

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

#Chapter 91 - Read The Double (or More ?) Life of The Fake Heiress Chapter 91

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Emmitt's lips twisted into a sardonic smile, finding humor in the misunderstandings of the past weeks, while simultaneously feeling exasperated by his sister's silence despite her academic prowess. "If she had just talked to me more," he thought, "none of this unpleasantness would've happened."

The food tasted bland, partly from wounded pride, partly from not knowing how to face Mirabella. So, when Emmitt's phone buzzed in his pocket, he seized the excuse of urgent business and left the half-eaten meal behind.

Delilah, puzzled, watched him leave. "Isn't it the weekend?" she mused. Shawn raised an eyebrow, his tone cryptic. "He's just being stubborn." Delilah looked at her husband, not quite grasping his meaning. Shawn just smiled and kept his thoughts to himself.

Once downstairs, Emmitt didn't start his car immediately but instead pulled out his phone and looked up the BrainSpark Nationals. He found the official website with ease and navigated to the scores section. He didn't have to search long before Mirabella's name leaped out at him, sitting at the top of the board, with a full hundred and fifty points.

His gaze lingered on the screen, fingers hesitant, then scrolled down to see Summer's name as well. He realized that had he not casually mentioned the competition, and had his parents not spoken of his sister's accomplishments, he might have continued to undervalue his biological sister over his adopted one—a thought that made him ruffle his hair in frustration before tossing the phone aside and starting the car.

Well, it was just a preliminary score, nothing to fuss over. Monday. Mirabella had barely arrived at school when she was summoned to the principal's office.

"Mirabella, long time no see," the principal, Mr. Hammond, greeted her with a beaming smile. His demeanor both gentle and polite.

She nodded politely, “Good morning. What can I do for you?”

“Well, I've been so swamped lately, even had to travel. I'm afraid that during my absence, some unfounded rumors about you taking shortcuts have been circulating around the school,” he said, his face darkening with concern before he continued with a hint of regret, “It's my oversight, really. I failed to clarify things with the faculty, leading to this misunderstanding. Rest assured, I will clear your name, Mirabella.”

Mirabella looked surprised but shook her head, “No need. Wise people know better than to

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listen to gossip. Explaining too much only breeds more suspicion.”

Mr. Hammond paused, not expecting her indifference, but then realized that for someone of her intellect, dismissing public opinion was natural.

“Isn't proving them wrong with skills more satisfying?” Mirabella added with a half—smile.

“You just...” he chuckled, shaking his head. He moved to the water cooler, poured her a glass of water, and changed the subject. “Anyway, about the upcoming BrainSpark Nationals, I have high hopes for you.”

Mirabella accepted the glass, thoughtful for a moment before raising an eyebrow, “I didn't sign up to compete.”

Mr. Hammond coughed awkwardly, gesturing for her to sit as he explained, “I took the liberty of entering you into the competition online.”

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Chapter 92 “I personally think this competition should be a piece of cake for you,” Mr. Hammond remarked with a hint of emotion in his voice.

Meeting Mirabella was a stroke of serendipity. At just 17, she made an online splash by cracking the complex conundrums posed by several prestigious Riverdale institutions.

Problems that stumped other students for weeks seemed like child's play to her. With barely any effort, she'd unraveled them and then some, her insights leaving onlookers in awe.

She almost caused an educational meltdown at these elite schools, and yet nobody had a clue who was behind it all. It was only when Parkside High School's online admission quiz blew her cover that he learned the mastermind giving the big institutions a run for their money was a high school student.

Pure luck played its part in bringing her to Parkside High School. Had she not been looking to study in Ashford, with Parkside being the top high school around, she might not have given it a second glance. Of course, Mr. Hammond never expected this young lady to actually choose Parkside.

When confronted with Mr. Hammond's unexpected confidence, Mirabella could only respond. "I just want to focus on my studies."

