

# Never Late, Never Away Chapter 76

Although she was already aware of how handsome and capable Finnick was, she looked down upon him due to the fact he was a cripple.

But now, when she saw him with her own eyes, she finally realized just what an exceptional man he was.

All along, she always assumed that Fabian was the most extraordinary man she had met. But compared to Finnick, Fabian was relegated to just being ordinary.

Despite being dressed in a simple black suit, Finnick emanated a unique vibe. One could feel the gravitas he possessed and the humility he carried. Beneath all that, was a hint of elegance and a touch of sexiness.

Ashley was stupefied as she looked him.

If not for the fact that Finnick was sitting in the wheelchair, Ashley would have felt that her efforts in finally getting together with Fabian were all for naught.

Once the introductions were completed, the servants proceeded to serve dinner.

Despite being tempted by all the tantalizing dishes in front of her, Vivian kept herself in check and just took whatever dishes that were nearest to her.

Noticing Vivian's restraint, Finnick picked out her favorites and placed them on her plate.

Even though this was a small action, it sent an emotional shockwave to most people sitting around the table.

The elder Mr. Norton was so surprised that the look he gave Vivian changed after that.

As for Mark, his expression darkened but no one knew what was going through his mind.

Finally, Fabian was the one who was most agitated.

When he saw how lovey-dovey Finnick and Vivian were, he could feel the fury within him burn like a raging inferno.

As his eyes flashed with anger, he suddenly sneered, "It looks like Uncle Finnick loves to pamper Aunt Vivian."

Vivian's hand froze the moment she heard his words.

What is Fabian up to now?

Finnick casually gave Fabian the side-eye. "What's wrong with me pampering my wife?"

In response, Fabian's eyes burned with greater intensity. The next time he spoke, his tone became visibly sarcastic. "There's nothing wrong with pampering her. I'm just afraid Aunt Vivian's character does not deserve this treatment."

His words were just like lobbing a grenade to the center of the table. Everyone at the main table turned silent as their expressions turned grim.

Vivian herself was pale in shock.

As for Finnick, his expression couldn't be more frosty. "Fabian, what are you trying to insinuate?"

"I'm not trying to insinuate anything." Fabian's mood appeared to improve when he saw that he had managed to infuriate Finnick. "It's just that I happen to study in the same university as Aunt Vivian. Hence, I know a thing or two about what she did during those days."

When he heard Fabian trying to keep everyone in suspense, the elder Mr. Norton was the first to lose his patience.

Slamming his cutlery onto the table, he demanded, "If you have something to say, spit it out. Don't keep going in circles. You're just annoying the hell out of me."

Prior to this, Vivian had heard that the elder Mr. Norton was a soldier who did a lot for the country. After he left the army, he went into business. Armed with wisdom and tactfulness when doing business, he quickly gained a foothold in Sunshine City.

In spite of that, he was still a soldier at heart. Therefore, he didn't like to sweat the small details and hated it when anyone tried to be sneaky.

Fabian turned pale when he was admonished by his grandfather, so he quickly added, "Grandpa, based on what I know, Vivian sold her dignity when she was studying. Therefore,

I don't think someone with such questionable character deserves to be a member of the Norton family."

The last bit of color left Vivian's face when she heard Fabian's words.

She neither tried to give any explanation nor was she angry. All she did was glare at Fabian who was sitting opposite her.

Once he was done speaking, Fabian felt the fire raging within him a moment ago had dissipated. Right when he wanted to gloat at Vivian, he didn't expect to see an ashen face and a pair of glistening eyes glaring at him.

What's with that look?

One might say it was a look of admonishment but in truth it was more of disbelief.

At that moment, he felt her gaze pierce through his heart just like a needle, stunning him.

In a blink of an eye, he immediately regretted his impulsive actions. Just when he was about to say something, he heard someone from the next table exclaim in shock.

"My God! What is that?"

