

## **Never Late, Never Away Chapter 971**

“What is it?” Finnick asked, uncertain what Vivian meant by her look. He thought she was feeling unwell somewhere, but her answer made him freeze. “Little pumpkin,” she prompted.

Finnick was momentarily stumped. He looked at her and said as convincingly as he could, “Little pumpkin isn’t here. As long as you’re obedient, he’ll come home.”

Dr. Foster had told him to coax her like he would a child, even if she asked for something impossible. It was the only solution to keep her emotions calm and improve her mental state hopefully.

Finnick was left with no choice other than to heed the doctor’s advice. His only wish was for Vivian to get herself together. While he took care of Vivian at home, he continued sending people to investigate Larry’s whereabouts.

Although she communicated with Finnick with an intelligence of a child and often had to be coaxed by him, she was no longer having any breakdowns ever since she began taking her medications. It was half a month later when what Finnick feared most happened.

He had unintentionally allowed her to wander into a restricted place—Larry’s room. I thought she’ll get better after half a month of medications. It seems like it is only my wishful thinking.

“Vivian.” Finnick reached out a hand to stop her, but the hem of her shirt slipped through his palm instead.

“Little pumpkin... little pumpkin is dead,” she cried, laying on Larry’s bed. “Little pumpkin, how could you leave me behind?”

When she finally got up from the bed a long time later, her eyes were too swollen for her to keep them open.

Finnick couldn’t bear seeing her in that state. He attempted to carry her out of the room, only to be stopped by her cold utterance.

“Don’t touch me.” Finnick froze. It had been more than a month since she last spoke to him in that icy tone. If she’s speaking to me this way again, does that mean she has recovered?

He studied her every move, hoping to find out if his speculation was right. However, what met his eyes was her frosty gaze instead.

“Can I help you?” Vivian asked.

Finnick shook his head, secretly feeling euphoric on the inside. It seems she’s truly recovered! The medications worked! But at the thought of her leaving him again, he quickly followed behind her.

“Nothing,” Finnick answered, facing the blatant hostility in her eyes. He was aware the Vivian standing before him was still mad. Hence, he didn’t dare to say too much in case it would cause her to regress.

“Are you hungry? Should I make you something to eat?” he questioned. He had been feeding her meals while she was incapacitated. Since she had recovered, he wouldn’t have to do that any longer.

Seeing as she had been awake since the early morning without having a single meal, he assumed she had to be hungry.

“There’s no need. I’m leaving,” Vivian said, taking a glance at Finnick. His goodwill reminded her of Larry, which made her very uncomfortable. That was also why she rejected him and planned to eat elsewhere instead. Finnick reached out to grab her arm, looking at her worriedly. “Where are you going?” He feared that if she were to leave him again, he might not be able to find her for the second time. Therefore, he mustn’t let her leave him.

“What does that have to do with you?” She shook off his grasp and turned around to leave.

Watching her retreating figure, Finnick decided to follow behind her. Even if he couldn’t be in close contact with her, seeing her from a distance would suffice.

However, she keenly felt his presence and turned around to say, “Don’t follow me. I want to be alone. I’ll come back.”

Perhaps because Larry had lived in the house and his presence lingered in the air, Vivian couldn’t abandon the house despite her refusal to be with Finnick.

She took a final glance at him before walking out the

door.

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Hearing Vivian's words, Finnick felt weirdly reassured. He stopped following behind her and allowed her to leave, choosing to believe that if she said she would return, then she would.

He stared at her back view. Does she have enough money on her? He shook his head. Since she's left, how could she not bring enough money?

Reminding himself to stop overthinking, Finnick instructed the housemaid to prepare a meal and returned to the company as soon as he was done eating. It had been ages since he last went to work. Although he had been working from home religiously, he felt that it was better to pay a visit to the company since Vivian no longer required his around-the-clock care.

After all, he had been absent for such a long time. He could guess that his employees were probably speculating about it. If he were to remain absent, it would result in his staff feeling insecure.

As soon as he walked into the company and met with the familiar office environment, he recalled Vivian and Larry had once been there. His heart clenched in pain at the memory. I'm a man. I can't collapse, he reminded himself.

"Mr. Norton," his assistant greeted, rushing up to him as soon as she saw him at the staircase.