Mr. Hammond chuckled. "Studying and competing? They actually go hand in hand." "So, what's your reason for putting me in this competition?" asked Mirabella to the chase.

Mr. Hammond adjusted his glasses. "Although Parkside's college placement rate has been consistent, there's been a troubling downward trend..." He paused, his smile tinged with bitterness. "I just don't want the school's century-old reputation to falter on my watch."

Mirabella gave Mr. Hammond an OK sign. "I get it."

Conversations with the bright were refreshingly straightforward. Mr. Hammond studied Mirabella for a moment before adding, "This competition isn't a walk in the park either. If you stand out, you might even catch the eye of an association or two from Riverdale. It could be great for your future."

Mirabella raised an eyebrow, slightly taken aback.

Mr. Hammond smiled. "With your capabilities, you're underselling yourself at our school. There's not much else I can help you with."

Mirabella waved a casual hand, "No need, I'm good as is." She then stood up, "Class is about to start. I should head back to the classroom."

“Alright.” Mr. Hammond said nothing more, but as Mirabella reached the door, he added, “I haven't told a soul about that online incident.”

Mirabella paused, smiled over her shoulder, and left. Mr. Hammond's gaze lingered until she was out of sight. Then, the warmth on his face faded. He walked to his desk and picked up the phone, dialing. Although the girl had expressed no need for clarification, that didn't mean he'd tolerate underhanded schemes during his absence.

In the blink of an eye, the day for the BrainSpark Nationals city preliminaries arrived. The tests weren't held at the schools but were centralized in the city's Education Center.

Mirabella didn't go to school that day but headed straight to the test site. Her parents, Delilah and Shawn, were up early, fussing over breakfast, making it heartier and more varied than usual.

After breakfast, they descended in the elevator and peppered Mirabella with reminders to make sure she had everything she needed.

Watching her parents, who seemed as if they were sending her off to battle, Mirabella couldn't help but feel amused. “Mom, Dad, it's just a simple little contest, nothing as serious as you're making it out to be.”

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Delilah's eyelids slightly at the mention of “little contest from her daughter's mouth. It echoed in her mind, contrasting with the nonchalant way Mirabella had described the event just days before as “just some boring contest with no prize money,

It was a contest that could secure a guaranteed spot at one of the nation's most prestigious universities, and she called it little?! With a complex expression, Delilah pondered over her daughter's flippant attitude. What was she to do with such a cheeky girl? Soon enough, Shawn fired up his vintage Santana and took his wife and daughter toward the city's Education Center.

Upon arrival, they were greeted by a sea of parents milling around the entrance. To their surprise, there was even a TV crew filming on site.

“Hey, is your competition going to be on TV?” Shawn asked, a mix of surprise and curiosity in his voice.

Mirabella glanced at the cameras by the door and frowned slightly. “I don’t know.”

“Don’t stress about it. Just do your thing.” Delilah chimed in reassuringly.

“Sure,” Mirabella responded, her voice calm and her demeanor unruffled.

At that moment, the Gilbert family’s chauffeur dropped off Summer. As soon as she stepped out, the cameraman, immediately swiveled his lens towards her, and a reporter hurried over for

an interview.

Shawn and Delilah noticed Summer, too, but weren’t surprised. They knew she was also in the competition. Seeing her surrounded by the TV crew, they refrained from approaching, especially with Mandy by her side. They harbored no fondness for anyone from the Gilbert clan.

Delilah couldn’t help but bristle at the thought of Mandy’s past attitude and the fact that she’d abandoned Mirabella in a small town, a clear sign of her archaic preference for sons over daughters.

With a dark look, Delilah turned away, not wanting Mandy to catch a glimpse of Mirabella. She quickly shifted her attention to her daughter, “Honey, you should head inside and find your

seat.” Mirabella could sense Delilah’s mood but didn’t ask any questions. “I’m going in,” she said. “Go get ‘em, sweetie. We’ll be right here waiting for you,” Delilah encouraged, patting her on the shoulder.