As the loud scream shifted everyone's attention away, they raised their heads and suddenly saw a large screen light up in front of them.

What was even more shocking was what was showing on the screen.

There were a few pictures that were playing on a slideshow.

When she saw those pictures, Vivian froze as if she had been struck by lightning.

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They were all pictures of her.

In the pictures, her face was drunk red, her hair messy and her clothes were strewn all over. She was lying in a provocative position with an arousing expression on her face.

Although there wasn't any part of her body exposed, her flushed red face and steamy expression were telling enough that everyone could see what was going on.

Vivian could recognize these pictures instantly.

They were taken two years ago and were the same ones Fabian questioned her about.

She immediately turned her head and glared at Fabian. Her gaze was no longer one of disbelief. Instead, it had turned into deep-seated hatred.

She knew Fabian hated her because he wrongly believed that she had betrayed him then. That was why he brought up her history during dinner in front of the Norton family. He simply wanted vengeance.

However, she could have never expected him to expose the pictures, let alone played them for everyone to see.

He just wanted to destroy me!

Even if I really betrayed him then, there was no need to go to such lengths.

As for Fabian, the shock he was experiencing was no lesser than that of Vivian.

He did bring up Vivian's disgraceful history but it never crossed his mind to do it in this manner.

To do so would be too despicable and cruel, even for him.

Therefore, he didn't know how those pictures were being played on the screen.

In the midst of his panic, his reflex was to explain himself to Vivian. But when he looked at her, his eyes were met with a gaze filled with animosity.

In a blink of an eye, he felt as if his world had collapsed.

He never expected that a woman he had loved so deeply before would one day look at him with overwhelming hatred.

Equally shocked were all the other guests present.

There were many guests at the party. Other than the members of the Norton family, there were many others who were relatives and business associates. Therefore, the whole hall was filled with guests.

When everyone saw the pictures, they were stupefied.

Although they were well brought up members of high society, human nature was naturally nosy. Hence, all of them couldn't help but gossip softly.

"My God! What's happening? Why are such pictures shown during the Norton family's dinner party?"

"Are you stupid? Can't you see the lady in the picture is Mr. Norton's new wife?"

"Oh! It really is her! When were these pictures taken? I don't think they were taken by Finnick. Could it have been another man instead?"

"This is utterly disgraceful. I think the girl is going to be kicked out of the Norton family."

As most of the guests were respected members of society, no one said anything that was extreme. Nevertheless, they couldn't help gloat at the Norton family's misery and comment in a mocking manner.

When Vivian heard the guests' remarks, her face paled further. She clenched her fist so tightly under the table that it felt like she was going to punch her fingers through her palms.

As for Finnick, his temper finally flared the moment he saw the pictures.

Damn it!

How dare anyone touch my woman in front of me.

The main table wasn't far from where the control panel was. Without giving it any thought, Finnick picked up the steak knife and stabbed it through the control switch of the screen.

Crack!

In a blink of an eye, the screen turned dark.

No one expected Finnick to react that way. Shocked by how he responded, everyone stopped gossiping.

The next moment, there was complete silence across the room.

No one dared to utter a single word as they looked towards the elder Mr. Norton. They were all curious as to how he was going to react.

"Ahem." Despite being someone that had gone through a lot in life, he was still appalled by what he saw. However, he managed to regain his composure quickly. Turning his attention towards Finnick, he sneered, "Finnick, is this true?"

Finnick didn't answer his grandfather's question immediately. In fact, his attention wasn't even on the elder Mr. Norton but his gaze fell upon Vivian instead.

When he saw her shockingly pale expression, his eyes turned icy cold.

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"Finnick!" When Finnick didn't answer him, the elder Mr. Norton was infuriated. He stamped his walking stick on the floor and glowered. "I'm asking you a question!"

Only then did Finnick turned to face him with a cold expression. "If I tell you that it's fake, will you believe me?"

As the elder Mr. Norton was his grandfather, Finnick remained respectful but didn't fear him at all.

