

The Double (or More ?) Life of The Fake Heiress

#Chapter 81 - Read The Double (or More ?) Life of The Fake Heiress Chapter 81

Chapter 81

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After grandma woke up. Mirabella made a return trip to the Davis family. It was a little past eight in the morning, and even though she finished her usual morning jog later than usual, her mother, Delilah, suspected nothing. She assumed Mirabella had simply taken a few extra laps.

Without revealing the truth about her overnight absence, Mirabella quickly showered and changed into fresh clothes. She then rummaged through a box she pulled from her wardrobe, selecting a sky—blue porcelain bottle from among a dozen jars and vials.

She tucked the porcelain bottle into her bag and didn't linger. Skipping breakfast, she briefly mentioned Granny's condition to Delilah, who offered to visit Catherine, but Mirabella refused and promptly left the house.

Twenty minutes later, Mirabella was back at the hospital. However, as she approached the door of the hospital room and spotted Mandy, Summer and a boy who looked to be around fifteen inside, her steps faltered.

"Mom, you fall sick and don't even tell me. If the nanny hadn't called today. I'd still be in the dark." Mandy said, pressing on her temples, though she was careful not to speak too harshly considering Catherine's condition.

Catherine was propped up in bed, pale and seemingly unwelcoming of the room's occupants. Her demeanor was chilly and detached.

"I'm fine now. There are doctors and nurses here; you don't need to take care of me. You should leave," Catherine stated, her thoughts drifting to Mirabella. She worried that if Mira returned and crossed paths with them, her granddaughter would be bullied once again.

Mandy, hearing Catherine's words, could barely contain her frustration. "You're unwell, and the kids came specially to see you. Why must you be so cold?"

Catherine simply gazed out the window, silent. Seeing this, Mandy was truly vexed. She couldn't comprehend why Catherine was being so stubborn. "Mom, tone it down. Granny can't handle the stress," Summer interjected, stepping forward and shaking her head at her mother.

Then, turning to her grandmother, Summer's eyes softened. She moved a chair closer, sat down by the bed, and gently took Catherine's hand. "Granny, please don't be mad at Mom. She's just really worried about you."

Catherine's icy facade thawed slightly under Summer's loving gaze. "My health is fine. You take your mother and brother and go back home," Catherine said, subtly withdrawing her hand.

Summer's fingers curled slightly, her smile remaining tender. "Doctors and nurses can't replace the care of family."

At the mention of family, Catherine's heart stirred with emotion. "But I don't need them... I have Mir..." She caught herself mid— sentence, realizing she was about to slip up.

Mandy, however, had picked up on something. "Are you waiting for Mirabella again?"

Catherine looked away. "She's not gonna come here. You were so mean to her last time!"

Mandy's laughter was edged with irritation. "I was being mean to her? Why do you think I sent her away? Don't you have any idea?" Shaking her head in disbelief, Mandy continued, "Alright, you defend her so much, but now that you're sick, does she know? Is she here taking care of you?"

She pointed at Summer. "No, she's not. So please, see clearly: it's Summer who is taking care of you, and it's Summer who came to visit. Summer's your real granddaughter."

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Catherine's face was ashen, her lips bitten as she struggled to find words. But Summer stood up decisively, giving Mandy's arm a gentle tug.

“Mom, ease up a bit, will ya? If Grandma wants Mirabella here to look after her, let’s just give Mirabella a ring. Mirabella might not be her flesh and blood, but the bond they’ve built over the years is the real deal. You don’t need to squabble with Grandma over me. Her health is what’s paramount.”

Summer’s smile had a hint of bitterness, and then she took out her phone from her bag.

Upon hearing this, Mandy’s anger flared even more. Seeing Summer about to make a call to Mirabella, Mandy couldn’t help but snatch the phone away from her.

“What’s the point of calling her? Why are you so pigheaded, kid? You’ve put your company’s big shindig on hold to come take care of your grandmother, and now you want to bring that girl into this? | can’t decide if you’re naive or just plain foolish.” Mandy scolded, her tone a mix of exasperation and disappointment.

“Mom, it’s alright.” Summer reached out to retrieve her phone, but as she looked up, she suddenly froze upon seeing Mirabella standing at the doorway.

Mandy followed Summer’s gaze to the door and stiffened at the sight of Mirabella, her face quickly darkening. “What are you doing here?”