With a soft acknowledgment, Mirabella hung her student ID around her neck, approached the entrance, and showed her ID to the staff for verification.

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After the TV crew finished their special segment on Summer, they moved on to film other students and parents.

Still sporting a polite smile though the cameras had turned away, Mandy caught sight of Delilah and Shawn. Her brow furrowed as she leaned in and asked in a low voice, “What are your former foster parents doing here?”

Knowing Mandy's disdain for the Davis family, Summer kept her gaze down and replied softly. “Mirabella is also competing.” Mandy snorted in disbelief. “Her grades are so mediocre, and she’s got the nerve to show up? Is this some kind of joke?”

Reflecting on Mirabella’s preliminary scores, Summer looked uncomfortable but simply said, “Mom, maybe you haven't really paid attention to Mirabella before, but she’s... pretty formidable now.”

“Formidable? More so than my daughter?” Mandy dismissed Summer’s words outright, not bothering to inquire further about Mirabella. Glancing at her watch impatiently, she said, “Enough of this. Go inside and make us proud. Don’t embarrass us.”

With a forced smile, Summer responded half-heartedly and made her way to the entrance.

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The BrainSpark Nationals’ city—level preliminaries weren’t a simple affair of filling out a test and waiting for a score. In addition to the written exam, there was a theoretical test and a live divergent thinking challenge, which cranked up the difficulty by several notches.

The written exam lasted an hour. After wrapping that up, contestants were ushered next door for the live question—and—answer session under the watchful eye of the clock.

Mirabella glanced over her test paper with a hint of boredom and shook her head. The

questions were somewhat tougher than the preliminary round, but.. 4

they lacked any real zest

for a challenge. With a tinge of disappointment, she picked up her pen and began to answer the questions at a leisurely pace.

Last time, her rapid-fire responses had drawn criticism for seeming flippant about the exam process, so this time, she was determined to embody the serious diligence expected of a student.

Forty minutes later, Mirabella, who had been deliberately slow, was ironically still the first to submit her paper, surprising even the proctor with her speed.

As she handed in her test, the proctor took a moment to note her name. Mirabella? Wasn't she the one who scored perfect marks in the preliminary competition? The proctor held onto the test paper, momentarily lost in thought.

Mirabella headed straight to the adjacent room for the live Q&A session. The rules were straightforward: three proctors would each draw a random question for the contestant to answer on the spot, all within a ten—minute time limit. It felt almost like a job interview.

Mirabella internally scoffed at the format, likening it to a dull, uninspired setup born out of some pyramid scheme.

Soon enough, three questions were drawn: one on history and the other two on science. designed to test cognitive acumen. Unfazed by the challenge, Mirabella tackled the questions in about two minutes, her expression unchanging as if the task was child's play thanks to her voracious reading habits.

The proctors were the ones left astonished. After she left, they couldn't help but express their awe. "This student might just be the most impressive one I've ever encountered," one whispered.

"She answered in two minutes and drew the toughest questions. This is some monstrous logical reasoning... | think we're witnessing the birth of a genius."

"No, it's more than that. This year's international competitions will surely have our country's name shining because of her." The entire examination process was being recorded by a TV crew, which had anticipated that

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the school's celebrity, Summer, would be the first to emerge from the test center. The crew was all set to interview her, banking on her fame for a ratings spike.

But to everyone's surprise, it was Mirabella who appeared first. The host paused for a moment, then quickly recovered and approached with her microphone to ask about the exam.

Mirabella might not have been Summer, but she had high-caliber beauty and a cool, effortless charisma that was camera— friendly.

Casting a glance at the approaching camera, Mirabella lightly massaged her temples, regretting not having lingered inside a little longer.

“How do you feel about the test questions today? Are you confident about advancing to the next round of the city finals?” the host asked, her voice cheerful and warm.

Mirabella looked at her impassively and answered tersely, “Pretty easy.”