She hadn't seen her boss in a long time. Although the work documents were delivered to his house, there were plenty of miscellaneous matters she had to handle in his absence. It had been a lot to shoulder on her own. It was no wonder she acted like she'd seen her life's savior when she saw Finnick return.

"Mm." Finnick nodded. "How are things in the company?"

They began to discuss work matters as they entered his office. His assistant immediately filled him in on the important events to keep him up to speed.

On the other side, Vivian, who had left the house in the morning, went to have her breakfast alone before driving to Rachel's nursing home. She felt that it was her

benevolence that cost her child.

Since the traffic was smooth, she managed to reach her destination in no time. The first thing that greeted her was the sight of Rachel and Shane sitting on a bench, chatting leisurely.

After Finnick wrecked Shane's main door, the latter moved into the nursing home with Rachel. On the surface, he claimed to stay there to care for Rachel. However, he was only using it as the perfect excuse to move into the facility.

When the pair noticed Vivian's arrival, the temperature in the room immediately felt a few degrees cooler.

"What are you here for?" Shane asked guardedly.

Since she was capable enough to shoot Evelyn dead, there's no telling what she could do to us.

But Shane had gotten it completely wrong. Vivian wasn't the type of person who would dirty her own hands by taking someone's life. It was Finnick who could.

Moreover, it was Evelyn who had reaped what she had sown. Even if she were dead, the police wouldn't have much to say about it either.

However, if Vivian were to go after Shane, she would undoubtedly have to face the law. It wouldn't be worth it to sacrifice her future for scums like them. Instead, she planned to use the cruelest method to torture both of them, for living in misery was a far better punishment than for them to die a quick death.

Vivian wanted them to know precisely what "an eye for an eye" meant. She was no longer a merciful person.

Everything that they owed her, she was determined to make them pay her back.

"Why am I here? Why don't you ask yourself what you did? Otherwise, why would I be here?" Vivian raised a brow, feeling amused at their question.

Even though the two of you are staying here, I'm the one who's footing the bill! Excluding that small bed, everything from the nursing home to Rachel's medication is paid for by me. What rights do you have to interrogate me?

"We didn't do anything other than to uphold justice,"

Shane said egoistically, holding his head upright. Vivian's expression swiftly turned from indifference into one of mockery. "Oh? Upholding justice? How noble of you." Looking at their faces, Vivian could no longer be bothered to speak glibly with them. For she knew, it was better to put words into action.

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"Rachel William, don't blame me for this. Your deceased daughter is the one to blame," Vivian said, no longer caring about the mother-daughter bond they shared. Vivian had given her chances after chances on the account that she raised her. However, since she was an accomplice to what happened to Larry, she would simply return in kind.

Having said that, Vivian called for the director and began to ask a couple of questions.

"I'd like to ask, how much money does Rachel William still have?" Usually, nursing homes would request payment monthly. However, as Vivian found it troublesome, she paid a year's worth of payment in advance. Let's see how much is left.

"Approximately ten thousand," the director answered. As the nursing home was located in a secluded location, equipped with top-notch facilities, and most of all, the luxurious suite Rachel was living in—the charges were sky-high.

"In that case, please refund me. I'm terminating the stay. Whatever happens after is her own business."

Vivian wanted to take away everything she'd given to Rachel and watch how she could survive without them. In the past, you wanted to rely on your biological daughter, but she turned out to be unreliable. You even sacrifice me, the one who's paying for your materialistic lifestyle, in exchange for your daughter. In that case, it's time for you to have a taste of how life will be without me.

Hearing that, Shane knew he was doomed. I've only recently graduated. Now that there's nowhere else for me to live, what am I supposed to do? Where do I go? Am I supposed to return home? He shook his head. No! That is

too embarrassing.

"I'll place your medications here. Once you've finished them, you'll have to figure it out on your own. If you can, have your biological daughter buy some for you then." I provided you with everything, yet you prefer your biological daughter. If that's so, then don't blame me for being merciless!

"No! You can't do that!" Rachel yelled, feeling extremely demoralized having everything taken from her. "Vivian Morrison, you've completely lost your rationale! You'll receive retribution for this! As she couldn't beg Vivian, she could only use verbal abuse, hoping Vivian would regret it.

Shane was slumped on the floor with no right to make an opinion. It was neither his property nor did he pay any rent. He had only managed to live there with some excuses.