Mirabella’s presence seemed to catch Catherine off guard as well, her face flushing with anxiety. “Actually, Mira stayed with me through the night,” Catherine hurried to explain, hoping to clear any misunderstandings.

“All night?” Mandy snorted with disbelief and cast a doubtful glance at Catherine. “Mom, you’re covering for her again? If she was here all night, why didn’t you mention it earlier?”

Catherine muttered defensively, “Would you have believed me? Would you not have sent Mira away?” Catherine had hoped to persuade them to leave before Mirabella returned, but she hadn’t expected her to come back so soon.

Mandy scoffed at Catherine’s words. “So, in your eyes, I’m that unworthy as a daughter?” Catherine looked away, unwilling to engage further.

“Mom.” Summer’s timely interjection broke the tension. She shook her head at Mandy, then quickly moved toward the door to welcome Mirabella. “Mira, come on in. Grandma’s been waiting for you.”

Mirabella cast a cool glance at Summer. Before Summer's hand could even graze her, Mirabella sidestepped and made her way into the room without giving Mandy a second look, heading straight to the grandmother's bedside with an even tone. "Didn't I tell you not to get worked up? Not listening again, are we?"

Catherine looked up at Mirabella's impassive face, her own expression shrinking. "I'm not upset. I'm fine."

Mirabella's smile didn't quite reach her eyes. "If you were fine, you wouldn't have had an episode last night."

Catherine fell silent, looking every bit the chastened child. She wasn't intimidated by anyone's anger, except for Mira's.

Summer watched the scene unfold, her gaze dropping and fingers tightening. No matter how hard she tried, she couldn't seem to earn more than a cursory glance from her grandmother. She really hated Mirabella.

Meanwhile, Aiden, who had been absorbed in his phone the whole time, finally looked up. His eyes held a hint of confusion as he observed Mirabella.

Was this the same sister he remembered as being foolish, clumsy, and timid?

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Aiden was the apple of Mandy's eye, a bright spark from the get-go. In the Gilbert household, he was practically raised on a pedestal, which unfortunately meant his temperament was spoiled rotten, leaving him with an air of indifference and the kind of arrogance you'd expect from a trust fund brat.

His interactions with Mirabella were few and far between. They hadn't grown up together, only really seeing each other when Mandy would bring Mirabella home to the Gilbert estate for the holidays. Aiden, spoiled as he was, took every opportunity to torment Mirabella, setting her up for trouble. It's fair to say that a fair share of the Gilbert clan's disdain for Mirabella could be laid at Aiden's feet.

“Hey, scaredy—cat, can’t even say hi when you see me?” Aiden pocketed his phone, his tone dripping with conceit as he addressed Mirabella.

Mirabella didn’t even bother to glance up. She turned her back to him, leisurely picking up a clean glass from the side table and pouring some water. From an angle no one could see, she discreetly dropped a pill she got from the Davis family into the cup.

Aiden, circling around like a hawk, came up beside her. “I’m talking to you. Are you deaf or what?” Summer, off to the side, watched with a slight sneer, seemingly eager for the drama to unfold.

Mirabella swirled the cup in her hand, acting as if Aiden was invisible, then turned around and offered the cup to her grandma, “Here, have some water.”

Just as Catherine reached for the cup, Aiden, feeling repeatedly ignored and none too pleased about it, reached out to grab it. “Mirabelle, you’ve gotten pretty bold, have you-”

His words were cut short as a sharp pain shot through his wrist, and a sudden force made him stagger. When he looked up into Mirabella’s cold, unfeeling eyes, Aiden involuntarily shivered.

“Didn’t your mom teach you any manners?” Mirabella towered over him, her eyes glinting with a frosty edge. Her voice was soft, yet it carried a dangerous undertone.

Aiden felt a primal fear, as if he were prey cornered by a predator. The pain in his wrist was nothing compared to the chill from Mirabella’s gaze. He stammered, “I... let me go.”

Mirabella sneered at his cowardice, “If you can’t handle the heat, stay out of the kitchen. You’re embarrassing yourself.” With that, she released him.

Aiden’s face turned ashen as he clutched his throbbing wrist, wanting to retaliate but too scared to do so.

