

# Never Late, Never Away Chapter 291

She pushed the plate over to Vivian, saying, "I made your favorite shortbread. Eat it while it's hot."

"Mom, I'm asking you a question! How do you know him?"

Grinning, Rachel explained, "I used to be a housemaid for the Morrison family. At the time, my main job was to look after Benedict. That's why we're so close. You have no idea what a beautiful little boy he used to be! I found myself smitten by his cuteness. He took a liking to me too, always running around me and calling me Ms. Rachel. He was such an obedient child!"

Vivian could imagine how adorable Benedict must have been when he was young. She wondered if her baby would be as beautiful. Judging by Finnick's appearance, it was a given. Once the baby was born, Rachel would be ecstatic to be able to look after another child again.

At this, she was reminded of her main purpose for this visit. Distracted by Benedict's appearance, she had nearly forgotten.

Her lips curved into a grin as she purposely said vaguely, "Mom, Mom! I have good news to tell you!"

"What is it?"

"I'm pregnant!"

"Really? That's wonderful!" It had been a long time since Rachel was this happy.

Ever since Vivian and Finnick got married, Rachel had been worried about her daughter. Now, it seemed like her worry had been for naught.

Taking in the blissful smile on Vivian's face, Rachel felt the last of her apprehension vanish. She mentally thanked God for looking out for them both.

After asking how Vivian had been feeling recently, Rachel stated, "Your appetite is going to get a lot worse in a few days. You'll also be suffering from nausea all the time."

As if on cue, Vivian felt her stomach roiling in protest.

Noting the slightly nauseated look on her daughter's face, Rachel chuckled and continued, "Let me tell you something. Being pregnant is not as glorious as people always make it out to be. When I was pregnant with you, I was vomiting every single day at every single meal. It got so bad I lost a lot of weight. After that phase, my appetite returned but I was insatiable. It was like my stomach was a black hole. I ate so much that I gained back all the weight I had lost and then some more. Walking became hard and all I could do was waddle around slowly. My stomach was so stretched. Then, at close to ten months, I gave birth to you."

Vivian paid close attention to what her mother was saying. "Mom, did it hurt when you gave birth to me? Did it hurt a lot?"

"Of course! I gave birth to you naturally, you know. At the time, I kept telling myself that I had to endure till the end. I had to ensure you entered this world safe and sound."

Rachel's mind cast back to when she was in child labor. To this day, she could still remember the agony she had been in. It felt like her body was ripping in half. However, the moment she heard her baby's first cry, tears trickled from her eyes. What was all this suffering in the face of bringing a new life into the world?

Once again, Vivian was in awe at how great her mother was to give birth to her and raise her alone.

She thought back to all the jobs Rachel had done in her whole life. Her mother had been a saleswoman, an insurance agent, a newspaper stand seller, a tailor... The list was endless. All these jobs were difficult jobs that required hard labor.

Despite doing all these hard jobs, all she had gotten in return was scorn and disdain. Yet she still managed to raise Vivian and send her off to university. It was absolutely astounding.

Tears pricked at Vivian's eyes at the difficult life her mother had led.

As if Rachel had been thinking about her life too, she commented, "It was not easy bringing you up alone. I wasn't very talented nor was I rich. I had to work hard to earn enough money

to get us by. Looking back on it now, the Morrison family actually treated me quite well. At least the work environment was good.”

Something occurred to Vivian and she asked, “By the way, Mom, you said you looked after Benedict when he was young. Does that mean you know Evelyn as well?”

Evelyn!

How could Rachel not know who she was?

“Mom? So do you?” Vivian noticed the way her mother’s eyes shifted slightly, like she was hiding something.

Lowering her gaze, Rachel tucked her hair behind her ears. “Of course I do!”

So she does know Evelyn!

Vivian pressed, “What was she like as a little girl?”

Rachel’s voice was low as she replied, “She’s an outstanding girl, of course. After all, she was born into such a good family. How could she not be?”