The elder Mr. Norton was so infuriated that wrinkles filled his face. "Finnick! Do you really think that a woman with such low moral standards can be a part of the Norton family?"

The elder Mr. Norton's words send a shockwave through the room.

His statement couldn't have been clearer. He was denouncing Vivian's place as a daughter-in-law of the Norton family outright.

Vivian's body couldn't help but tremble in response.

For some reason, she felt as if her heart was smashed when she heard what the elder Mr. Norton said.

Initially, the main reason she got married was so that she could have her name registered in Sunshine City. Since it's now done, I shouldn't care much whether the marriage lasts?

However, for some inexplicable reason, the thought of divorcing Finnick and not being able to return to his villa, or even growing distant from each other caused a sense of disappointment in her.

When he noticed the change in Vivian's expression, the only thing Finnick felt was his heart squeezing tightly onto itself.

Without any hesitation, he grabbed Vivian's clenched hands under the table.

Amidst the elder Mr. Norton's wrath, everyone present was frightened and kept quiet. However, there was only one person who was desperately trying to keep her head down. She didn't want anyone to notice that she was gleefully gloating.

That person was no other than Ashley. She was the mastermind behind those pictures.

When she heard Fabian wanted to expose Vivian's true colors during the party, Ashley was thrilled but felt he didn't go far enough.

Since they were going to harm Vivian, they might as go all out. She wanted to destroy Vivian's reputation to the extent that she would not dare to show her face in the high society of the city.

Therefore, she secretly bribed the Norton family's servant to broadcast the photos she had so that everyone could see the darkest side of Vivian.

That way, even if Vivian and Finnick divorced, Fabian would never get back with her given how egoistic he was.

While Ashley was counting her chickens before they hatched and waiting for the Norton family to kick Vivian out, she did not anticipate what Finnick was about to say. He was going to wipe that smirk of hers off her face.

“Grandpa, you are right. Perhaps, Vivian does not deserve to be a member of the Norton family.” When Finnick finished the first part of his sentence, Vivian’s face turned further pale. However, he quickly added, “But, my wife doesn’t need the acknowledgment of the Norton family.”

Looking up in disbelief, Vivian’s eyes met Finnick’s gaze.

Within the calmness in those eyes, she could see the determination behind it. The warmth in his hand permeated through her skin gradually, as if it would melt the coldness in her heart.

Suddenly, Vivian could feel a burning sensation in her nose.

Even the elder Mr. Norton was stunned. Meanwhile, Mark could no longer hold back his anger and reprimanded, “Finnick, how can you speak to Grandpa like that? After marrying such a loose girl and disgracing our family, you still refuse to repent!”

Only then did Finnick shift his attention away from Vivian and gazed coldly at Mark.

Despite just being a glance, it was more than enough to send a shiver down Mark’s spine.

“Mark,” Finnick called out to him in an icy tone. “Don’t throw wild accusations at my wife.”

Mark’s face turned pale and was about to say something when elder Mr. Norton cleared his throat abruptly.

At that moment, Mark held his tongue and looked towards his grandfather.

“This matter requires further investigation. After all, she is Finnick’s lawfully wedded wife,” elder Mr. Norton remarked with a tone that was hard to discern. “Do not let the comments of unscrupulous people trigger a feud among us.”

Vivian was stunned when she heard those words.

Although she didn't know the elder Mr. Norton well, she was aware that he had a reputation for being ruthless and cold-blooded in the city. Without such a relentless attitude, the Norton family wouldn't have become what they are today.

Hence, she didn't expect him to be so reasonable. I have disgraced the Norton family and yet he is not holding me accountable?

Both Mark and Finnick were also caught by surprise by their grandfather's reaction. Since Grandpa always had the say, both of them didn't dare say anything further.

The only person who was most upset with the turn of events was Ashley.

Her eyes widened in astonishment as she couldn't believe her ears.