Regaining her composure, Summer stepped forward to shield him, “Mirabella, how can you be so rough with a kid? Aiden used to be your brother after all.”

Mirabella’s eyebrows arched playfully as her gaze settled on Summer’s face, a taunting smile on her lips, “Putting on a show of sibling love, are we?”

Summer frowned, "You..."

Before she could finish, Aiden pushed her aside. Having already been embarrassed in front of Mirabella, Summer's intervention was like salt in his wounds. Shooting Mirabella a venomous look, he stormed off. Summer was left standing there, her dignity in tatters.

Half a minute later, Aiden, who had stormed out of the room, doubled back to the doorway, "Mom, why are you still here? If someone wants to stick around and take care of grandma, you don't need to waste your time." With that, he really did leave without looking back.

Mandy, ever the doting mother, didn't bother with a reprimand for Mirabella and hurried after her son. Summer was left there, her complexion a mix of anger and embarrassment.

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As Mandy and Aiden left, Summer found herself without any reason to stick around. With a forced smile and a mumbled excuse, she made her awkward exit.

Once they had all gone, Catherine turned to Mirabella, rushing to clarify, "Mira, the reason I didn't tell them about you taking care of me in the hospital is because..."

Mirabella handed her the water and interrupted with a calm voice, "I know. Don't worry about it. You don't need to stress."

Relief washed over Catherine as she took a small sip of her drink. It was her usual tonic. Her eyebrows rose in surprise, "Did you just go get my medicine?"

Mirabella nodded slightly, hooking a nearby chair with her foot and slouching down onto it with a casual air. "Why haven't you been taking the medicine I prepared for you these past days?"

Catherine gripped the cup tighter, her gaze shifting away from Mirabella. "I have been taking it."

Mirabella's half-smile didn't reach her eyes as she watched Grandma. She didn't say a word. The silence stretched. Catherine always found it unnerving when her granddaughter wore that smile. All the excuses she had thought up seemed to stick in her throat. Finally, Catherine caved in, murmuring, "It's not that | intentionally didn't take your medicine. It's just that... it disappeared."

Mirabella tapped her fingers on the armrest, maintaining her languid demeanor. "The Gilbert family took it, didn't they?" It took Catherine a moment to nod, confirming what Mirabella already suspected.

"Alright, let's put the medicine issue aside for now. Let's talk about what caused your sudden illness last night," Mirabella said gently, as if discussing something mundane.

But Grandma knew better. That tone was a sign of Mirabella's growing irritation. After a pause, Grandma managed a wry smile, "It's actually because the medicine was gone. Besides me, the only other person at home on a regular basis is my caregiver. So, | called Mandy."

Mirabella rubbed her temples, sighing with a hint of exasperation, "You could have just called me directly if the medicine was gone."

Catherine looked down, the bitterness in her eyes hidden.

Mirabella switched topics, "And what's the deal with James? How come he was the one who brought you to the hospital last night?"

Catherine was momentarily taken aback by Mirabella's choice of address, then explained, "Maybe | accidentally dialed his number during the episode last night. Mr. James is a kind man. You must thank him for me."

Catherine didn't mention that, in this new city, she felt almost like a stranger. Her daughter was unreliable, and her most beloved granddaughter now had her own family. In this city, James was the only acquaintance she had. Other than him, Catherine couldn't think of anyone else to call.

"Mr. James?" Mirabella cocked her head, her expression one of confusion as she looked at her grandmother.

"Isn't he your tutor?" Grandma asked, a bit puzzled.

Mirabella blinked, not quite sure where the misunderstanding lay, but it would do. It would save a lot of explanations, so she simply agreed, "Yeah, he's my tutor."

Upon hearing this, Grandma didn't question it further. She simply sighed in appreciation, "Your tutor has done well, turning your grades from rock bottom to top of the class. Mira, you must invite him over for dinner sometime. We really should extend our thanks."

Mirabella could only nod silently, a wry smile tugging at the corner of her mouth.

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Far away in Riverdale, James suddenly sneezed. At this moment, his usually handsome features seemed a bit paler, but those eyes remained mysterious.

"Sir, are you feeling unwell again?" Wyatt asked, concern etched in his gaze.

James lifted a hand in dismissal. "I'm fine."

"The auction doesn't start until six this evening. Perhaps you should rest at the manor first?" Wyatt suggested with care.