The host, microphone in hand, felt at a loss for words for the first time after such a dismissive yet self-assured response.

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In any typical scenario, a student being interviewed on a television program would exude modesty, answering the host's queries with a tempered humility. So why was this particular student so audaciously blunt, her impatience almost palpable?

The surprising part was, the host doesn't seem to be bothered by it. Indeed, beauty does seem to wield its own form of Justice.

Snapping back to the moment, the host offered a sheepish grin and chuckled, “Ha-ha, I suppose you're quite confident about your performance, then. Well, we're wishing you all the best and hope you can advance to the next round.”

“Thanks.” Mirabella breezed past them and headed out.

Watching her leave, the host muttered, “I wonder which school she’s from. Such a looker — she’d have legions of fans if she ever decided to join showbiz.”

As soon as Mirabella stepped outside, Delilah and Shawn, who had been waiting eagerly, spotted her instantly.

“Sweetheart, all done already? That was quick.” Delilah remarked, her eyes darting to the entrance to check if other students were exiting too.

“Yep.” came Mirabella’s succinct reply. She knew she could have finished even sooner had she not been trying to maintain the appearance of a studious demeanor.

“How did it go?” Delilah asked, her maternal curiosity kicking in despite her confidence in her daughter’s abilities. Mirabella arched an eyebrow playfully. “Piece of cake.”

“When do we find out the results?” Shawn interjected.

“Tomorrow morning at ten.”

Shawn nodded, committing the time to memory. “Let’s head off then. Your mom and I are taking you out for a feast to celebrate.” That was the plan they’d hatched while waiting outside.

Mirabella glanced at her parents. “But don’t the results come out tomorrow?”

Delilah beamed with pride. “My girl’s a genius. We don’t need the results to know she’s aced it.”

Shawn shook his head with a smile. “Let’s continue this in the car, shall we?”

Soon, the family was on their way.

Not far off, Mandy, who had been sitting in her car the whole time, had witnessed everything 17:251

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from Mirabella’s exit to the family’s departure. The sight of Shawn’s old, beat-up Santana only deepened the sneer on her lips. Just as she expected the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.

Checking her watch, Mandy's face, meticulously made up, betrayed a flicker of impatience. She instructed her chauffeur, "Go see why Summer is taking so long."

"Right away, ma'am." About ten minutes later, Summer finally emerged and got into the car. Mandy's voice, edged with reproach, hit her immediately, "What took you so long?"

Summer flinched slightly, picking up on Mandy's impatience. With a soothing voice, she replied, "The questions were quite challenging this time, took me a bit longer. And then there was the TV crew interviewing, which held me up a little."

At that, the sharpness in Mandy's face softened, and a scornful smile crept onto her lips. Right, Mirabella only finished so quickly because she couldn't understand those difficult questions.

"How do you think you did?" Mandy then asked.

"It was alright. Making it to the city finals shouldn't be a problem," Summer said nonchalantly, though her confidence in her results was crystal clear.

"Good, that's what I expect. A daughter of the Gilbert family must outshine the rest, especially Mirabella!" Mandy huffed.

Summer's gaze lingered outside the window, her eyes cool and detached, unnoticed by Mandy. She loathed being compared to Mirabella — it made her feel second-rate.

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In the bustling heart of the city, Shawn arrived at a renowned seafood bistro with his wife and daughter in tow. As they stepped out of the car, Mirabella took in the opulent decor of the establishment, her gaze lingering on the details that screamed expensive taste.

Shawn went off to park the car, and Delilah, after taking a few steps, noticed her daughter hadn't followed. She turned, a puzzled look on her face. "Mira, what's holding you back?"

Mirabella blinked, her tone earnest. "I was just wondering how much a meal here costs. We're not exactly rolling in dough."

Delilah couldn't help but laugh at her daughter's remark. "Don't you worry about it. Even if we dined here every single night, I could still afford it," she reassured. After all, they owned the place.