She had assumed she could annihilate Vivian this time and shatter her reputation. Unexpectedly, none of her desired outcomes came about.

Finnick didn't mind Vivian's history while the elder Mr. Norton chose not to press the matter.

What is going on?

Peeved with the outcome, Ashley let her tongue loose without thinking. "Great Grandpa, these aren't just baseless speculations. They're the truth..."

Before Ashley could finish, the elder Mr. Norton turned and glared fiercely in her direction. Ashley was seized by fear and rendered speechless.

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"Who is this ignorant girl and where does she come from?" the elder Mr. Norton reprimanded her sternly, "Know your place! You are not qualified to address me as Great Grandpa as you have yet to marry into the Norton family. Hence, stop commenting about our family matters."

Ashley was dumbfounded after being admonished and regretted her impulsive decision to speak out.

She had not expected that the scheme she painstakingly put in place didn't hurt Vivian at all. Instead, she ended up leaving a bad impression on the elder Mr. Norton.

That very instant, she didn't dare utter another word. All she did was keep her head down as her teeth dug into her lower lip.

Why? Why did he do that?

Why is Vivian always so lucky to escape whatever I throw at her? I just can't beat her!

When the next dish was served, everyone ate in silence.

After dinner was finally finished, everyone proceeded to a hall in the next room to dance.

As the band performed on stage, melodious music filled the room. There were a lot of couples dancing in each other's arms. Amidst the music, waiters weaved in and out of the crowd serving champagne and wine. The guests who didn't dance crowded together and chatted merrily.

The scene looked like what she had always seen on TV. However, Vivian had the niggling feeling that she didn't fit in. Standing behind Finnick's wheelchair, she could sense the occasional condescending stare and mocking gazes.

"Finnick." Vivian was watching Ashley and Fabian dancing in the center of the room and how they captured everyone's attention. It simply made her feel awkward. "Shall we go home now?"

After all, they couldn't dance and there was nothing much left to do.

"We will be staying the night here," Finnick replied without hesitation.

Despite feeling perplexed, Vivian nodded without protest.

"What's wrong? Are you not feeling comfortable?" Finnick's eyes darkened. "Is it because of what happened just now?"

Vivian was caught off guard and didn't know how to respond. "I'm fine with it. When that incident happened two years ago, I had endured much worse than this in comparison. I-I'm just worried that you wouldn't be happy staying here," Vivian answered sincerely.

Finnick was her husband. From an outsider's perspective, they might misconstrue that she had cheated on him. For a man, this was extremely damaging to his ego.

Vivian really didn't want Finnick, who had an exceptional reputation, to end up becoming a laughing stock because of her.

Surprised by Vivian's answer, Finnick gave it some thought. He then turned his wheelchair in Vivian's direction. When he saw her nervous and awkward expression, his heart couldn't help but melt.

"Vivian William," he suddenly asked, "would you like to dance?"

"Dance?" Vivian was stunned. "With whom?"

Given Finnick was in the wheelchair, he definitely couldn't dance. However, other than him, she didn't know anyone else there.

When he saw Vivian's puzzled expression, Finnick smiled unwittingly.

"With me," he quipped and grabbed Vivian's hand out of the blue.

With him?

Vivian became even more confused. Before she could react, Finnick was already rolling his wheelchair to the center of the hall with Vivian in tow.

Being pulled along, Vivian followed him in acquiescence.

"Finnick?" Vivian was stunned. "What are you doing?"

"Dancing." Finnick's usually indifferent gaze was now filled with glee. "Didn't you say that you made an effort to learn the dance steps? Do you still remember them?"

Only then did Vivian comprehend that Finnick wanted to dance with her.

She blushed at his question. "I... I just spoke without thinking. I can't even follow the rhythm properly."

Finnick's grin widened. "Is that so? That will only make things easier."

Vivian was surprised. Before she could ask why, Finnick held her hand and gave it a forceful tug.

The next moment, Vivian lost her balance and fell into Finnick's arms.

