

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 396

Without a choice, Vivian continued to suppress her anger. "Are you done? If so, then you can leave now."

Evelyn let out a cold snort. She was surprised that Vivian did not explode with rage like the last time. Hence, she inched closer and whispered in Vivian's ear to provoke her further, "Don't worry, I'll take back what was mine." After that, Evelyn stood up and looked at Vivian in defiance.

All of a sudden, Vivian recalled someone seemed to have made a similar remark like this before. She paused for a bit and finally remembered. It was a remark her Twitter follower, "Back to the Past," had made: It's time to return the item to its owner.

"You're 'Back to the Past!'" Vivian exclaimed in disbelief while pointing at Evelyn.

"Bingo," Evelyn chuckled, "Are you that innocent, or are you plain dumb?"

"And you're also the one who released the birthday video?" Vivian was dumbstruck. She did not realize Evelyn had been following her Twitter for such a long time.

Upon that, Evelyn seemed to be very proud of her achievement. "Of course, it's me, you fool. I wish I could continue to play this game with you, but you're just too dumb."

She then turned around and left after mocking Vivian for the one last time.

Feeling stunned, Vivian froze in the pantry for a long time.

Never in a million years did she think Evelyn was "Back to the Past." Why didn't I suspect anything earlier? She's right. I'm stupid. I'm so stupid!

She went back to her seat and continued working under the watchful eyes of all her colleagues for the rest of the day.

The day had finally come to an end, and she went home immediately. At that time, Finnick was still nowhere to be found.

To take her mind off Evelyn, Vivian took a warm shower and felt much better. Suddenly, her stomach rumbled. That's when she realized she had not eaten the entire day.

Since Mrs. Filder took a day off, Vivian decided to head downstairs to make herself some noodles. Coincidentally, Finnick just came home while she was walking downstairs. The awkwardness was written all over their faces the moment their eyes met.

Vivian froze. She was not sure if she should turn around and return to the room or keep walking to the kitchen. After giving it some thought, she decided to do what she had initially intended and walked toward the kitchen, giving Finnick the cold shoulder.

Finnick only stepped into the living hall after Vivian had ignored him and walked away.

He then went straight into his study, wanting to continue with his unfinished work. Yet, he was constantly distracted by Vivian's emotionally distant expression earlier. No. We can't go on acting like strangers. Thus, Finnick immediately went downstairs again to have a talk with her.

He stood by the kitchen and noticed she was cooking noodles. After a brief hesitation, he finally opened his mouth. "I'm hungry too. Could you make me some?"

In the meantime, Vivian was actually aware that Finnick had been standing outside of the kitchen for a while, but she just pretended he was not around since he did not say anything.

I knew it. I knew he wanted me to make him some noodles too.

Finnick, for sure, would not know how to cook, and Mrs. Filder was not around to take care of his dinner.

Nonetheless, Vivian decided to make an extra plate of noodles for him, though they had not made peace with each other. Yet, she did not answer his question directly.

The way she ignored his request caused him to feel extremely awkward. Obviously, Finnick was not used to making peace with someone, so he decided to leave the kitchen and return to his study.

He sat by his desk and was mad at himself for not continuing with the conversation. How am I supposed to talk to her now?

A corner of Vivian's mouth quirked up. Well, well, well, how the high and mighty Mr. Norton has fallen. All for a plate of noodles.

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Just when Finnick was still figuring out his next move, he heard someone knock on the door. "The noodles' ready."

Finnick's face lit up instantly, but by the time he opened the door, Vivian had left and was walking to the dining table.

He followed her to the dining table and started eating the noodles. Finnick had several times wanted to initiate a conversation with her, but after seeing how focused she was on her food, he did not know what to say.

"Finnick." While he was still contemplating what to say to her, Vivian suddenly called his name.

"Yes?" Finnick was pleased that she made the first move. He put down his fork and looked at her.

Vivian lowered her head as she did not want to look at him. She asked while twirling the noodles on the plate, "Would you come to Ashley's funeral with me?"

Believe it or not, Vivian did not know if she should make that request since they were still not on speaking terms. Besides, she did not want to give in first.