Still, their daughter had always been under the impression they were strapped for cash, which both Delilah and her husband found rather amusing, so they hadn't bothered to set the record straight.

Half-joking, Mirabella replied, "I've got this sneaky suspicion you're keeping things from me." Like, how come they were supposedly poor, but it looked like they were anything but?

Clearing her throat, Delilah deflected, "Nonsense, darling." Mirabella gave a drawn-out "Hmm," clearly not convinced.

The bistro manager, who had been tipped off by the bosses, was waiting at the entrance. He hurried over to greet Delilah with the utmost respect, "Madam, welcome."

At the sound of "madam," Mirabella's eyebrows shot up. Her glance at her mother was heavy with implication as if to say. "Is this what you meant by 'nonsense?'"

Delilah touched her forehead, realizing the charade was up too soon. She cleared her throat and steadied herself, then nodded at the manager before turning to her daughter, "See, isn't the service here exceptional?"

The manager stood awkwardly to the side. Was the boss' wife commending him?

Mirabella's lips twitched as she observed the ever—bowing manager and the grandeur behind him, sensing her experiences of a modest life slipping away. After a moment, she nodded. "Quite good."

“Carry on with your work. We'll head up to our booth,” Delilah instructed the manager, sending him a discreet signal to leave them be.

Although the manager didn't quite grasp the underlying dynamics, he was adept at reading the room. He quickly excused himself and made sure the staff knew not to disturb the family's meal.

Satisfied with the manager's response, Delilah led her daughter upstairs to their private booth. 12:25

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The booth was spacious, its interior as lavish as the rest of the place, dripping with

extravagance.

“Sweetheart, take a look and order whatever you'd like,” Delilah said, presenting the menu to Mirabella.

Mirabella opened the menu, and upon seeing the prices on the first page, she fell silent once again. It felt like she'd stumbled into the wrong script.

Just then, Shawn, who had parked the car, returned. Rolling up his shirt sleeves, he mentioned, “Zach just called. He's going to join us for dinner.”

Delilah was surprised, “He's back in town?” “Yep, got in yesterday,” Shawn confirmed, then turned to his daughter. “Mira, you'll get to see your brother Zach soon.”

As Mirabella handed him the menu, she casually asked, “What does Zach do for a living?”

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Chapter 98 Zach was all chivalry at dinner, meticulously de-shelling seafood for Mirabella as if it were second nature.

“So, where are you hitting the books these days, Mira?” Zach’s voice was gentle as he placed a peeled shrimp into Mirabella’s bowl.

She glanced up at him, her response unruffled, “Parkside High School.”

Zach was genuinely surprised. “That’s stellar! I missed getting into Parkside High by a whisker back in my day. Still stings a bit.” He let out a sigh that was almost too real.

Delilah chimed in from the side, not missing a beat, “You spent the night before the exams playing video games. You’ve only got yourself to blame. No sympathy here.”

Zach cleared his throat to mask a rare moment of embarrassment, muttering, “Everyone’s young and foolish at some point.”

“Ha, you’ve got the most excuses. Look at your sister here, acing the BrainSpark Nationals prelims on her first try. She’s outshining all you boys by a mile.” Delilah couldn’t help but beam when she mentioned her daughter’s achievements.

“Is that so?” Zach could hardly hide his amazement.

“Of course, why would I lie? Just this morning, Mira finished the city preliminaries. We’ll get the results tomorrow, and you can check them out then,” Delilah snorted.

Zach turned to look at Mirabella, feeling a bit defeated. “I knew about that competition when I was still in school. It’s held every couple of years, attracting whiz kids and prodigies from across the nation. You scored full marks on your first go...”

t That was kind of insane, right?!

Meeting Zach’s bewildered gaze, Mirabella’s lips curled into a timid smile, her reply cheeky enough to warrant a smack. “It’s no big deal.”

Zach was in disbelief. Ah! He felt like he’s no longer the smartest kid in the house.