"No need. We'll head straight to the venue later," James replied, his voice crisp. After a brief pause, he turned his head, "Make sure to keep an eye on every individual who enters tonight."

Wyatt nodded in understanding. "Understood. Should that person appear, we'll make sure they don't slip away," James nonchalantly flicked his cuff, and after a moment's silence, he murmured, "Let's hope so." "If they need that medicine, they will definitely show up," Wyatt whispered, his expression unreadable in the dim light.

Meanwhile, Mirabella watched as Catherine finished her medicine and engaged in light conversation with her. Age and frailty soon took their toll, and Catherine drifted off to sleep not long after.

After tucking the blankets around Catherine, Mirabella quietly exited the room. As she reached the lobby via the elevator, she encountered Mandy, who, it seemed, had been waiting for her deliberately:

“Come with me. We need to talk,” Mandy said. The lobby was bustling, so Mandy’s voice wasn’t sharp, but her face was still painted with its customary haughtiness.

Mirabella’s eyebrows arched in interest at Mandy’s retreating figure, heading toward the outdoor garden. After a few seconds of thought, Mirabella followed.

“What exactly did you give Catherine? What kind of medicine was it?” Mandy demanded, her eyes cold as she looked at Mirabella as if she were a villain of the worst order.

With her hands casually in her pockets, Mirabella’s demeanor was nonchalant. “Is there a problem with my medicine?”

Mandy almost laughed in irritation at Mirabella’s attitude. “No packaging, no manufacturer’s name, ‘mystery medicine,’ really? You’re bold to give such a thing to a woman in her seventies. Are you trying to kill her, Mirabella?”

“Mystery medicine?” Mirabella let out a light chuckle, lazily raising her eyelids, her eyes a deep shade of intrigue as they met Mandy’s accusatory stare. “Do you have any idea how much my medicine is worth?” Her speech was slow and deliberate, bordering on mockery.

Mandy was momentarily taken aback by her tone, and after regathering her composure, replied with a scoff, “No matter how expensive your medicine is, it’s still unverified.”

How much could a rural folk remedy be worth? What a joke. Pausing, Mandy added, “Besides, I’ve consulted a doctor, and they also advised against such untested rural remedies. They said it could exacerbate cardiac stress, practically amounting to a slow poison. Catherine’s health was stabilizing until your medicine

came into the picture. Her sudden illness last night, how do you explain that, Mirabella? If anything happens to her, you’ll be the one to blame.”

Asmirk played on Mirabella's lips, but she wasn't angered by the accusation. Instead, she posed a wry question, "The doctor you consulted, was he perhaps severely myopic and practicing without a license?"

Mandy was at a loss for words.

With a soft chuckle, Mirabella shook her head, no longer interested in wasting her time on such nonsense. Without another word, she turned and walked away.

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Mandy snapped back to reality, watching Mirabella walk away into the distance, her face turning ashen.

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Mirabella gave a quick report to the nurse on duty at the station and left the hospital in a hurry. Despite her grandmother's sudden illness, there was a sigh of relief knowing that her grandma was admitted to the hospital in time and had her medication on hand. There was little worry about complications.

However, as Mirabella stepped out of the hospital, her eyes inadvertently caught a somewhat familiar figure. She paused mid— stride, her mind quickly placing the person. Wasn't that Collins, Leo's agent? She had just seen him yesterday and his image was fairly fresh in her mind.

She squinted, scanning the crowd once more, but there was no sign of Leo.

Seeing an agent at the hospital didn't necessarily mean that Leo would be there as well, especially since Leo had mentioned flying out to a neighboring state to shoot a music video that day. Leo was likely airborne at the moment.

With a shake of her head, Mirabella let go of her curiosity and continued on her way out.

No sooner had she left, a man emerged from a side door near the restrooms, his face half-hidden by a black mask and a baseball cap pulled down low. Collins approached him with a document in hand. "Leo, the hospital director and the others are waiting," he said.

Leo's gaze fell on the sheet Collins was holding. He nodded, "Let's go."

Collins knew how much courage it took for Leo to come to the hospital and gave him a reassuring pat on the shoulder. "You never know, miracles can happen, right?"

Leo just offered a wry smile in response. Soon, they entered the director's office, where they were met by the director and a top neurologist.