But she was afraid to face Harvey alone. After all, she was indirectly related to Ashley's death and the collapse of the Miller Group. Finnick's presence at the funeral would make her feel a little less uneasy.

That request put Finnick in a rather awkward position. He was pleased that Vivian took the initiative to make peace with him, but he had to turn her down.

Vivian tilted her head aside to look at Finnick, who did not give her a response. She could see awkwardness on his face. He's probably worried that his presence might cause a stir at the funeral since everyone knew what happened between him and the Miller Group.

"You don't have to go if you don't want to."

"It's not that I don't want to go," Finnick immediately explained as he did not want to cause further misunderstanding, "But I'll be meeting Evelyn this Sunday to work out the details of our design. This design will affect the company's performance for the next two quarters of the year, so I have to be there. I'll get Noah to drive you to the funeral, okay?"

Upon hearing his explanation, Vivian tightened her grip on her fork. Evelyn again. Does he still have to meet her for work? He might treat her as a co-worker and a friend, but clearly, Evelyn has her hidden agenda.

Vivian recalled all the things Evelyn said to her in the office today. If only I can keep Finnick away from that woman.

But she knew he would not believe her even if she told him the truth. Besides, they had had too many arguments in the last couple of days, all because of Evelyn. Hence, she did not want to argue with Finnick on the same matter over and over again.

"Got it." Vivian lowered her head and answered.

"You have to trust me, Vivian." Finnick thought Vivian was still suspicious of his relationship with Evelyn. He lifted her chin and gazed into her eyes. "Evelyn and I are just co-workers. There's nothing..."

"Got it." Vivian interrupted. At this point, she was so sick of hearing her name.

Finnick instantly kept quiet as he knew Vivian did not want to talk about Evelyn anymore.

After a short awkward silence, Vivian switched to another topic. "Can you give Emma a chance to attend Ashley's funeral?"

"You're willing to forgive her?" Finnick had no intention of letting her off so easily.

“Ashley’s death is her greatest punishment.” Vivian thought it would be too cruel to keep Emma away from her own daughter’s funeral.

“All right then. I’ll arrange for her to come back.”

Vivian nodded and continued finishing her noodles in silence.

At the same time, Finnick could not help but let out a sigh after seeing how cold Vivian was. It’s going to take some time to heal this relationship.

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On Sunday, Noah came and drove Vivian to Ashley’s funeral. Vivian had asked Rachel to come along so that she would not be alone.

When she arrived, the first person Vivian saw was Harvey.

Harvey was standing in front of Ashley’s photo with his back hunched. He was no longer the man he used to be. In fact, he looked aged as compared to the last time Vivian saw him.

Vivian could not help but feel sorry to see him in such a miserable state. Though Harvey had never fulfilled his responsibility as a father throughout her childhood, he was still her biological father, after all.

And since Rachel did not wish to get near Harvey, Vivian had to walk up to him by herself.

“Dad,” Vivian stood behind him and gently called.

Harvey turned around and looked at Vivian. Her appearance suddenly got him flustered with emotions. Though Emma and Ashley were to be blamed for the chaos that had happened, to Harvey, Finnick, too, had to bear a certain degree of responsibility for Ashley’s death, the collapse of the Miller Group, and barring Emma from returning to the country. He did not

know how to feel when he saw Vivian here, but since she was his only daughter left in this world, Harvey decided not to make things difficult for the both of them.

In a gentle voice, he said, "Hey."

Vivian responded with a nod as she did not know what else to say.

"Good to see you here. Come and say goodbye to your sister." Harvey then turned around, took a glance at her photo, and started tearing up again.

Vivian stood beside him quietly as she did not know how to comfort the grieving man.

The Miller family might have lost its foothold in the business world, but since Fabian was the one who organized the funeral, many prominent families still came to pay their last respects to Ashley.

At this time, Fabian went up the stage and started speaking.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we're gathered here today to pay our respects to the late Ms. Ashley Miller. On behalf of all the friends and guests here, I would like to offer our sincere condolences to the Miller family."

All of a sudden, there was a commotion outside. Upon hearing a woman wailing, all the guests began to look toward the entrance.

