

The Princess and the Pauper (Arabella)

Chapter 1411

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Serena watched as May kept her gaze lowered, never even glancing her way, and irritation bubbled within her. It was just a

servant, for crying out loud, too stuck-up to appreciate a kind gesture.

Thinking she's all high and mighty.

Just then, an excited voice broke through the tension.

"Darling, my darling"

Darren heard his wife had finally arrived, and he hobbled as fast as he could, leaning heavily on his cane, wishing he could move faster.

The help trailed behind him with a wheelchair, offering a helpless smile while explaining, "Mr. Darren refuses to sit in the wheelchair. He says it'll ruin his image."

Arabella, standing by the door, had to suppress a giggle. Did he really think hobbling on a cane was any better for his image?

Belinda hurried over to steady him. "What on earth happened to you?"

"Just took a little tumble, it's nothing" Darren wrapped his arms around his wife. "You're finally here. It feels like an age since we last saw each other! I must say, my dear, you're still radiant. Your face is more delicate than the roses in the garden."

The staff couldn't help but snicker at Darren's remarks.

Belinda swatted him playfully. "People are listening, have you no shame?"

Look at all these wrinkles, and you are still comparing me to flowers."

She touched her face subconsciously as she spoke.

"You look beautiful! Even more so than when you married me." Darren kissed her forehead solemnly before saying, "From now on, you're not going anywhere. It's my turn to take care of you"

"With you looking like that?" Belinda eyed his cane and teased him. "And what about leaving everything to Sampson?"

"He's grown now. We're too old to be chasing after him. Once I'm back on my feet, we won't stay at Bard's place anymore. Let's go back to living our own lives, like the old days!" As the couple chattered away, clearly eager to share the moments they'd missed, Arabella's eyes softened, feeling the warmth of family harmony.

When their heartfelt exchange concluded, Arabella finally said, "Hello, Grandpa, Grandma."

"Bella?" Belinda's eyes lit up upon seeing her granddaughter, and she immediately let go of her husband to embrace Arabella tightly.

Arabella smiled. "How have you been feeling lately?"

"I've been taking the medicine you gave me on time. I feel like I'm full of energy again, no aches or pains."

Belinda released the hug, beaming at her granddaughter. "Did you just get back? Where were you?"

"Just taking care of some things."

Knowing the risks involved, Arabella didn't disclose details, simply saying, "Seeing you and Grandpa together makes me truly happy for both of you."

"All thanks to you." Darren lavished Arabella with praise from head to toe, completely oblivious to another granddaughter

standing by.

Serena noted that ever since Arabella had shown up, her grandparents had showered her with affection and attention, more so than they ever did with Serena herself.

On the other hand, she felt utterly dispensable, despite being their granddaughter by blood.

She remembered how she'd gone to greet her grandmother when she arrived, and not once did her grandma embrace her, even though Serena had spent nearly an hour sweetly holding her hand.

It seemed blood ties trumped all!

And her grandpa hadn't even acknowledged her since he appeared, as if she was invisible.

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The person who got under her skin the most was May!

Just moments ago, she had offered May a KCY bracelet, but May had barely acknowledged the gift, keeping her at arm's length.

Yet, the moment Arabella walked in, May's smile blossomed like a sunlit rose.

"Granny, it's my turn now, I've missed Miss Bella so much, I want a hug too!"

Belinda chimed in with a warm smile, "May has been talking about you the whole way!"

"Miss Bella, I really missed you!" May exclaimed, embracing Arabella joyfully.

"I've been following your instructions to the letter, making sure Madam takes her medicine, taking her out to bask in the sunshine, breathing in the fresh air"

"May treats your words like gospel," Belinda laughed. "Miss Bella wouldn't like this; or 'Miss Bella wouldn't approve of that' — it's become her mantra.

She's always going on about what you would think" Arabella couldn't help but laugh.

"Miss Bella, I've been using the skincare products you gave me every day.

