest, thankful for the fact that she was unharmed. It was then that Vivian suddenly remembered something as her face paled in fright.

I am with child! How can I forget something so important?

Holding her stomach, Vivian cursed inwardly. What if I really got hit and put this child in danger? I'm really not fit to be a parent.

After that, Vivian did not dare walk around on the street anymore. She quickly stopped a nearby taxi and told him her destination.

It was only when she reached home that the adrenaline wore off. Vivian suddenly felt mentally and physically exhausted. She collapsed onto the sofa and closed her eyes, recalling every single thing that had happened today. Despite calming down, she could sense that she was in a complete mess and panicked, not knowing what to do.

Vivian then muttered something along the lines of pulling herself together as she shook her head. When she opened her eyes, she noticed a familiar-looking briefcase near the armrest.

Vivian then turned around and also saw that Finnick's coat was already on the rack. Ah, so he's back already!

The thought of him being home made her feel a little more spirited. Immediately, Vivian got up and hurried upstairs towards the study.

The door of the study was slightly ajar. Vivian peeked inside and saw Finnick at his desk, poring over documents.

Without realizing it, her tears began to fall again. Too many things have happened today. Now that Finnick is here, I feel more at ease.

Finnick happened to look up and noticed Vivian standing by the door. He frowned when he saw her in tears again and hurriedly walked towards her. "What happened?"

Wordlessly, Vivian threw herself into Finnick's arms and started crying.

Finnick knew that Vivian went to the hospital today. However, her behavior now indicated that things were not looking up for Rachel at all. With soothing strokes to Vivian's head, Finnick asked, "What's wrong? Did something happen to your Mom?"

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Vivian nodded vigorously in Finnick's arms.

Very gently, Finnick pushed Vivian away and led her towards the sofa.

"Okay, take some deep breaths and talk to me slowly. Tell me everything." Finnick picked up some tissue from a nearby container and wiped away her tears tenderly.

Vivian took a few minutes to compose herself. "The doctor said that I'm incompatible as a donor."

As a matter of fact, Finnick had already anticipated this. When he first heard about Rachel's condition, the first thing he did was set out to look for suitable donors. However, he had not gotten a response yet.

"Don't worry. I've already started making inquiries. It won't be long until we find someone."

Vivian nodded and looked at Finnick gratefully. "But there's something else." Vivian suddenly recalled the results of the DNA test, and tears welled up in her eyes. "The doctor said that my... DNA is completely inconsistent with that of my mother's. I'm not her biological daughter."

Finnick was stunned to hear this from Vivian. "What do you mean?"

"I didn't believe it either. So I decided to ask her in person." Vivian then let out a loud wail. "Finnick, that was not a mistake. I am not her daughter."

Finnick hurriedly moved over to hold Vivian but could not find the words to comfort her. He was at a loss.

"I did a paternity test some time ago, and the test results confirmed that I am not Harvey's daughter. And today, I found out that I'm not even my mother's own child. Finnick, I have no relatives. I have no one! What should I do?"

“What do you mean?” Finnick caressed Vivian’s back in an attempt to comfort her. “You still have me. I am your husband, and we are a family. I’ll be with you until the day I die.”

“Really?” Vivian raised her head, looking at Finnick with tear-stained cheeks. “Do you promise?”

Finnick looked at Vivian affectionately. “Of course. I love you, and I will always be with you.”

The sincerity in Finnick’s eyes took Vivian’s breath away. She was so moved that she could not respond.

Very gently, Finnick planted a soft kiss on Vivian’s forehead before he embraced her again. “Don’t dwell on it. I promise I’ll never leave your side.”

Finnick’s reassurances brought great comfort to Vivian, who finally managed to calm down. Leaning against his arms, Vivian found strength and warmth returning to her. Deep down, she knew he was right. She was not alone because she had him.

Vivian suddenly recalled that their family was about to become a lot bigger with their latest addition – a baby.

Joyfully, Vivian raised her head to look at Finnick. “There is some good news that came out of this after all.”

“Huh?” Finnick was a little puzzled by Vivian’s sudden change in demeanor. Wasn’t she crying just a few minutes before?

“I’m pregnant!” finished Vivian happily. “Finnick, we’re going to have a baby!”

Vivian looked at Finnick expectantly, thinking that he would be just as excited as he was before.

However, she had not prepared herself for the sudden chill in his expression. He became stoic, and his eyes were a mix of emotions that she could not comprehend.

“What’s the matter?” Finnick’s reaction puzzled and displeased Vivian in equal measure. “Aren’t you happy to have children?”

Finnick opened his mouth and wanted to explain but could not find the right words. Was this child truly conceived by us both?

In the end, Finnick looked at Vivian vaguely and asked, “How far along are you?”

“The doctor said it has been a month,” replied Vivian gently, as she absentmindedly stroked her belly.