"Oh? I'll receive retribution? Fine. Hand me the medications then." Vivian stretched out a palm and stared at the medication Rachel was holding. She knew Rachel couldn't live without them.

Rachel hugged the bottle of medicine tightly as if her life depended on it. Seeing that, Vivian sneered. Humans are indeed selfish.

She laughed before turning around to leave with her car keys in hand. Shane and Rachel watched as the car drove off into the distance, unable to return to their senses for a long time. It had all been too abrupt and caught them completely off-guard.

At that moment, Shane decided to leave. Back then, he only fawned over Rachel because he needed a roof over his head. Since Rachel was left with nothing, there was no reason for him to stay anymore. After all, Evelyn never liked her mother while she was alive either.

"Where are you going, Shane?" Rachel had a bad premonition as she watched Shane leave. Her heart pounded against her chest. Is he abandoning me?

"I'm leaving. Good luck to you," Shane announced plainly. He couldn't even be bothered to turn around, merely waving a hand as he walked away. Seeing the

drastic change in his attitude, Rachel was stunned, feeling like she could hardly catch a breath.

Where else can I go with my mobility difficulties? I'd spent my last cent buying Evelyn a bed and now have nothing to my name. I can't even afford my next meal! Seeing as Rachel was still kneeling at the entrance, the other residents of the nursing home felt it was ill-omened. They couldn't wait to chase her off.

She had already caused a storm in the nursing home when her daughter died a few days ago. Even though they were discontented, they couldn't do anything for she was a paying resident like everyone else. However, things had changed. The residents smiled as they shared a look. They could finally get rid of her.

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"Hurry up and leave! You're such a jinx!"

"Yeah! Get lost!"

"This is not a place where you belong."

Rachel stumbled out of the nursing home in an attempt to protect her dignity. Even though she had turned to leave, she could still hear the cursing they were throwing her way. For a moment, she was tempted to return a few insults, but she was aware that she was in no position to do so.

As a matter of fact, she had always known where Larry was. Evelyn had shared that information with her. She had initially planned to use it in exchange for her own safety. However, after some contemplation, she decided to avenge her daughter instead.

Therefore, she could only wander on the streets, relying on the leftovers of the nearby restaurants to keep herself fed. At times, there would be people who would find her pitiful and throw some bread on the floor for her to eat. Rachel found it incredibly filthy at first. But in the end, when she was about to faint from hunger, she went back in search of her only source of food and gobbled it up despite it having been stepped on multiple times.

It was what she needed to do if she wanted to live.

Finnick instantly felt relieved when he returned home and saw Vivian sitting at the dining table, having her meal.

He took off his shirt as he walked toward her and took a seat next to her. Staring intently at her, he seemed to realize her hostility had largely decreased. Although she was still aloof, Finnick was contented with her condition. There was nothing else he could have asked for other than to remain by her side. That way, he was confident he could win her back. If she could love him so dearly once, she definitely could do so again.

“Where did you go today, Vivian?” he asked, his head slightly tilted. He scooped some of her favorite dishes and placed them on her plate. Vivian glanced at him blandly before lowering her head to resume eating her food.

“Do you not feel like saying? Or is there something you don’t wish for me to know?” He was aware she didn’t want to be bothered by him. But he was like a rebellious adolescent. The more she didn’t want him to, the more he would.

Who knows? Perhaps if I annoy her enough, she may stop harboring a grudge and start speaking to me? He began to get excited at the thought of it and started telling her about a bunch of work-related matters. As expected, she got annoyed soon enough.

“I went to see Rachel William and Shane Teslar,” she replied, wanting to shut him up. Having gotten what he wanted, Finnick smirked. “Mm. Then you must be exhausted, honey. Eat more.”

Hearing him call her by the endearment, she froze for a second. She took another glance at him before she carried on eating.

Seeing her reaction and how she had eaten the food he scooped for her, he was like a dog with two tails. He continued scooping more food for her without another word. It was only during bedtime when Vivian initiated a conversation.

“Let go,” she ordered. Finnick had wanted to cuddle her to sleep. However, as soon as his hands touched her waist, she spoke. He looked into her eyes for a bit, shaking his head in refusal.