Don't you think my skin looks better than before?"

On hearing this, Serena could see right through Arabella's schemes. She was like a sly fox, buttering up the help behind their backs!

How utterly devious!

"Your skin was never bad, May. You were just using the wrong products before. It's looking much better now," Arabella assessed,

noting May's complexion that was now porcelain-smooth, like a doll's.

May was over the moon. Every day she looked in the mirror, she noticed her skin growing fairer and silkier.

"Miss Bella, the cream you made is like magic!"

"Bella, when can you send Granny a couple of those bottles? Preferably the wrinkle-reducing kind"

Before Betinda could finish, Darren chimed in, "And send a couple for me too.

I want to look as young as I did back in the day, make your Granny fall in love all over again!"

Arabella replied with a smile, "I'll see to it right away."

Serena, watching them all get along so famously, suddenly stepped forward, pushing May aside with a honeyed smile. "Bella, I want some of that skincare too."

In front of her grandparents, there was no way Arabella would dare to refuse her!

But to her surprise, Arabella simply glanced at her coolly and said, "Finish what you have first, then we'll talk."

May, with perfect timing, added, "Serena's got such an enviable stash of luxury skincare products."

"You have plenty already," Belinda scolded gently, unable to suppress a laugh.

"Use those up first."

Serena felt a tinge of embarrassment, not expecting the elders to only think of themselves, completely disregarding her.

At that moment, a servant hurried over. "Miss Bella, the madam is looking for you."

"Alright," Arabella responded to the elders. "I'll be back soon"

"Bella, after your aunt is done with her business, could you ask her to come see me? It's been ages since I last saw her. I do miss her so"

"Of course."

Arabella followed the servant down to the basement level. As she entered, the scent of iron and salt hit her nostrils. Before her stretched a dim corridor, flanked on either side by what could only be described as 'cells' Some held captives, others stood empty.

At the very end of the hall, Eunice commanded the space with an aura of sheer power, lashing a man with a short whip mercilessly.

The man was covered in wounds, yet none of the crimson stains seemed to touch Eunice.

At that moment, Eunice appeared both ruthless and imperious, a force to be reckoned with.

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"Aunt Eunice."

Eunice turned at the sound of the voice, her face breaking into a warm smile.

"Ah, you're here?"

Arabella walked in, her demeanor as nonchalant as if she were at a high society ball, not a dingy backroom where a man lay beaten within an inch of his life. Her expression remained unfazed.

Eunice admired her niece's bravery and composure all over again.

"You wanted to see me, Aunt Eunice?"

"Do you recognize this man?"

Arabella's gaze swept over the barely conscious figure. "Nope, never seen him before."

"Last night, I got a tip-off. Someone on the dark web put a pretty penny on your head." Eunice's eyes fell on the man before them. "I had some people trace his IP address, and we pulled him out of the shadows."

Only then did Arabella understand why her aunt had rushed off the phone last night, leaving her to entertain Romeo and Martin without a proper goodbye—it had been for this.

"Has he said anything?" Arabella asked, her voice as cool as a breeze.

"Not a word," Eunice replied, scrutinizing the man. She had been working him over for thirty minutes, yet not a peep. "Tough guy, it seems."

As Arabella's slender fingers brushed the man's wrist, he instinctively tried to pull away, but the ropes held him fast.

He didn't know what Arabella was up to, and his eyes were filled with wariness and suspicion.

"Deprived of food and water, you've got two days to live, tops." Arabella looked into the man's eyes. "I get it, you took someone's money to cause trouble, but what's the use of money if you're dead?"

The man remained silent, his gaze shifting away.

"Or maybe it's not for you." Arabella speculated. "Is it for your family? A friend?"

The man's face was a mask, unchanging from the start.

"If I'm not wrong, this person means a lot to you. So much that you'd risk your own life for their well-being. But if you die, would

they grieve for you?"

The man's silence was as solid as ever, seemingly resolved to await death.