The child had been inside her for a month? Why hadn't she felt anything before?

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“A month?” Finnick’s face darkened as he counted the number of days in his heart. A month ago was the exact date that Vivian got kidnapped. With that, it was unlikely for the child to be biologically related to him.

“Yes.” Vivian nodded her head without noticing the change in Finnick’s expression. “To be exact, I might’ve gotten pregnant with the child the night before I got kidnapped.”

Finnick recalled that they had indeed gotten intimate on that night before she got kidnapped. Could it really be that coincidental, though... They had always wanted a kid, but even so, Vivian was still not pregnant. So how is it possible that out of all those times, she was only impregnated that night?

Thus, Finnick felt dubious regarding that. If his guess was right, it meant that the child could be a result of the gang rape.

As his thoughts drifted in that direction, the image of the four men ripping Vivian’s clothes off ignited the anger within him.

He clenched his fists hard and muttered, “Mark Norton, one day I’ll make you pay for that.”

Feeling the anger that Finnick possessed, Vivian looked at him helplessly. She wondered why Finnick did not show any delight after the news of her pregnancy.

“Finnick, are you okay?” Vivian questioned in an annoyed tone. “Didn’t you hope for a child all along? Why do you seem unhappy about it now?”

“N-no, Vivian. I...” Finnick was unsure of how to articulate his thoughts to Vivian. He had a strong urge to hunt for the four guys and skin them alive as he got reminded that Vivian was pregnant with the child of another guy.

The fact that Vivian broke the news of her pregnancy in excitement shattered his heart further.

Finnick could not face Vivian because it would only hurt his heart seeing her exuberant joy when she spoke about the child.

On the other hand, he knew clearly that it was not Vivian’s fault as she was the victim. He could only blame himself for not protecting her well enough.

After he had pondered for a while, his facial expression turned solemn as he looked at Vivian and spoke earnestly, “Vivian, I think we should abort this child.” He could never allow Vivian to give birth to the child of another man.

Ultimately, Finnick could not bring himself to face the child if the child was born. He might even resent the child.

“What are you talking about?” Vivian asserted as she shot up from the sofa. She looked at Finnick in disbelief and yelled in anger, “How could you say that? This is our child!”

“Vivian, listen to me.” Finnick stood up, held her shoulders, and said in a serious tone, “We cannot have this child.”

“Why not?” Vivian asked while staring into Finnick’s eyes – she could not accept those words coming out of her husband’s mouth.

“Vivian, please calm down.” Finnick tried to console her. “This is not the right time for us to have a child. If you really want one, let’s wait a while more, okay?”

“But I’m already pregnant. Why do we need more time?” Vivian could not figure out what Finnick meant.

What did he mean by that? For the longest time, that child was what both of us had hoped for, so how could he get me to abort it?

“Vivian, please just listen to me.” Finnick was getting impatient. “We definitely cannot have this kid,” he emphasized.

Upon hearing Finnick’s words, Vivian shrugged his hands off her shoulder, took two steps back, and stared at him with her eyes filled with hurt and sadness.

She recalled how elated Finnick used to get when he knew of her pregnancy the last time. However, he seemed like a totally different person this time around. Is he still the same Finnick that I know?

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“Why?” Vivian asked while she was choking on her tears. “What’s the reason for not wanting the child?” Vivian probed as she looked at Finnick coldly.

Finnick looked away because he could not bear to look straight into Vivian’s teary eyes and stated, “Now is just not the right time.”

Hearing that, Vivian was utterly disappointed in him for the lack of proper explanation.

As she wiped her tears, Vivian looked sternly at Finnick and declared, “I would never abort this child.” After that, Vivian left the study without care for Finnick’s reaction.

Watching Vivian leave, Finnick tightened his fist in anger. Should I... tell her? Could Vivian handle the truth? She might change her decision if she knew. But...

No... No, I can’t... She would be devastated. When Finnick thought of the amount of pain the news could bring to Vivian, he decided not to reveal the truth to her.

But in that case, how should I convince her to get an abortion? At that moment, Finnick could not come up with any other solution.

Meanwhile, after reaching the room, Vivian was on her bed, crying her heart out. All she did was share the exciting news with Finnick, but his response was too unexpected – that he did not want the child at all.

Perhaps Finnick did not want to get intimate with her the past few days because he wanted to avoid impregnating her. But why would he do that? Vivian could not understand the sudden change in Finnick's mind.

She then tried to recall when Finnick had become a different person. However, the more she dwelled on it, the more upset she felt. The change in his attitude towards her seemed to have happened after Evelyn's appearance.

In the past, Finnick would never lose his temper in front of Vivian and would always trust her. Yet now, he even considered aborting their child.

Did he still have feelings for Evelyn, possibly wanting a divorce so he could get back with her? Maybe that was why he wanted the abortion. Was he afraid that I would use the child as an excuse to cling to him?