"Finnick! What are you..." She panicked and scrambled to stand back up. However, Finnick hugged her waist so tightly that she was unable to move at all.

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"Hang on tight." Finnick lowered his gaze at her and beamed. "We are dancing!"

Just as he spoke, Finnick moved his wheelchair along with the music, gently rocking back and forth to its rhythm.

As for Vivian, she leaned into his embrace as both of them rolled together under the bright lights and gaping stares of the guests.

She was mesmerized by the moment.

Staring at Finnick's handsome face, she couldn't find a single flaw on his chiseled features. His usually cold gaze was now draped in gentleness. It caused his expression to sparkle just like a sparkling.

This handsome man is actually my husband.

As Finnick's wheelchair gently swayed to the music, all the other guests gawked in astonishment. Even Ashley who was the center of attention a moment ago couldn't help but stop to watch.

"Dancing in a wheelchair?" she exclaimed. But, jealousy soon filled her eyes as she sneered, "A cripple will always be a cripple. That's the sad reality."

Ashley had planned to mock Finnick and Vivian. But when she saw how exceptionally dashing Finnick was and how he gracefully waltzed his wheelchair to the music, she suddenly felt her mockery had lost all its basis.

Furthermore, she wasn't alone. All the other watching guests who were astonished at first were now filled with envy.

"My God! This is the first time I see someone emit so much charm dancing in a wheelchair."

"I'm really envious of that girl called Vivian for how much her husband loves her. Furthermore, he is such a romantic and a capable man too."

"That's the second son of the Norton family for you." A few elderly guests recollected what happened a long time ago. With a regretful tone in their voice, they remarked, "He was such an exceptional child since he was young. If only the kidnapping didn't happen. Sigh."

Meanwhile, Vivian, who was sitting on Finnick's lap, could faintly hear the remarks of the other guests though she couldn't make out what they were saying. Not able to resist, she looked towards them.

Without any hesitation, Finnick raised his hands and held onto her chin to stop her.

"Do you care about what they say?" Finnick obviously knew fully well what was on Vivian's mind.

Vivian smiled awkwardly in return.

"You shouldn't," Finnick murmured. After letting go of her chin, he gently caressed her. "All you need to do is to relish this current moment."

Finnick's voice deepened and seemed to have some devilish charm in it. Completely bewitched, Vivian nodded obediently. Reaching her hands around his neck, she swayed her body gently to match his movements.

When he saw Vivian moving along with him, Finnick's grin widened faintly.

Meanwhile, at the staircase on the second floor.

The elder Mr. Norton was standing there, looking down upon the dancefloor and taking in everything that had happened.

When he watched Vivian and Finnick rolling around the dancefloor, he clearly saw her laughing joyously and the beam on Finnick's face. The scene caused his lips to widen slightly.

It's been a long time since I saw that child smile.

"Mr. Norton." At that moment, an old butler approached. "It's almost time. Do you want me to usher the guests out and arrange for Finnick and Mrs. Norton accommodation?"

"Mmm, it's about time." Regaining his senses, the elder Mr. Norton nodded. "By the way, please get Vivian to see me in my study."

Just as he spoke, the elder Mr. Norton turned and headed there.

Finally, the ball started to wind down. The star of the night didn't turn out to be Ashley who was supposedly the guest of honor. Instead, it was Vivian who sat on Finnick's lap the whole night.

When the final song was done, Vivian stood up. While she was still blushing, she saw an elderly-looking butler approach her. He politely informed her, "Mrs. Norton, the elder Mr. Norton wants to see you in the study."

Vivian was shocked.

What does the elder Mr. Norton want with me?

Is it because of the pictures just now?

When she recalled how sharp the elder Mr. Norton's gaze was, Vivian couldn't help but feel nervous and looked towards Finnick subconsciously.

However, Finnick nodded lightly at her. "Don't worry, although Grandpa is an eccentric, he isn't an unreasonable man."