"I guess I was wrong,' Arabella said knowingly. "So, you're not doing this for your own glory or for someone close, and you're not terminally ill. Normally, there's no need to risk your life for a job like this. That leaves two possibilities: you're either repaying a debt of gratitude that's worth more to you than your life, or you're being coerced"

That last word made the man's gaze flicker, but he quickly regained his composure.

"Is the other party powerful?" Arabella continued, her tone persuasive. "You should know, here in Dawnstar, no one's got more clout than my uncle and aunt.

The man remained mute, his eyes as empty as before, as if waiting for death's embrace.

"Is their reach even greater than my aunt and uncle's?" Arabella found this intriguing. "Who have I managed to offend that's such a big shot? Doom?"

The man looked at Arabella with a flicker of surprise before quickly hiding it, shifting his gaze away.

"Doom's backbone is broken, and its remnants are too busy licking their wounds to bother with me. So, this person must be

someone I know, and our enmity runs deep"
Arabella smiled faintly and continued, "Since I've
guessed this much, it's only a matter of time before I
find out on my own. A bit
more effort, that's all. If you spill the beans now,
you'll save me the trouble, and I might even help you
fake your own death. Start
a new life under a new identity. You've got two days
to think it through."

After making her offer, Arabella glanced at her aunt.
"Let's go, Aunt Eunice."

Eunice was taken aback by how her niece had
managed to get the man to contemplate his choices
with just a few words. As
they left the basement, she couldn't help but wonder
aloud, "Bella, have you been interrogating people
often? I'm suddenly very
curious about your other talents. Do you have any
secret identities I don't know about?"

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"You could ask Uncle Bard," Arabella said with a mischievous smile, not revealing anything directly. Previously, due to a mix-up, Jack had been detained by Uncle Bard's men, only for them to later find out she was the big boss of Mafia Flame.

"You're making me even more curious now,' Eunice chuckled as she whipped out her smartphone and shot off a text to her husband. Then she asked, "You even know about The Doom? Did they give you trouble before?" As far as she knew, the Doom was a force to be reckoned with, yet her niece seemed to handle them quite well, not letting them get the upper hand. Quite impressive!

"As far as I'm informed, there's still a faction of their remnants scattered around Dawnstar. Leave it to me. I'll make sure they all come out of hiding, not a single one spared."

"Those small fry pose no threat to me, Aunt Eunice, no need to trouble yourself."

Without their main pillar, Arabella wasn't worried about those small factions.

"But these people are like flies, buzzing around and disturbing your life now and then. I know you're tough and won't let them

take an inch, but it's annoying over time. Let's just have Aunt Eunice take care of it once and for all, no refusals!"

Eunice sent another message, instructing her people to team up with those from Bard's side and uproot those remnants once and for all.

"Thanks, Aunt Eunice."

"Silly girl, no need for thanks with family" Eunice said fondly as she patted her head.

In the living room.

Belinda took a gift from May's hands and lovingly passed it to Serena.

"I heard from your grandfather that you won first place in the piano competition. This is a little something from me."

"And I've got something for you too!" Darren added quickly, instructing the house staff to fetch his gift.

Serena opened Belinda's gift to find a lavish diamond bracelet, and then Darren's present, a platinum diamond pendant.

The value of the two gifts combined was at least \$100,000!

She was over the moon, "Thank you, Grandma and Grandpa! I knew you loved me the most!"

Seeing Serena so happy, Eunice's voice, filled with excitement and joy, broke into their conversation.

"Mom!"

Belinda looked up and saw her beloved daughter-in-law!

When she had heard about her falling off a cliff, Belinda cried for a whole month, losing nearly six pounds. She even visited the church to pray, hoping her daughter-in-law would be alive.

And as if the pray worked, here she was, standing alive and even more beautiful than before, running towards her.

Belinda's eyes welled up with tears, "Eunice!"

"Mom!" Eunice, shedding her ruthless demeanor from the basement, transformed into a sweet little girl and threw herself into

Belinda's arms, exclaiming, "Mom, I missed you so much!"