As she thought of the possibility of Finnick wanting to leave her, her heart ached more intensely. But earlier, he said that he would always stay by my side. Was it all just a lie? A lie to soothe my emotions temporarily?

Vivian shook her head hard as she did not wish to dwell upon what she had assumed. However, she could not control her tears.

Regardless of what Finnick said, she was determined to give birth to the child.

She was determined to protect the child at all costs as it was still her child after all.

With a thousand thoughts in mind, Vivian cried herself to sleep. When she woke up the next day, she realized that she had a blanket over her; she guessed that it was probably Finnick's doing.

However, the man was not in the room. Nonetheless, Vivian was fine with it as she was not prepared to face him.

After washing up, she headed down for breakfast. Initially, Vivian thought that Finnick had left for work, so she did not expect to see him at the dining table.

Thus, she stopped and hesitated if she should turn to walk away or sit down to have breakfast with him.

“Vivian, you’re awake.” Finnick spotted Vivian and spoke with an awkward expression, “Come and have your breakfast.”

Vivian had no choice but to sit down at the dining table. Despite that, she did not sit beside or across Finnick as usual. Instead, she chose the furthest seat and sat down.

Finnick knew that Vivian was still angry at him. Last night when he went back to their room, Vivian was already asleep. He adjusted her position and covered her with a blanket. After that, he thought of lying down right next to her. However, he could not bring himself to do so as he recalled the disagreement they had earlier. Thus, he went to the guest room.

While Vivian was fast asleep, Finnick stayed up the whole night trying to come up with ways to convince her to abort the child but to no avail.

How could he convince her to abort the child when she held the thought that she was pregnant with his child? It was the first time Finnick had wrecked his brains that hard trying to come up with a solution for something.

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After a moment of thought, Finnick looked at Vivian, who was having her breakfast with her head lowered, and spoke, “Vivian, regarding what we were discussing last night...”

Vivian tightened her hold on the fork in her hands in reaction to Finnick’s persistence on that issue. Did he really want me to abort the child so badly?

After a few moments of hesitation, Finnick continued, “Vivian, please stop being stubborn and listen to me. We really cannot have this child.”

“Me being stubborn?” Vivian could no longer hold in her anger. “Finnick, this is our child. Even if you disagree, it’s still a precious life. How could you be so heartless and ask me to abort it?” Vivian exploded in anger.

Upon hearing Vivian’s words, Finnick’s face darkened. “Do you mean to say that you’d still want the child even if the child is not mine?”

“What do you mean by that?” Vivian was confused at what Finnick said. “Why wouldn’t it be? What are you trying to say?”

Finnick went silent with his lips tightly pressed shut.

Vivian shrugged that thought off and assumed that Finnick had only said that out of anger. “Finnick, this is my child, and I would never let anyone harm it.”

The dining room turned silent as Finnick did not respond. There was so much tension between them as neither were willing to budge.

“You have to abort the child.” Finnick declared a few moments later, got up, and left the house.

There was no point in insisting further as Vivian showed no signs of willingness to budge. Hence, it was best for them to both cool down while he came up with other solutions.

Clang!

Vivian slammed a plate on the floor while tears rolled down her face.

Thinking back on what Finnick said, Vivian’s heart turned cold. She could not believe that Finnick chose to resort to such a cruel method to reconcile with Evelyn.

After venting out her frustration, Vivian slowly sat back down and calmed herself.

Will I be able to give birth to the child smoothly if Finnick insists on the abortion?

Vivan recalled the method Finnick used to punish Ashley and felt chills down her spine – it felt impossible for her to stop him. Hence, she needed to come up with an idea to stop Finnick from wanting her to abort the child.

Vivian racked her brains to think of people who could help her, and Mr. Norton came to her mind instantly.

Mr. Norton wanted a grandchild for the longest time, so he would definitely help stop Finnick from insisting on the abortion.

Vivian finally saw a glimpse of hope. Not bothering about the mess on the floor, she grabbed her bag and immediately left the house.

At the Norton Residence, Mr. Norton was taking a walk in the garden after breakfast.

“Vivian, it’s been a long time since you’ve visited!” Mr. Norton teased as he spotted Vivian.

Mr. Norton looked at her with concern in his eyes as he was reminded of the many unfortunate events that had happened to Vivian. After all, the Norton family was at fault.

“Grandpa.” Vivian rushed forward and tugged on Mr. Norton’s sleeve. “I have something to talk to you about,” Vivian said shakily.

Judging by how anxious Vivian looked, Mr. Norton’s face turned serious. “Alright, let’s talk inside.”

“Okay.” Vivian followed Mr. Norton to his study.

“Alright, tell me, Vivian. What’s wrong?” Mr. Norton asked after the door was closed.

“Grandpa, I’m pregnant, b-but...” Tears rolled down Vivian’s face while she continued, “But Finnick doesn’t want to keep the child.”