That’s true. If Evelyn weren’t such an amazing woman, Finnick would not have found it so hard to forget her; Benedict would not have pampered her so either.

Vivian mentally berated herself for asking such a stupid question.

Rachel shot her daughter a curious look. “Why are you suddenly asking about her?”

“Oh, it’s nothing. I was just asking.”

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Vivian was reluctant to tell Rachel about Evelyn's death. Maybe her mother already knew. Whatever the case, she did not want to continue this topic further lest she caused her mother more grief.

Chatting a while longer, Vivian finally left. She had only just turned the corner of the street when she spotted a tall figure.

Benedict was leaning against his Range Rover. Upon noticing Vivian, he called out, "Get in. I'll send you back."

Although she knew she should not be too friendly with Finnick's enemy, she found that she did not actually hate Benedict. Strangely enough, she even felt a sort of kinship with him.

She had a lot of questions that she hoped he might be able to answer.

That was why she nodded in agreement. He swiftly opened the car door for her, gesturing her to step inside like a gentleman.

Sitting down in the driver's seat, he started up the engines.

Benedict broke the silence first, "I never thought you would be Ms. Rachel's daughter, Vivian."

Vivian bobbed her head, replying, "Yeah. I never expected my Mom to know you either."

"Seems like we're fated to meet."

Benedict glanced at her, discovering that she looked even prettier from the side.

Focusing his attention back on the road, he stopped the car at a red light.

He spoke up again, "Ms. Rachel was very nice to me when I was young. Unfortunately, things happened and she left my life. I honestly never thought I would get to see her again today."

"My Mom told me about you, about all the things you did when you were a little boy."

"Did she tell you I was a naughty one?"

"No. She actually kept praising you, saying how you were very smart and understanding. She liked you a lot. You and... Evelyn."

She had thought that by mentioning Evelyn, he would talk a little bit more about his sister. To her disappointment, he did not.

Instead, he seemed much more interested in her. "Where were you when Ms. Rachel was working for us? I've never seen you even once."

"I was at Miller Residence." She explained. "Mom told me your family did not like outsiders staying there. Left with no other choice, she sent me off to live with the Millers."

"I'm sorry."

"For what?"

His voice was sincere as he uttered, "If it weren't for us, you probably wouldn't have needed to live with the Miller family. I have a rough idea of what sort of people they are. I'm sure they didn't treat you very well, did they?"

"Forget it. It's all in the past now. You were just a kid back then anyway." Slowly but surely, she had been trying to get over her past. "Besides, Finnick has already taught them a harsh lesson for what they did to me. I don't hate them anymore."

She should not have brought up Finnick's name. The moment his name left her lips, Benedict tensed.

"Who knows if Finnick did that for you or for himself? Don't be so naive! He's not as perfect as you think he is! He's a hypocrite!" His voice came out stiffly.

Vivian would not allow anyone to speak badly of Finnick in front of her.

She scowled, snapping, "Benedict, could you not get so agitated at the mention of Finnick every single time? Do you really know what happened back then? Maybe it's not what you think it is!"

"You leap to his defense each time! How very stupid of you!" Benedict's face was blank as he hissed, "I've never seen such an idiotic woman as you! You're so foolish! An idiot!"

At this, Vivian understood that it was pointless to argue with him. They would just end up hurting each other.

Her tone was less than friendly when she demanded, "Let me off. I want to walk back home myself."

Sensing the unpleasant atmosphere in the car, Benedict realized that Vivian had misunderstood him. In truth, he was not against her specifically.

"Please don't misunderstand. I don't hate you; the one I hate is Finnick."

Now feeling embarrassed for her mistake, she suggested, "Then maybe you misunderstood Finnick too. Did the Morrison family actually investigate the incident carefully back then?"

For a long while, Benedict was silent. Vivian did not prod him further.

Abruptly, he uttered, "At the time, the Morrison family was in dire straits. We did not have the time and energy to investigate that matter."