Her tone was filled with a girl's coyness, and Belinda, as always, was a sucker for it, loving her as if she were her own daughter.

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"Mom, I've missed you too. Seeing you safe and sound before me, it fills me with joy. It's good to have you back, that's all that matters."

"Mom, it was my fault for worrying you before." Eunice reached out to wipe away Belinda's tears, explaining, "I was investigating the whole Calvin and Arlen situation and didn't dare reveal that I was alive. I feared tipping off our enemies. Rest assured, I was well taken care of by Alexander, nothing happened, and he didn't take advantage of me in the slightest."

Not like the rumors that were swirling about her virtue being compromised.

"Silly child, what are you talking about! As long as you're alive, even if you were missing an arm or a leg, our Griffith family would still embrace you!"

Belinda caught herself, realizing her words might have come off wrong, and quickly corrected, "Tut-tut-tut, what I mean is, no matter what happens, you will always be a part of the Griffith family. We will never abandon you, no matter the circumstance."

"Thanks, Mom." Eunice said, moved as she snuggled closer into her arms.

Arabella noticed the contrast in her aunt's demeanor and found the change from strong-willed woman to this gentle figure quite endearing.

However, Serena didn't share the sentiment. She had been enjoying a warm Moment with her grandparents just before her aunt's arrival shifted the attention, leaving her feeling sidelined.

"If it hadn't been for you, we wouldn't have known that Calvin, Arlen, and those heartless cousins of yours were up to such despicable acts behind our backs!"

Belinda was so furious when she heard the news that she felt her blood boiling. Luckily, Arabella had left some medicine with May before she left, which saved Belinda from a potential stroke.

"It's all thanks to Bella. If it weren't for her being with me that night, I couldn't have handled it alone."

Eunice recounted the events of that night succinctly. When Belinda learned that Arabella could hack into phones, dismantle surveillance without detection, knock out security guards, and was an exceptional medic who could preemptively counteract drugs slipped into their drinks.

"Exactly! If it weren't for Bella, we wouldn't have realized that the dangers we faced in the past were all orchestrated by them!"

Darren chimed in.

He had kept quiet about this before, seeing how his wife almost fainted from rage.

He and his wife had ran into various accidents in their trips. But now it turned out to be made-made accidents.

"To think, the things even your Uncle couldn't uncover, you managed to trace back and find the evidence." Belinda said

incredulously, patting Arabella's head with admiration. "You've amazed me time and again, dear. You're outstanding!"

As the atmosphere grew warmer, Eunice steered the conversation back, "Oh, Mom, you mentioned that Serena won first place in a piano competition. I caught a glimpse of you and Dad rewarding her for it"

"Yes, yes, yes." Belinda suddenly remembered her granddaughter who had been momentarily forgotten and gestured for Serena

to come over. "This child won first place in a national competition."

Eunice smiled, "So, what did you two reward her with?"

Serena, seeing the topic finally shift back to her, beamed with a sweet smile, enthusiastically sharing the details of her prize with

her aunt, even boasting a bit in front of Arabella.

"But you two might be playing favorites. Bella's credentials outrank those competition judges. Guess who she is?"

Serena's face paled slightly, blindsided by her aunt's sudden advocacy for Arabella's recognition.

Was this an intentional move to overshadow her own achievements?

“Higher than a competition judge?” Belinda and Darren were both surprised, guessing several times but not arriving at the right answer.

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Eunice spilled the beans with a gleam in her eye, "Your darling granddaughter, she's none other than the world-renowned piano virtuoso—Melody"

Belinda and Darren were thunderstruck, frozen in awe before a cascade of compliments tumbled out.

"I'll simply adore Melody's piano pieces, Belinda gushed towards the end, her excitement palpable. "Especially when she releases a new track. I'd listen at home, in the car, first thing in the morning, and last thing at night. I can't get enough, I really can't!"