“Are you letting go or not?” Her voice turned colder. But



Finnick was an experienced businessman. How could that possibly scare him? He shamelessly shook his head and hugged her even tighter.

Facing the unabashed Finnick, Vivian was helpless. She chose to ignore him, turning to her side before she fell into a deep sleep.

After all that had happened, Vivian had been suffering from insomnia for quite some time. But that night, perhaps because of his warm embrace, she finally managed to have a restful sleep for once. The next day when Vivian awoke, she found herself still in Finnick's arms.

She fluttered her eyes open and noticed he was still asleep. It was the only time she could put down her guard and truly stare at him to her heart's content. When she gave it a thought, Finnick hadn't really done anything wrong. He merely chose her instead. But somehow, she couldn't find it in herself to forgive the man. That was the biggest hurdle in her heart.

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"What are you looking at?" Finnick flipped and rolled above her in one swift move, staring down at her. He had been awake for quite some time and had felt her piercing gaze.

Although he knew the delicate woman in his embrace had been feeling aggrieved partially because of him, he was happy to be in that position with her once again.

Hardship was part and parcel of life. It was unavoidable.

"Nothing." Vivian shook her head. Finnick watched as she got up from bed and began to get dressed. It's time to go back to work, she thought. Perhaps if I keep myself busy enough, I won't have the time to be drowning in my grief.

That was something she had personally experienced when she had left Finnick back then.

"Vivian, don't go to work. Rest at home." Finnick knew she was planning to go to work, but he didn't want her to give herself unnecessary pressure.

His heart ached, knowing that was her way of keeping herself functioning. Although he wished she wouldn't try

to suppress her feelings, he knew that there was no way he could change her mind once she had a goal in sight. Therefore, he stopped persuading her and silently hoped she could learn to be stronger. Even though it was equally difficult for him to forget about Larry, they needed to learn to move on with their lives.

After breakfast, Vivian intended to drive herself to work. When she walked to the front door, she saw a car parked before her; the window rolling down to reveal Finnick's face.

It was then she understood why he skipped breakfast. Finnick stared at the unmoving Vivian and honked the car, signaling for her to get in.

Despite her refusal to be driven by him, her heart softened when she was reminded that he had skipped his meal for her sake. She sighed, walking up to the passenger side, and took the front seat.

"How was breakfast?" he asked to make small talk. He had deliberately woken up earlier to prepare it for her. Seeing as she had licked her plate clean, he was on cloud nine.

She merely took a glance at him and nodded in response. Even though he didn't mention it, she could tell the breakfast was made by him. However, seeing that he hadn't taken a bite of it, she couldn't help but feel guilty. Finnick didn't bring it up either. Perhaps, she'll start feeling sorry for me, and I'll be able to appear in her mind more frequently from now onward! Then as time goes by, I may even be able to find my way back into her heart. The mere thought about that made him grin as he stared at Vivian.

The latter, having no idea what was on his mind, could only remain silent.

Lately, whenever she didn't feel like speaking, silence was her best answer. However, it was also one of the reasons two people often grow apart.

It's all right. I'll always be waiting for her to come back to me. No matter how cold she is, how long it's been, or how tired I am—I'll keep waiting.

"I've reached. You'd better get going," Vivian said as

soon as she saw the company's entrance coming into view. She took an inquisitive glance at Finnick and left without waiting for his reply.

Was she checking whether I was fine without eating breakfast? Skipping breakfast was a bad habit. She had always been concerned ever since she found out he had developed stomach troubles in those years he spent carving out his career.

Realizing that she hadn't stopped worrying for him, he was elated. He drove to a nearby restaurant and ate his meal alone, staring at a photograph of her on his phone.

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But Vivian's mood immediately soured the moment she entered the company. She saw someone who made her feel incredibly disgusted—a painful reminder of her grief. That person was Shane Teslar, who had been made homeless after meeting with her the night before.

With nowhere to turn to, he had spent the night at an internet café before making his way to the company in the morning.

No matter how arrogant you are, you're merely an insignificant employee. So what if you're my mentor? He directed a silly face at Vivian as she walked past him.

Vivian smirked, seeing the pompous look on his face.

Most people in the magazine company knew Finnick was their boss. How Shane was ignorant of that fact, she truly had no clue. Maybe because he's new? She ignored him, heading directly to the Chief Editor's office, and knocked on the door.