With a polite nod, Collins handed over the medical report to them. After a brief examination, the director removed his glasses, his expression tinged with regret. "The spinal damage is severe. It will take years to recover, if at all—and that's secondary. The main concern is the damage to the spinal cord nerves. That complicates things significantly."

The neurologist added, "The nerves connect to the entire body. If the spinal nerves are damaged, it could lead to sensory abnormalities or even paralysis. According to Mr. Davis' report, the damage is moderate. Conservative treatment is the only option, and there's no guarantee of full recovery. Even if there's a one in a thousand chance of healing, strenuous physical activity will be out of the question."

Leo's fists clenched at his sides. Despite having heard similar verdicts before, each one felt like a knife twisting in his gut.

"Isn't there any more effective treatment?" Collins asked, his eyes reddening. Collins had secured this meeting because the hospital was renowned for its neurology department, and he had hoped for more than the same disappointing answers they'd received elsewhere.

"I'm sorry," was the simple, disheartening reply.

Before Collins could say another word, Leo placed a hand on his arm, nodded to the director and the specialist, and said, "I understand. Thank you."

Without waiting for a response, Leo turned and walked away, his solitary figure a portrait of despair.

The neurologist, accustomed to such cases yet still touched by the sight, let out a sigh. His eyes inadvertently fell on a magazine lying nearby, sparking a thought. "Wait a second," he called out to Leo.

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The expert picked up the magazine and flipped through it quickly, “Look, our hospital might not have the means, but there could be someone overseas who can handle your neurological

Leo had reached the doorway when he heard this and spun around abruptly, “Who?” The neurology expert held up the magazine, pointing at a photo, “This person here, a genius doktor, LIN.” Leo’s gaze landed on the magazine’s photo, and in that moment, he froze.

“This LIN, they won a bunch of medical awards Internationally by the age of nineteen. Any research paper they put out sends shockwaves through the medical community. They are especially skilled at treating neurological conditions. If they take your case, a full recovery might just be on the cards.”

The reverence on the expert’s face as he spoke was a clear indication of his high regard for LIN. Collins lit up with a manic joy, “Could I take this magazine with me?”

The expert wasn’t stingy, handing over the magazine. “However, I’ve heard LIN is notoriously reclusive and doesn’t just see anyone. But you could give it a shot.”

Collins, clutching the magazine like a prized possession, nodded his thanks. At this moment, he couldn’t care less about how temperamental LIN was. The important thing was the potential. for his star’s health to be restored. Even if LIN was difficult to persuade, he would find a way to get them to treat Leo.

Exiting the hospital and sliding into the car, Collins still cradled the magazine, his usual anxiety and tension finally easing. “Leo, you don’t have to worry about your health anymore. We’ve got hope now. If we can get to this LIN, you’ll be back on stage in no time.”

“I’ll look this LIN up online, see if there’s any information,” Collins said, reaching for his phone. Leo was still stunned from seeing the photo in the magazine and didn’t quite catch what Collins was saying.

After a while, Collins, Initially buoyed by hope, looked grave again, “This LIN... his temperament really does seem tricky. Rumor has it, unless it’s a world-class medical puzzle, getting him to act is unlikely.”

Collins turned to his client with a raspy voice, “Leo, we...”

Leo finally snapped back to the present, cutting Collins off. “He’ll take my case.”

Collins looked puzzled, not understanding where Leo’s sudden confidence came from, “What do 1/2

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you mean by that?”

Leo took the magazine, flipped to LIN’s photo, and casually pulled off his black face mask, holding up the magazine, “Compare the two, see any resemblance?”

Collins was more confused by the action, but still glanced back and forth before speaking uncertainly, “You two are both good— looking? Hang on, Leo, this isn’t the time for a beauty contest with some genius doctor.”

Leo’s expression darkened, and he rubbed his forehead in frustration, “Don’t you think he looks. a bit like me?”

Upon hearing this, Collins took a closer look, “Now that you mention it, there is a resemblance.” His words trailed off as his face registered shock, “You wouldn’t happen to be...”

Seeing that Collins seemed to be grasping the truth, Leo put the magazine down and put his mask back on, “Alright, let’s hit the road.”