They saw a few security guards trying to stop a woman from entering, but she kept slapping them and scratching their faces with her nails as if she had gone mad. In the end, the middle-aged women barged into the hall and ran to the front.

Vivian thought her voice sounded familiar but could not recall who she was. As the woman approached, she finally recognized her. It was Emma.

Looking absolutely dishevelled, Emma was no longer the elegant woman that she was. Clad in a torn blue blouse and a pair of old and oversized camo sneakers, she ran toward Ashley's photo.

Not only had she become as skinny as a skeleton, but her complexion was both sallow and pallid. It was as if she had been undernourished for quite some time.

Vivian was shocked to see Emma in such a condition. What exactly did Finnick do to turn this classy and domineering woman into a haggard beggar? What did they do to her?

Emma ran to Ashley's coffin in wobbly steps and dropped to her knees.

"Ashley! How could you leave me alone? I didn't even get to say goodbye!"

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Fabian stopped in his tracks when he realized that the wailing and crying came from Emma. He was momentarily at a loss. When Fabian recovered to his senses, he waved at the security guards, who had rushed in to remove her, to move back.

"Oh, Ashley, my sweet daughter. I can't believe you're gone from my life. It's my fault that I failed to protect you!" Emma continued to yell and wail without caring so much about her image.

Some of the guests at the funeral used to be friends with Emma. They sighed as they had never expected a strong-willed Emma ended up in such a state. Others started to engage in hushed whispers.

Harvey was also startled by the sudden appearance of Emma. He walked briskly toward Emma and said, "It's Ashley's funeral and there are many guests here. Can you please stop being an embarrassment?"

"Am I an embarrassment?" Upon hearing Harvey's words, Emma sprung to her feet and grabbed onto his collar. "Is that all you care about, Harvey Miller? You're such a piece of trash! You can't even protect your own wife and daughter. What right do you still have of calling yourself a man and a father?"

Emma's grip was so tight that Harvey failed to pry open her balled-up fists at his collar and tie. His feet were unsteady and his face was turning red from her pulling his tie.

Seeing that Harvey started to have difficulty breathing, Vivian went up to them and helped him break free from Emma.

The appearance of Vivian had the effect of adding fuel to the fire as Emma let go of Harvey and started charging toward her, ready to give her a slap on the face. Vivian took a quick step back and avoided the slap. However, Emma's sharp fingernails still landed on her arm, leaving a few deep scratches.

"Vivian William, you're a murderer! The nerve you have for showing your face here at Ashley's funeral. If it wasn't for you, Ashley would still be alive. I must kill you to avenge Ashley!" As Emma yelled and attempted to charge at Vivian again, she was promptly stopped by Harvey.

Fabian was also quick to shield Vivian behind him from Emma's attacks. He looked at the scratches on her arm and asked worriedly, "Does this hurt a lot?"

Vivian shook her head to indicate that she was okay. But as she moved, her wounds twitched and caused her to wince in pain.

"Harvey Miller, you're so blind! This b*tch has killed your own daughter and you're still protecting her?" Emma was punching and yelling at Harvey, who was still trying to hold her down.

"Vivian is also my daughter. And with Ashley gone, she's now the only daughter I have. Of course, I'll have to protect her!" Harvey felt embarrassed by the commotion caused by Emma. "Will you please stop screaming like a crazy person? We'll settle this at home!" He wished the floor would just swallow her up so she would stop bringing shame to the family.

"Hahaha...!" Harvey's words seemed to have triggered a wild switch in Emma as she let out a loud and sarcastic chuckle. "You still think that she's your daughter? You're such a fool!"

"What do you mean by that?" The man's expression instantly stiffened.

"I'm telling you, Vivian is not your biological daughter. You've been raising another man's child all these years!" Emma continued to yell and her voice choked, "You still think that she's your precious daughter. Don't you know that she has killed your own daughter?"

Emma's shocking revelation managed to stun everyone in the room and chatters erupted instantly from every corner of the room. What's going on? They came to attend a funeral, but they heard mind-blowing news.

As the whispers went on, some just stopped being discreet altogether and started discussing the matter openly. "A daughter just passed away, and the next thing he knows, his wife discloses that the other daughter is not blood-related to him. What kind of twisted event is this?" someone said.