She glanced at the watch on her wrist, knowing the Chief Editor would've arrived at work at that hour. It was the perfect time to look for her. When she pushed the door open, the cold gaze in her eyes immediately made the Chief Editor flinch.

"What happened, Vivian?" the Chief Editor asked, glancing at her warily. Vivian was typically gentle and considerate. But ever since she stopped going to the company, it seemed as if she had transformed into another person.

"Fire Shane Teslar. Right now!" Vivian commanded.

Having said that, she turned around to leave, adding, "Call me once he's gone."

Shane happened to be hovering nearby and heard her words clearly. He glared scornfully at Vivian.

"Who do you think you are? Are you dreaming? Do you think you can order the Chief Editor around?" Shane yelled. I can forget about you chasing me out of the nursing home since you paid for it. But who do you think you are to come for my job?

"Shane Teslar, come in," the Chief Editor ordered before he could shoot his mouth off.

Shane froze for a moment. How could the Chief Editor possibly know who I am? He entered the office perplexedly.

"You're fired; effective immediately," the Chief Editor announced. "Go to the Human Resource Department to handle the related matters." It was the first time Vivian used her authority as the lady boss of the company. Even though she was usually compliant at work, she still had her rights when it came to who she wanted to hire.

"What? Why?" Shane was in disbelief. "All because of that bitch?"

The Chief Editor shook her head. She finally understood why Vivian ordered her to do so. How can anyone speak with such a lack of class? "Is the President's wife someone you can scold?" She stared coldly at him. She truly admired Vivian and the President from the bottom of her heart. Hence, whenever she heard someone badmouthing Vivian, she couldn't help but feel indignant and stand up for her.

"President's wife?" Shane froze. No wonder she dared to behave as if everyone owes her a living. It's all because she's the president's wife! Shane was still dumbfounded even as he walked toward the company's entrance.

"Vivian, Shane Teslar has been fired. You can return any time now," the Chief Editor informed. Although she didn't speak in a fawning tone, it was comparably gentler than how she usually spoke.

"All right. Thank you, Chief Editor." Vivian hung up the phone and went upstairs. She had been spending her

time at the café below the office, confident that the Chief Editor would handle the matter expeditiously.

However, it was a small world. They bumped into each other right as Vivian was on her way back. Pretending as if he didn't exist, she straightened her back and walked past him, but heard him muttering, "Vivian, I've underestimated you."

She merely raised a brow, making no comments, as she headed upstairs. When she returned, everyone was looking at her with scrutinizing eyes. But she wasn't one to cower at that. She made sure to stare every one of them right back in the eye until they looked away.

It was only until she sat back at her desk that she realized the amount of time she had wasted. Right as she was about to begin her work, Paris' voice sounded.

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"Vivian, are you okay?" Paris was aware of what happened to Vivian. However, she wasn't good with her words and had no idea how to approach the topic. Hence, she could only ask in caution.

"I'm fine." Vivian only realized how long it had been since she last saw Paris when she noticed the worry in her eyes. She forced herself to put on a smile before gently patting Paris' head.

While Vivian resumed doing her work, on the other side, Finnick had just received notification from the Human Resource Department regarding Shane's termination. He narrowed his eyes. He hadn't realized he had slipped through the cracks.

He instructed his subordinates to crack down on Shane, placing his name on a blacklist in the business industry. As the present Finnor Group was ranked in the Top Tens of the country, few companies would dare to go against them.

Since you've provoked us, I'll make you regret it and pay a hefty price for it! Although Shane was only an accomplice, Finnick felt his methods were already considered rather mild.

In the following months to come, aside from spending her day at work, Vivian maintained searching for Larry's

whereabouts, albeit without much hope. Even though she knew she was looking for a needle in a haystack, she couldn't let herself be discouraged.

"Vivian, would you like to come over to my place for lunch?" Paris asked. Although Benedict was aware of Vivian's condition, he feared he would bring up the wrong thing and stir up her sadness. Hence, he hadn't invited her to his place in a while. Ultimately, it was Paris' insistence that it would cheer her up that Benedict finally agreed to the idea.

"All right." Vivian nodded. It's been a long time since I last saw Benedict. However, what she didn't know was that Benedict had seen her while she wasn't in the right state of mind. At that time, he felt feeble when he witnessed her in that condition. All he could wish was for the medication to do its magic so that she could recover.