"Remember your grandma's birthday? I was dying to have Melody play at our house, cost no object, just to see her perform live for her. But Melody was nowhere to be found. The folks at the Piano Association said they couldn't reach her. And now, my precious granddaughter is Melody herself!" Darren was overwhelmed with surprise and joy. If only they had found Melody sooner, perhaps their reunion with their treasured granddaughter could have happened earlier.

"We must celebrate! We've got a miracle doctor in the family, and a piano maestro to boot. Darling, we need to think of something special to reward Bella with.' Belinda, in her exuberant joy, was already brainstorming ideas. Arabella was about to politely decline when Eunice elbowed her, signaling not to miss this golden opportunity. They had to let

Serena hear straight from her grandparents what kind of reward a piano maestro deserves. It would keep Serena from getting too cocky about her own piano first prize!

Arabella caught onto her aunt's "little scheme" and couldn't help but smile.

Though Eunice meant no harm, her words felt like a deep insult to Serena.

"At that auction the other day, didn't I win that tanzanite? Let's give it to Bella as a reward!"

When Belinda dropped this bombshell, Serena's face went pale.

Tanzanite was a thousand times rarer than diamonds, and the piece Belinda had won was of the rarest tanzanite blue!

They say the stone's magic lies in its ability to show a dazzling array of colors when viewed from different angles, even

appearing in different hues under varying light.

If Serena's memory served her right, that stone was won by Belinda for two million dollars. Belinda treasured it immensely, and

now to think she'd part with it so readily for Arabella.

"Well then, I'll give Bella the natural, wild pearl I won at the auction,' Darren declared generously.

Eunice chimed in with a smile, "Bella, your grandpa spent a good two million on that pearl. It weighs over 300 grams, so he's

kept it as a treasured possession, believing it brings good fortune. Now, he's giving it to you so freely, which means he's incredibly proud and satisfied with your achievements."

Eunice paused to chuckle before adding, "And with the tanzanite your grandma's giving you, the value is quite significant."

Arabella hadn't expected her grandparents to be so lavish. The rewards amounted to four million dollars.

She responded warmly,

"Thank you, Grandma, Grandpa, for your generosity"

"Silly girl, there's no need to thank us. It's the Griffiths and the Collins"

blessing to have such a remarkable child in our family"

Meanwhile, Serena watched as Belinda and Darren heaped praises on Arabella from start to finish, fuming with envy.

Just moments ago, her grandparents had rewarded her with gifts totaling a mere one hundred thousand dollars, but when it

came to Arabella, they didn't hesitate to present treasures worth four million!

The disparity was staggering.

Sure, Arabella was Melody, but did that really warrant such an enormous reward in one go?

It was blatant favoritism!

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Serena's jealousy simmered just below the surface, a bitter taste in her mouth that no amount of sweet talk from Eunice could

wash away. "Serena, your sister Bella has accomplished something truly extraordinary. Just being known as 'Melody' puts her leagues ahead of her peers. Heck, she's a top player in the whole scene, untouchable."

"And once you achieve such bright results, we will surely reward you too. We would never favor one grandchild over another"

While Belinda's words were meant to comfort, Serena knew better. They all knew she couldn't become the next Melody or the next Dr. Bell in the near future. Such promises were hollow, just sweet nothings to placate her.

"All I feel is pride and joy for Bella's success," Serena said, masking her true feelings with a smile.

"There's no point in fretting over rewards. I aim to follow in her footsteps and make our family proud"

Her eyes shone with feigned optimism as Belinda cooed, "I Knew you weren't petty, dear. We just want to ensure fairness."

Serena forced a laugh, "Bella's just returned to the family. Even if you were unfair and doted on her a bit more, I wouldn't mind.

I've had my fair share over the years. If they neglected Bella, I'd be the first to object!"

Darren and Belinda chuckled at her gracious words, their hearts warming at her apparent understanding and kindness. They had raised her well, indeed.