His w bewildered Vivian. The Morrison family, one of the top three families in Sunshine City, were in dire straits?

He did not elaborate further, probably finding it too humiliating to tell her.

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Vivian returned to the magazine company.

For some reason, Benedict's words niggled at her mind and she was determined to find out what he meant.

Since Jenny had been working at the magazine company the longest, Vivian decided to ask her about what happened all those years ago.

Jenny pondered the question for several moments before flipping through her notebook of that year.

At last, she answered, "Ten years ago, the Morrison family had an unprecedented business crisis. Several large companies banded together to threaten their business. Things got so bad that Morrison Group came close to getting bought over by that consortium. This incident shook everyone to the core since the top three families in Sunshine City were interconnected. If one of them prosper, so would the others; and vice versa. Needless to say, the Jackson and Norton families were alarmed at how things were going. However, they did not actually help the Morrison family. Instead, they stood by the sidelines."

Unable to stop herself, Vivian interjected, "Why didn't they help the Morrises? I thought their families have always been rather good friends?"

"Yeah. Under normal circumstances, they would have aided the Morrises. Of course they wouldn't want the Morrises to crumble. Unfortunately, that year was a bad year for everyone. They were suffering from the world economic crisis too. That was why they could only watch helplessly from the sidelines."

Vivian listened carefully as Jenny explained everything.

"That's not even the end of it."

"There's more?"

“Well, what I’m about to tell you might not be directly related to the forceful takeover of Morrison Group, but Evelyn Morrison was kidnapped around this time as well. The poor Morrisons, they just couldn’t catch a break.”

So, these are the factors that might have affected the kidnapping all those years ago.

“At the time, Finnick and Evelyn were...” Jenny trailed off, not sure if she should tell Vivian more about the kidnapping.

Vivian urged her, “It’s okay, Jenny. Please continue. Finnick’s already told me about their kidnapping.”

Relaxing, Jenny continued her story, “Luckily, the Norton family finally decided to step in. Although Evelyn Morrison died in that fire, Morrison Group received the Norton family’s help and managed to get through that tough time. Otherwise, the Morrison family would have been destroyed.”

That’s right. Even with the Nortons’ help, the Morrisons have fallen from grace. Everybody looks at them with disdain now, treating them as yesterday’s news.

However, Vivian had a feeling that the Morrison family would rise to glory again if Benedict were to manage the company properly.

She questioned, “It must have been Samuel Norton who helped them, right?”

She thought Finnick’s grandfather must have been quite an important figure back in the day.

To her surprise, Jenny shook her head. “You’re wrong, Vivian. At the time, he was so anxious over Finnick’s kidnapping that he had fallen ill. There was no way he would have the energy to aid the Morrisons.”

“Then who?”

“Mark Norton, Finnick’s older brother.”

Vivian was at once stunned and puzzled. Mark? It was Mark who helped the Morrisons?

She was not that familiar with Mark. However, from what she knew of him, he was quite a sinister man. He would not do anything that did not benefit him.

She asked Jenny, "Are Benedict and Mark on good terms?"

Snapping her notebook shut, Jenny answered, "I have no idea. I guess they've probably known each other since young?"

Before Vivian could think on this more, her stomach suddenly spasmed and nausea rose in her.

Jenny panicked upon noticing the green look on Vivian's face. She cried out, "Vivian, what's wrong? Why do you look so terrible?"

Clamping a hand over her mouth, Vivian waved her other hand at Jenny before she rushed toward the toilets. She instantly started retching the moment she entered one of the stalls.

Sarah hurried over, frantically asking Jenny what was wrong.

The latter replied, "I don't know. She looked like she wanted to vomit."

"She wanted to vomit?" The wheels turned in Sarah's head before it clicked. She shouted, "Do you think she's pregnant?"

At the word "pregnant," the entire office exploded into mutters.

Anyone working for a magazine company was usually quite sensitive when it came to sniffing out something. Naturally, they were also quite nosy and loved to gossip. Vivian's current status as Mrs. Norton only served to make the news even more exciting.