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As soon as Paris heard Vivian's agreement, she happily filled Vivian in about what had been going on with Benedict. Vivian listened to her attentively. Although her mood hadn't been great, she still maintained a positive attitude before the person who was her friend cum sister-in-law. After chatting for a while, Paris checked the time and thought it would be too late if they waited to knock off work. Therefore, she dragged Vivian along to skip work together.

If it were in the past, Paris would've never acted that way. However, for the sake of Vivian's safety, she was willing to go all out. Otherwise, accidents could happen if they were to stay out too late.

Vivian knew what Paris was thinking. While they were leaving, she signaled to the Chief Editor through the window. It was better than having to be scolded the next day.

"Vivian, this is my first time skipping work. I didn't expect it to be this exciting," Paris said with a giggle. She had always been a studious child. Even when she was a student, she had never had any slip-ups and made it on time to every class.

The first time doing something rebellious was undoubtedly a strange feeling for her. Glancing at Paris' expression, Vivian chuckled. It had been a long time since she last laughed genuinely. To think it would be Paris who managed to squeeze one out of her. Seeing the smile on her face, Paris happily pulled her along.

"What are you doing?" Vivian saw that Paris was still trying tugging on her arm as they walked.

"Oh! I forgot that you drove." Paris scratched her head awkwardly before gesturing for Vivian to get her car while she waited.

Looking at the muddle-headed Paris, Vivian couldn't help but shake her head as she walked to the parking lot to retrieve her vehicle. There, a seemingly brand new SUV caught her attention. She curiously approached to take a closer look but froze as soon as the words written on the car came into view.

It read, For my dearest sister, Vivian.

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She had almost forgotten that she had asked Benedict to buy her a car before. She never thought he would still remember it.

Vivian abandoned her own car that still looked brand new and drove the one gifted by Benedict. Meanwhile, Paris was quite relieved to see Vivian driving that car. She had almost forgotten about the car. Fortunately, Vivian still remembered it.

"Hop in." Sitting behind the wheels, Vivian had returned to her calm self. Her impassive expression reminded Paris of the time when she first knew her. At that time, Paris was very cautious in case she might accidentally offend Vivian.

After getting to know her, Paris soon realized that beneath that cold facade lay a warm heart. She understood Vivian was now acting cold and distant because there was too much happening lately.

None of them spoke in the car. Vivian had always been a woman of few words. As for Paris, she thought it'd be better if she remained silent, afraid she might say something wrong and unknowingly upset Vivian. She

decided to only talk to Vivian when they arrived home. Throughout the ride, the young lady was looking at the passing scenery outside the window.

By the time they reached home, Benedict was already waiting for them at the porch. His heart ached to see Vivian losing so much weight, yet he mentioned nothing about it. The purpose of having Vivian here was to cheer her up, not to upset her further.

In a cheerful voice, Benedict exclaimed, "Vivian, you actually drove the car I gave you!" Initially, he was worried that Vivian might not even accept the gift. He was glad to see her driving it.

Vivian nodded. "Thanks for the car, Ben." Then, she followed Benedict into the house.

Benedict had had the food ready. In fact, the man's cooking was much better than Finnick's. In his free time, he would search for new recipes and cooking videos to improve his cooking.

Benedict was the one who prepared the lavish spread of food before Vivian. To make the latter feel comfortable and cozy, he even took a day off to clean up the house. "Come, have a seat." Benedict knew Vivian had changed a lot, yet he never thought the young lady would distance herself from him.

Vivian nodded and then complied. Sitting at the dining table, she watched Benedict and Paris as they busied themselves in the kitchen. Initially, she wanted to offer help. Yet, seeing their loving interaction, she decided to leave the two lovebirds alone.

"Paris, grab me the olive oil."

"Paris, help me tie my apron. It's hanging loose."

Benedict would call Paris from time to time, asking her to give him a hand. Vivian could sense their affection for each other in the air. Soon, Benedict was done with the final dish. The three of them were now sitting at the dining table, enjoying their meal.

"Vivian, try this one; it tastes delicious. You should eat more!" Benedict helped fill Vivian's bowl with food. Then, he would glance in Paris' direction to make sure the latter had enough food on her plate. Although it was a subtle



act, Vivian didn't fail to notice it.