After dinner, Mirabella prepared to head back to school. Shawn was supposed to drive her, but Zach took over the duty halfway through lunch.

Throughout the drive, Zach occasionally glanced at his sister sitting in the passenger seat, internally sighing at the disparity between them. They were from the same parents. How could they be so different?

Feeling his gaze, Mirabella tilted her head, a playful lock of hair falling over her shoulder, her eyes curious, "What's on your mind, Zach?"

He cleared his throat. "I was just thinking. I should pay a visit to the folks who raised my sister

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to be such a standout."

He had some idea of her background, knowing that she hadn't grown up with the Gilberts but was raised in the countryside by her grandmother. Suddenly, he found himself quite curious about this old lady.

Mirabella hadn't expected him to bring this up. After a brief pause, she replied. "Task Grandma when we have our next meet." "Mm," Zach hummed in acknowledgment, letting the conversation fade.

Soon, they arrived at the school.

"Zach, I'm gonna head in," Mirabella said as she unbuckled her seat belt.

Rubbing his forehead, Zach replied softly, "Sure thing."

Noticing his repetitive gesture throughout the drive, Mirabella inquired, "Are you feeling okay?"

Zach looked up, startled, before shaking his head with a smile. "Occupational hazard. It drains the mental energy."

Mirabella hummed thoughtfully, then as she opened the door and was about to step out, she turned back, "When are you planning to swing by home?"

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Chapter 99 Zach gave her a puzzled glance. “Hmm?”

“I've got some vitamins and energy boosters at home that really work wonders. When are you coming back? I'll have them ready for you,” Mirabella explained casually. After all, she had taken a ‘little’ welcome gift from him. It was only right to offer something in return.

Truth be told, her remedies were worth a lot more than the ‘little’ gift.

Coming back to his senses, Zach realized his sister meant well and smiled. He was just about to speak when he heard her voice again. “Or just text me your address, and I can mail them to

55, and I can you, no big deal.”

Seeing the earnest look on his sister's face, Zach swallowed his initial refusal and said, “Thank you, I'll be staying at home for a while.”

Mirabella snapped her fingers at him. “OK, I'll give them to you tonight.” With that, she hopped out of the car with a cool move.

Resting his hand on the steering wheel, Zach watched his sister walk away and shook his head with a smile. One had to admit, she was pretty cute, or rather, quite dashing.

Starting the car, Zach turned around and left the school. As he drove off, he passed the Gilbert family's car head-on.

Sitting in the car, Summer glanced up just in time to catch a glimpse of Zach's face in the passing vehicle. “Stop the car,” she urged the driver.

The driver slammed on the brakes, pulling over to the side of the road. Summer pushed the car door open, but when she looked back, Zach's car had already vanished into the distance. Biting her lip in frustration, She quickly pulled out her phone and dialed Zach's number.

After several rings, Zach finally answered, “Summer? Is there something you need?”

Summer's gaze still followed the direction Zach had gone, and she spoke gently. "It's nothing. much. I was just wondering if you were back from your business trip?"

Zach, driving away, paused for a moment before replying without any noticeable change in his tone. "Not yet. The case at the company is pretty complex. It might take a while longer."

Hearing this, Summer's grip on her phone tightened unconsciously, her expression faltering slightly. After a few seconds, she found her voice again. "Ah, is that so? Well, let me know when you're coming back. I'll come to the airport to pick you up."

Zach responded noncommittally, "I've got a client right now; we'll talk when I'm free." "Okay, then... you go ahead with your work, Zach."

After hanging up, Summer stood there for a long time, her eyes getting teary slightly. The cars had only brushed past each other, but she wouldn't mistake that face or the license plate.

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Why did Zach lie about still being on a business trip? Was it because of Mirabella's return that he was acting so cold towards her?

That's right, he was coming from the school. It didn't take much guessing to know that Mirabella must have said something to him! Summer clenched her fists, her sharp nails almost piercing her palms.