Chapter 88

Chapter 88

Mirabella had just returned home from the hospital when Emmitt walked through the door. Days had passed since their last falling out, and although

the anger had subsided in Emmitt's heart, a certain unease lingered, casting a cool shade over his gaze whenever it landed on his sister.

"Did Leo not come home yesterday?" Emmitt's eyes swept the living room, then turned towards Delilah, who was bustling in the kitchen.

"Yeah, he did, but he left right after dinner. Said he had a flight to Lakewood today to shoot a music video or something. Why the sudden interest? You looking for him?" Delilah eyed him curiously.

At that, Emmitt hummed noncommittally, "No big deal, really. Just haven't seen him in a while and thought he'd stick around the house to rest up."

"I called you yesterday, but you were busy with work." Delilah replied, her voice tinged with annoyance. Clearing his throat, Emmitt made no reply.

"Aren't you hungry? Lunch will be ready soon. Go and chat with your sister in the living room." Delilah instructed, pausing before adding, "And rein in that temper of yours. Mira is your flesh and blood. Don't always be looking at her through those judgmental glasses."

Emmitt was about to decline the meal, but Delilah's words left him swallowing his protests. Mirabella sat curled up on the couch with a book, her focus undisturbed even as Emmitt took a seat beside her. He watched her, his expression dimming, assuming she was intentionally ignoring him. He didn't initiate conversation, choosing instead to pick up the remote and flick on the TV.

The quiet atmosphere was broken by the sounds of the television. Mirabella glanced up briefly before returning her attention to the pages before her, seemingly unaffected by the intrusion.

Emmitt wasn't truly interested in watching TV. It was more about upholding Delilah's request without losing dignity by speaking first. So, he flipped through channels aimlessly, paying no real attention to what was on.

But soon, a variety show caught his attention, halting his restless channel surfing. Summer, a dynamic pop singer known for her stage presence and central role in her group, was gracing the screen. Even Emmitt, who seldom

watched such programs, couldn't help but be impressed by his foster sister's natural charisma. He settled in to watch.

After the performance, the hosts began interviewing the artists. As the center of her group, Summer was a focal point of their attention. "So, our lovely Summer, aside from rehearsals, what do you usually do with your free time?" the host inquired.

On the screen, Summer, with her flawless makeup and sweet smile, answered gracefully, "Besides training, I spend most of my time with my nose in a book. After all, as everyone knows, I'm still a senior in high school."

"Haha, you've seen how hardworking and dedicated Summer is. Has she won over any more fans out there?" The host playfully joked to the camera.

The audience laughed affectionately at the host's teasing. After a brief pause, the host continued with a smile. "We've heard you participated in the 'BrainSpark Nationals' and achieved an impressive sixth place in the preliminaries. Summer, how do you feel about that, and do you have any inspiring words to share with us?"

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Emmitt's eyebrows shot up, a look of utter surprise and astonishment painting his features. He was well-aware that his foster sister's grades were nothing short of stellar, but to rank sixth in the nation on the preliminary exams? That was something beyond merely 'good.'

Prodigy, genius — she truly deserved every academic accolade.

On the TV, Summer maintained her composure, answering the host's questions with a calm and modest demeanor. "Preliminary scores don't really mean much," she said coolly. "I'm just going to keep pushing forward, aiming to do well in the upcoming rounds and live up to everyone's expectations."

The host, all smiles, smoothly transitioned to interviewing the other team members.

Emmitt's attention drifted from the TV, and he fished out his phone to shoot a message to Summer on Messenger. [Congrats on snagging the sixth spot in the nation on those prelims.]

At that moment, Summer, phone in hand, saw the sudden message from Emmitt and paused briefly before responding: [Thanks, Emmitt. How'd you find out about my score, though?]

Emmitt chuckled, typing back, [Just saw your interview on TV.]

Summer's fingers hesitated on the screen for a moment. [Lol, you actually watch that kind of website to check out my score or something.]

stuff? | thought you went on the competition

Finding that a bit surprising, Emmitt asked, [There's a website for your competition?]

Summer's gaze narrowed slightly as she replied, [Yeah, but to check personal scores, you need the entry number. Otherwise, just checking the rankings is a pain, considering how many high schools and students are involved nationwide.]

Emmitt: [Makes sense. When's your next exam? Don't forget to let me know your results.] Another cute emoji popped up from Summer, [Sure thing! After next week's round, I'll text you as soon as | get my scores.] Emmitt: [Good luck!]