Throughout the meal, Vivian remained silent.

Knowing that it was not a habit of hers to talk while eating, both Benedict and Paris, too, ate their food in silence. They planned to have a heart-to-heart with Vivian after the meal in hopes of making her feel better.

The two were acting in a constrained manner throughout the meal. Yet, Vivian was perceptive enough to notice that they were trying hard not to display affection in front of her.

Later, in the living room, Vivian listened as Benedict and Paris gave her the pep talk. They didn't put it bluntly nor mention Larry, yet they conveyed their hopes for her to be prepared for the worst that could happen and stay strong.

Vivian simply nodded in response. Soon, she left the Morrison residence. She should be heading home now as it was about the time she usually got off work. Anyway, she was glad to have spent the time with Benedict and Paris, especially seeing them being affectionate to each other.

On her way back, Vivian's mind was flooded with loving memories of her with Finnick. We were so happy back then... Why would something like this befall our family? She wiped her tears and kept her eyes on the road. Everyone had their difficulties and issues in life. She needed to stay strong to avoid becoming a burden to her family and friends

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Vivian planned to head back home. As she was driving, her mind was bothered with racing thoughts. Before she had even realized it, she had arrived at Finnick's company. She took a glance at her watch. It was ten minutes before the employees clocked out.

Since both the Finnor Group and the magazine company were under Finnick, they had the same knock-off time.

Vivian got out of the car and entered the company building. The receptionist was one of the few who knew she was the president's wife.

Seeing Vivian's cold expression, she asked meekly, "Mrs.

Norton, may I help you?" It seems like Mrs. Norton is in a bad mood.

All of the employees were aware that the president's office was surrounded by a gloomy atmosphere lately. Yet, they had no idea what happened.

Vivian cast a glance at the receptionist. "There is no need. Thank you." With that, she headed upstairs. Her presence didn't draw much attention in the office. The employees only knew that Vivian was a frequent visitor to their company, yet they had not the slightest idea of her identity.

Thus, they only took a casual glance at Vivian before they continued with their work at hand. Inexplicably, it triggered Vivian's negative emotions. Finnick could manage such a huge company and discipline his employees well, but he couldn't even take good care of his family. Our family life is a mess now!

Just then, Finnick's assistant came up to her and greeted, "Hello, Mrs. Norton."

Vivian nodded. "Hi. I'm waiting for Finnick."

Having studied psychology before, the assistant could tell that Vivian seemed reluctant to go to Norton's office.

Thus, instead of leading her straight away to the office, she asked, "Do you need me to bring you to Mr. Norton's office?"

"There is no need. I don't want to disturb him, so I'll wait for him here." Hearing that, the assistant fetched her a glass of water before she clocked off. As the employees got off work, the office space soon became empty.

Vivian had waited for quite a while, yet Finnick was still nowhere to be seen. Finnick usually leaves the office on time. What's he doing upstairs in his office?

Feeling doubtful, she went upstairs and pressed her ears against the door of the president's office. Yet, she didn't hear any sound at all.

Vivian started to doubt if there was anyone in the office. After thinking for a while, she pushed open the door and found no one. Right then, she heard a sound coming from inside the resting room, barely audible.

She entered the room and was immediately overwhelmed

with awkwardness to see Finnick changing his clothes. Before she could leave, the man had grabbed hold of her waist and pinned her against the bed. "Vivian, are you here because you missed me?"

Vivian's heart was thumping wildly at the warmth of the man's body. Meanwhile, Finnick buried his face against her neck and breathed in her body fragrance, waiting for her answer.

"Finnick, get up." Vivian felt awkward. It was as if she was caught in the act while peeking. Finnick did as she said, knowing that she might get mad if he didn't.

That was when Vivian noticed the man's bloodshot eyes, yet she said nothing about it. Casting her eyes over the room, she said, "You can change your clothes. I'll wait for you outside." With that, she left the man alone.

In fact, she saw Larry's toy just now, the one that the boy lost when the two of them were hiding in the resting room in the past.

She supposed the toy must have reminded Finnick of Larry.

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As a man, Finnick was unwilling to show weakness in front of her. That man must be hiding in the room just now, crying. Perhaps he never thought Vivian would barge in. Vivian felt complicated right now, for she knew she still had feelings for that man.