"What nonsense are you talking about?" The pressure of being the subject of gossip finally got to Harvey as he slapped Emma on her face before he attempted to drag her out of the door. "You're getting out of here. Now!"

Ignoring the burning sensation radiating from her cheek, Emma broke free from Harvey's grip and continued to cry out loud, "I'm not lying!"

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Emma turned around and looked at Vivian in disdain. "Vivian William, I hated you from the moment I saw you. Why does an illegitimate daughter get to stay with us? For that reason, I took you to the hospital to get a forged DNA test done in hope that Harvey would kick you out of the house. To my surprise, the paternity test came back negative and that was when I realized you aren't blood-related to Harvey at all!"

Emma's disclosure triggered some of Vivian's distant memories. Emma did take me to the hospital once when I was a little girl. She said that I looked a little malnourished and needed to go for a medical check-up so that she could take better care of me thereafter. I remembered feeling touched by her thoughtfulness and acceptance of me. I wouldn't have thought that her real intention was to kick me out of the house!

"That's impossible. If you had known that I'm not his daughter, you wouldn't have waited until today to tell him the truth!" Vivian insisted that what Emma claimed could not be true.

If she had known for sure that I'm not my father's daughter, her initial plan would have succeeded. Why would she hide this information from her husband for so many years? This doesn't make any sense.

"Why don't you turn to your mother for this question?" Emma snickered and glanced toward Rachel. "Rachel William, now that the cat is out of the bag; you're not still planning on keeping quiet about this, are you?"

"Mom, what's going on?" Vivian turned to her mother in bewilderment.

Rachel had stood frozen since the instant Emma dropped the bomb by saying that Vivian was not Harvey's biological daughter. Her face was white as a sheet and her whole body was trembling as she stood there, at a loss how to answer her daughter's question. It seems this secret can't be kept forever, after all.

"Vivian, I-I..." Tears kept rolling down her cheeks as the older woman was fumbling for an explanation.

Her mother's uncontrollable sobbing made Vivian feel anxious. "Mom, please say something. How is it that I'm not Dad's daughter? Why don't you just set them straight?" Vivian's voice grew desperate.

However, Rachel just shook her head and kept muttering, "I'm Sorry, Vivian. I'm so sorry..."

"Since you're too much of a coward to admit, I'll help you do the honor," Emma said to Rachel with a smirk on her contorted face. "Many years ago, I confronted you as soon as I found out the truth about Vivian. You carried a child for another man and even have the audacity to pass her off as Harvey's daughter! Do you remember what you did when I showed you the DNA results?"

Emma let out an unsettling laugh as she continued, "You begged me! You got onto both your knees and you begged me to keep it a secret. Oh! What a satisfying moment to see my nemesis crawling before me to ask for a favor!

"You promised that as long as I turn a blind eye to this, you would disappear from Harvey's life forever. That's the only reason why I agreed to keeping Harvey in the dark about Vivian's true identify. Rachel William, have I left out anything?"

Every audience in the room now looked at Rachel in disbelief as they tried to digest the rapid unfolding of events. This woman is really something. Not only did she have a child with another man, but she also made Harvey Miller raise that child. They were now shooting sympathy looks at Harvey for being kept in the dark all this while.

“Mom, please say something. She was wrong, right? Mom?” Vivian was already in tears. She desperately needed her mother to deny this in front of everyone in the room. Vivian was disappointed again as Rachel just kept her head low and continued to sob inconsolably.

Harvey was on the brink of an emotional breakdown after soaking up all the information. He walked up to Rachel and demanded an explanation. “Is everything Emma said true? Talk to me!”

Rachel was visibly shaken up. “I’m sorry. I’m sorry. This is all my fault. I’m sorry...” All the woman could muster was more apologies.

Seeing as questioning Rachel was not getting them anywhere, Harvey grabbed hold of Vivian and barked, “You’re coming with me to do a DNA test right now!”

The man did not care that his excessive force had left bruises on Vivian’s arm as he dragged her onto his car. His mind was now occupied with only one thing—the truth about Vivian’s identity.