By then, Delilah was calling for lunch, so Emmitt pocketed his phone, standing up with a cursory glance at the book *Mirabella* had just closed.

The cover was littered with French, not a hint of English translation, and it looked incredibly dense. Even with his decent grasp of French, Emmitt couldn't decipher the book's theme or content.

She had been so engrossed in this French read, without any English glossary, that she hadn't even been distracted by the television. Wasn't that a bit too much of a show?

If she were diving into a regular French textbook, he wouldn't have thought twice, but this... Well, it certainly screamed sophistication.

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Chapter 83 Shaking his head, Emmitt couldn't help but feel disapproved, then he headed to the study to call Shawn for lunch.

At the table. Delilah didn't fuss over her eldest son, instead, she busied herself with serving her daughter. "Mira, eat up. You've been holed up with your books so much; you're looking too thin," Delilah said with concern.

Other kids were out shopping with friends during the holidays, but her daughter was buried in books round the clock. At this rate, Delilah feared her child would turn into a real nerd.

When Emmitt heard Delilah's comment about the strain of reading books, he shot her a peculiar glance. Everyone read books related to high school courses. But what was his sister into?

This unconditional favoritism Delilah showed her daughter wasn't something he was keen to praise.

No data found.

Chapter 90

Chapter 90

Emmitt, weary of the exaggerated tales that seemed to flow endlessly from his mother's lips, casually shifted the conversation. "Didn't Mirabella join the BrainSpark Nationals? How did the prelims go?"

He paused briefly, glancing at Mirabella, but before she could respond, he continued, "Summer's been in that competition too. Scored pretty well, got a high ranking." He deliberately omitted that Summer had placed sixth, out of consideration for Mirabella's pride.

Mirabella's eyebrows twitched slightly, but she remained silent.

Delilah and Shawn, standing nearby, didn't seem the slightest bit surprised. Instead-

"Oh. Summer's score is decent enough," Delilah said nonchalantly with a nod.

Shawn, equally composed, added, "Summer's always been a strong student. Her being near the top isn't surprising."

But no matter how good Summer was, she wasn't a match for their daughter. After all, their girl had aced it, clinching the top spot with a perfect score.

Noticing their tepid reactions, Emmitt looked up, puzzled. Summer had been their cherished foster daughter for over a decade. Even if they

weren't thrilled for her, their response seemed off. Could it be because Mirabella had done poorly, and they were being considerate of her feelings?

Emmitt chuckled at the thought, but before he could dwell on it, Shawn's voice filled the air again. "Our Mira's a different story. Fresh from a small-town high school and hardly settled into the big city's teaching methods, she went straight for the jackpot-a perfect score. She's really done the Davis family proud!"

Shawn finished speaking with a smugness so exaggerated, it was as if he wanted to tattoo 'World's Smartest Daughter' across his forehead.

"And rightly so. She's the national number one." Delilah chimed in, her tone shifting to one of unbridled pride, her chin lifted high. Emmitt's face registered shock as he turned to them. "Perfect score? First place?"

Sensing Emmitt's disbelief, Delilah blinked innocently. "Huh, didn't I tell you?"

"You might've forgotten." Shawn chimed in, feigning seriousness.

"How could she..." Emmitt blurted out impulsively, "Her grades were not great, were they?"

Delilah's eyebrows arched as she glanced at her eldest son. "Who told you that?" She seemed to have erased from her memory the fact that she too had once believed her daughter's academic performance was lacking.

Emmitt was taken aback.

Chapter 90 "If you don't believe it, go check the rankings online for yourself," Delilah huffed, clearly disappointed by Emmitt's distrust.

Emmitt's expression stiffened, his grip on his fork faltering. He didn't reach for his phone to check the rankings. He knew his parents wouldn't joke about such matters. Mixed emotions churned within Emmitt as he turned to look at Mirabella, who sat quietly enjoying her meal.

For so long, he had always thought that his sister had poor academic performance, and he even believed that the acceptance letter to Parkside High School was obtained through improper

means.

After learning she had entered the BrainSpark Nationals, he prejudged her actions as frivolous. Ironically, he had thought himself kind, even offering to hire her a tutor—an offer she had declined, leading him to believe she was reaching beyond her grasp.