Back in the classroom, Jenna, who'd been slumped listlessly over her desk, perked up immediately, "Mira, you're back. How'd the test go?"

Mirabella tucked a strand of hair behind her ear with an air of nonchalance. "Not bad, I guess." Jenna clicked her tongue twice. That tone was asking for trouble. "You look beat. Rough night?" Mirabella glanced at her and asked.

Jenna shook her head and rested her chin on the desk, looking utterly dejected. "Did you hear about the infuriating thing our homeroom teacher announced this morning?"

No data found.

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Chapter 100 Mirabella arched an eyebrow, a signal for her friend to continue.

“The monthly ordeal of the Deathly Tests!” Jenna exhaled deeply. “Do you know why they call Annette ‘The She—Devil?’ Because anyone whose average score dips below their last one gets subjected to the most twisted form of punishment!”

Mirabella looked on, her expression the epitome of nonchalance.

“Punishment?”

“Yeah! Ten laps around the track every afternoon after school for ten days straight. If that’s not twisted, I don’t know what is!” Jenna shivered at the mere thought.

Asmirk tugged at the corner of Mirabella’s lips. “You call that twisted?”

Jenna’s patience snapped like a twig. “Ten whole laps! You know the size of our school track, it’s massive! Just one lap during PE, and I’m already winded!”

Ten laps might as well be a death sentence!

Oh right, she forgot that Mirabella always performed like an Olympic athlete during gym class as if they weren’t even attending the same school.

Mirabella stroked her chin, eyeing Jenna from head to toe before shaking her head in mock disapproval. “Dark circles under the eyes, habitual late nights, a body bloated with retained water, and a lack of exercise. You’re squandering your youth, sweetheart. That’s a no-go.”

Jenna snorted, “You sound like one of those slick holistic health gurus right now.” While speaking, she fished out a compact mirror from her desk and peered into it. “But seriously, are my under-eyes that bad?”

Mirabella remained silent.

“Looks like my dark circles are pretty bad,” Jenna said somberly, setting down the mirror and turning her woeful gaze onto Mirabella’s face, which was flawless, radiant skin without a blemish in sight. The stark contrast was a blow to her self-esteem.

Jenna covered her face. “Ooh, I am wounded. Spare me the comfort.”

Mirabella’s lips twitched slightly, her voice as light as a feather. “Just hit the books and survive your Deathly Tests.” Jenna dropped her hands, glaring at Mirabella with indignation. “That’s just mean, a double whammy of insults!” Mirabella offered a faint smile.

Jenna was flabbergasted. This wasn't the caring Mirabella she knew!

That evening, after dinner, Mirabella ascended the stairs and rummaged through her collection

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of jars and bottles. She selected a slate—grey vial and descended back to the living room. “Zach, this is for you. One pill a day. Come back to me when you've run out,” she said, handing over the porcelain bottle to Zach.

Zach raised an eyebrow and accepted the bottle. “Is this that energy—boosting concoction you mentioned at lunch?” he inquired, unscrewing the lid. “Yes,” Mirabella nodded. “Trust me, it'll work wonders for you.”

Zach chuckled, bringing the bottle to his nose for a sniff. A subtle aroma wafted out, not the overpowering scent of herbal remedies but rather a refreshing fragrance that seemed to clear his mind.

“This medicine...” Zach lifted his eyes to Mirabella, clearly surprised. “The smell is actually comforting!” Of course, Mirabella's lips curved up in satisfaction. This was a remedy beyond value.

“Till try one now.” Zach said eagerly, tipping out a pill the size of a pea. A glass of water was conveniently beside him, and with a gulp, he swallowed the pill. Despite being an herbal pellet, it went down smoothly, lacking the harshness of the commercial herbal medicines that often left a bitter taste.

Perhaps the initial soothing scent had primed Zach, and as soon as he took it, he felt the perennial weight on his shoulders lift significantly.

This medicine was nothing short of miraculous!