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After puking her guts out, Vivian felt a lot better.

I've been feeling rather nauseous lately. Must be the morning sickness kicking in. Her spirits soared at the thought even as her heart swelled with love.

Washing her hands at the sink, she took a moment to stare at her reflection. She seemed to have lost a little weight. Despite that, she was still buoyed at the thought of being a mother.

When she returned to the office, she noticed everyone staring at her with wide grins.

Did something happen?

Her voice was cautious as she asked, "Err... Did something good happen, guys?"

Sarah walked up to her and said, "Congratulations, Vivian! You are pregnant, aren't you?"

So it was you! Busted!

Feeling a little shy, Vivian murmured, "Yeah... I-I'm pregnant."

Sarah swept her into a bone-crushing hug, squealing loudly. It was almost like she was the one pregnant and not Vivian.

In her excitement, Sarah shook Vivian agitatedly as she babbled, "Wow, you're so amazing, Vivian! You're going to be a mother! Mr. Norton is going to be a father!"

Jenny hastily stopped Sarah's movements, berating her, "Let go of her! Pregnant women shouldn't move so roughly, especially in the first few months. Their pregnancy is still not stable yet! You're going to hurt her!"

Gasping, colors drained from Sarah's face as she released her grip on Vivian immediately.

Smiling, Vivian assured her, "I'm okay, Sarah. I'm not that fragile yet."

The rest of her colleagues swarmed over, eager to congratulate her. They also reminded her to be careful from now on.

Shannon had not expected that Vivian would get pregnant so soon. This means that her position in Finner Group just got much more secure!

She began to regret her previous actions, hating herself for offending Mrs. Norton.

Squeezing forward, Shannon pasted an ostentatious smile on her face as she simpered, "Oh, congratulations, Vivian! You're so lucky!"

Sarah and Jenny rolled their eyes at Shannon's rapid change in attitude.

Sarah could not help sniping, "Wow, Shannon, your attitude changes faster than the blink of an eye! You used to have it out for Vivian all the time previously. What, are you regretting your actions now?"

"Shut up!" Shannon glared at Sarah. When she turned back to Vivian, she was all smiling. "Ignore her. I apologize for whatever misunderstandings we used to have. You're a magnanimous person. You won't hold my past actions against me, will you? We're all still colleagues and good friends, right?"

Vivian twitched her lips into a stiff smile. "I won't hold a grudge against you. We're all colleagues here. I'm grateful for everyone's well-wishes."

Seeing how everyone was so attentive to her, Vivian was touched.

Ever since they found out about her identity as Mrs. Norton, that brought them all closer together. They laughed and joked with each other a lot more. Never would anyone talk badly of her behind her back again. Nobody would call her dirty or accuse her of being a homewrecker again.

Humans are so realistic.

Just as everyone was chatting cheerfully, Fabian appeared.

The cold expression on his face effectively silenced everyone.

His gaze was locked on Vivian as he stated, "Come to my office. I want to talk to you."

Her colleagues shrank back in their seats at the tension they could sense coming from their Chief Editor.

Left without a choice, Vivian obediently followed Fabian into his office.

Sarah and the rest craned their necks to look. Once the two entered the office, they murmured amongst themselves, trying to guess what he had to say to her. They noticed

how he always had an odd look in the eyes when he stared at her. Sometimes, he acted like he had a grudge against her; Other times, it was the complete opposite and he treated her kindly.

As she was pregnant, Fabian gestured for Vivian to take a seat.

However, deep in his heart, he found himself unable to accept that reality.

His lips trembled when he asked, "They were talking about how you are pregnant. Is that true?"

"Yeah."

"Vivian, are you really planning on staying with Finnick for the rest of your life?" He growled. Anger crept into his tone as he continued, "You can't give birth to that baby! Have you forgotten what you and your mother went through? Do you want history to repeat itself?"

At first, Vivian was taken aback by the seriousness of Fabian's words. Then, her expression hardened.