Yet, she was unwilling to get close to him, afraid it would remind her of Larry. She knew that Finnick was suffering no less agony than her. It was just that the man never showed his sadness.

Nevertheless, she couldn't bring herself to be with him like how they used to be in the past, pretending as if nothing had happened. Meanwhile, Finnick came out of the resting room to see Vivian deep in thought.

"What's wrong? What are you thinking right now?" asked Finnick, wrapping his arms around her. Vivian looked up, fixing her eyes at him while trying hard to suppress her sadness.

It seemed like the man had collected himself as the

redness around his eyes had disappeared. Still, as Vivian looked at his face, she could find traces of him having cried before. I've misunderstood him all the while. This man would never cry in front of me, but he is as sad and miserable as I am.

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Seeing that Finnick was ready to go, Vivian stood up and then left the office. Finnick's eyes followed the woman as she walked out of the office and shook his head. It looks like this time, Vivian has found out about me crying.

Yet, he didn't regret it, for he knew Vivian's attitude had softened after finding out about him crying.

Meanwhile, Vivian had reached her car and gotten behind the wheel. Just as she was about to drive off, Finnick slid into the passenger seat. Seeing that, Vivian furrowed her brows but didn't say anything. The car drove off and soon vanished into the streams of traffic.

The next day, Finnick arrived at his office to see a report on his desk. It was the investigation report from the detective agency he established to search for Larry.

They must have found something, or they wouldn't send him a report early in the morning. Finnick immediately flipped open the report and started reading it, not missing a single word as he went along.

On the other hand, Vivian arrived at the magazine company to see Paris, who seemed troubled. The latter came up to her and grumbled about her parents. It turned out that Paris' parents didn't want their daughter to marry into the purple, and they asked Paris to break up with Benedict.

Vivian was surprised by Paris' parents' reaction. I thought all parents would hope for their daughter to marry into a decent family and live a good life. Why are Paris' parents so different from others?

When she asked Paris about it, the latter answered, "Actually, we came from a small village. My parents only moved to the city to take care of me. They are against the idea of me marrying a rich man, afraid that people might think that I'm doing that to climb the social ladder."

Although she still couldn't understand Paris' parents' mindset, she respected their opinion. Yet, she would try her best to help Paris out.

Vivian knew Paris accepted Benedict as her boyfriend not because of his wealth but out of love for him. She thought Paris' parents were thinking too much, putting their daughter in a difficult position.

"Why don't I visit your parents after work? Let me talk to them." Vivian believed the only way out was to communicate and persuade Paris' parents.

It would only make the matter worse if Paris got tough with her parents. Although Paris was a mild-mannered person, Vivian was afraid she might lose her temper and end up quarreling with her parents.

"Alright." Paris thought it was not a bad idea for the persuasive Vivian to talk to her parents. Although Vivian was not in a fit state, Paris believed she could deal with her parents well. Her parents might be a tough nut to crack, yet she knew Vivian was tactful enough to deal with them.

"Your parents' objection must have bothered you a lot. I see you were scolded by the chief editor just now?"

Vivian asked. She believed Paris' conflict with her parents alone was not enough to make her lose her cool.

Vivian knew the chief editor must have bawled Paris out after seeing the latter's document being hurled onto the ground. The poor Paris eventually lost it after being severely criticized.

"Yeah." In a bad mood, Paris whimpered, "Ugh! I want to be with Benedict so badly! I don't want us to break up!" Instantly, she regretted her words the moment they emerged. She knew Vivian's relationship with Finnick had turned sour lately, and it was inappropriate of her to say something like that in front of Vivian.

"It's okay. Everything will be fine," Vivian comforted her. That was when she suddenly thought of Larry. Is it true that everything will be fine? Can we really find Larry? Paris soon fell into silence, knowing that Vivian must be thinking about her son. She had confidence in Vivian. The latter was a tough woman who could overcome whatever

life threw at her.

Later, Vivian sent a message to the chief editor and got off work early. They went to a mall to buy some of Paris' parents' favorite snacks. After all, it would be inappropriate of Vivian to visit them empty-handed.

The two looked around the mall. "Paris, which should I buy?" Vivian asked. Paris followed Vivian's gaze and saw she was looking at some expensive health supplements.

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