Why does my pregnancy have anything to do with what my father did? Finnick is not Harvey Miller. He won't do to me what Harvey did to my mother! Comparing the two of them is just outrageous!

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Vivian retorted sharply, "Fabian, I won't end up like my mother because Finnick is not Harvey Miller."

Her protectiveness of Finnick sent pain shooting through Fabian's heart.

She added, "Fabian, I really hope you'll give Finnick and I your blessings."

She knew Fabian hated her husband. That was why he sent her off to interview Benedict. He wanted her to find out what sort of man Finnick was so that she would leave him.

Too bad for Fabian, his plan failed. She had already fallen in love with Finnick long before then.

"I won't give you my blessings! Never!" Fabian roared, "Vivian, you know I love you! Yet you married another man and are going to have his child. Can you blame me for being upset?"

Taking a deep breath, he continued his lament, "Do you have any idea how sad I was when I heard you are pregnant? Vivian, I can't forget you. I can't forget about all our memories together..."

There was no way to reverse time. The same could be said for love. You either loved someone or you did not. There was nothing reasonable or logical about love. It just was.

Sighing, Vivian practically pleaded, "Fabian, forget about me. You can't always live in the past; you still have a long way ahead of you! Ever since you left me all those years ago, fate had already decided we're not meant to be together."

Fate had already decided we're not meant to be together.

Fabian was struck speechless at her words. If only he had not abandoned her back then; if he had chosen to trust her, they would not be in this situation today...

Who else could he blame but himself? Vivian was not in the wrong here.

Vivian thought Fabian was calling her into his office so that he could assign her an interview or something. Now, she realized it was purely for personal reasons. He just wanted to persuade her to leave Finnick again.

Since there was no point in lingering in his office any longer, she said, "Mr. Norton, if there's nothing else, I'll be taking my leave."

Fabian was on the verge of a mental breakdown. It would seem like there was really no hope for him and Vivian anymore.

"Vivian, is it really not possible between us? Do you honestly have no feelings for me? Not even the slightest bit? I don't believe that..."

Vivian had to admit she used to love him, so very deeply. Yet after everything that had happened, her feelings for him became nothing more than memories of her youth. In those memories, she loved him and the feeling was mutual.

However, in the real world, right now and for the rest of her life, she would only love Finnick.

She replied softly, "Don't forget that Ashley is pregnant too. You should focus all your love on her and your unborn child. Fabian, there's really no going back for us."

"Vivian, it's still not too late for us to get back together! As long as you're willing to return to my side, I'm willing to start things over again! We can leave this country and begin a new life somewhere else! I can give up everything for you!" He cried out with desperation lacing his every word.

Vivian sighed. Why can't he understand? Why is he so hung up on me?

Although Ashley had a lot of flaws and was incredibly ruthless, there was no doubt that she was truly in love with Fabian. He really should be cherishing her.

Just as Vivian was about to persuade him again, there was a knocking sound from the door. It was Shannon.

She entered the office, noting the fury simmering in the air.

Not wanting them to direct their anger on her, she spoke up carefully, "Mr. Norton, this is the draft for Benedict Morrison's interview about his antique fair. These are the photos. Please check if you're satisfied with the typesetting. Senior Editor Jenson is waiting for your approval before she proceeds."

Fabian's expression was stony as he accepted the draft. He flipped through it quickly, not expecting a lot of issues.

The mere mention of Benedict was already more than enough to catch the readers' attention. Those beautiful photos of him would only serve as a prop. The article itself had even fewer problems. Vivian was the one to write up the script before the interview so he had already seen it then.

He nodded at Shannon. "Everything looks great."

Signing at the bottom, he handed the draft back to her.

She smiled at Fabian and snuck a sideways glance at Vivian before she left.

Upon stepping out of this office, Shannon mulled over what she had seen. Both of them had differing expressions on their faces. Fabian looked angry and frustrated while Vivian's brows were knitted deeply in displeasure.