"Is everyone here?" Bard entered, his gaze landing on Belinda. "Mom, you've arrived. Just now?"

He had hastened home upon hearing of his mother's visit, wrapping up his work to be with family.

"Bard" Belinda teased, "Guess what other identity your darling niece has?"

The room fell silent, awaiting his guess. Bard's eyes swept to Arabella, fearing they'd discovered her secret leadership role. No, their cheerful expressions said otherwise. What other identity could it be?

"Just tell him," chuckled Eunice, stepping forward.

"Bella is none other than the renowned piano virtuoso—Melody.

Bard was incredulous, taking a moment to digest the news before realizing it was his turn to reward his niece.

"The grandparents have given their part, so as her uncle, I should contribute too. Eunice, how about we give Bella that famous painting we acquired two years ago?"

"No objections here? Eunice agreed.

Bard ordered the painting to be brought over.

Serena nearly choked on her envy. That painting had caused a stir in the art world of Dawnstar, its rarity and symbolism fetching it a hefty price of four million at auction.

Now it was worth even more!

A single identity, 'Melody', had netted Arabella a reward nearing ten million dollars!

How was Serena to accept this?

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On the other side of town.

Martin had just wrapped up his work and was about to dash off to keep a date when he ran smack into Fitch.

"Buddy, I need a solid," Fitch was waiting for him right outside his office, a look of sheer desperation on his face. "I've got this

developer who's being a real pain. We've been haggling over this contract forever, and my grandpa is running out of patience. If I

don't seal the deal today, I'm toast. Come with me, will you? Just pretend you're part of my team."

Fitch hadn't even finished his plea when Martin cut him off, "Sorry, man. I've got plans with Serena today. Can't bail on her"

"What, she didn't give you enough grief yesterday? Now you want an encore?" Fitch gaped at him in disbelief. "Are you some kind of masochist?"

After the way she's been acting up, you're still indulging her?"

"That's none of your business."

"Alright, alright," Fitch tried to reason with him. "You and she have got a lifetime to sort things out. But this contract is urgent. You know how my grandpa's temperament."

"Today's really not good," Martin said, stopping in his tracks to emphasize his point. "Serena's been really down lately. I need to be there for her"

"What's she got to be down about?" Fitch was at his wit's end with that woman. "This contract is critical, man. You've done a ton

of deals, you've got the chops. At least tell me what the other side is thinking. How to move this partnership forward? What concessions do I need to make?"

"Fitch; Martin said, his gaze soft yet resolute, leaving no room for argument.

"Serena really needs me"

Fitch wanted to blurt out, "Aren't you just her backup plan? How important could you be to her?" But not wanting to hurt his good friend, he simply suggested, "Can't you reschedule with her for tomorrow?"

"It's a sensitive time for her. I don't want her jumping to conclusions"

Martin decided not to keep Fitch in the dark any longer and spilled the beans about Serena not being the true heiress of the Collins family.

Fitch's jaw dropped in disbelief, "What are you telling me? She's known for half a year she's not the Collins family's golden girl, and she's still playing up in front of you?"

She should be grateful anyone wants her at all!

The status and standing of the Cooper family eclipsed her birth family's by miles!

And she's got Martin: a handsome, promising, devoted guy who's head over heels for her and treats her like a queen.

What's there for her to be dissatisfied about?

"I'll see what I can do about that developer. If I can get back early today, I'll swing by and help you out," Martin offered.

"Hey, Martin, I wasn't finished." Fitch muttered under his breath as he watched his friend walk away, frustration and concern mingling in his heart.

That guy, why did he have to be such a soft touch? Meanwhile.

Florence had gone to her son Martin's company, just missing him. No one knew when he'd be back as he'd left in a hurry, seemingly on some urgent business. So, she refrained from calling or texting him, fretting in silence instead.

After a half-hour wait, the office door finally swung open. Florence lifted her gaze, filled with anxious anticipation, and blurted out,

"Martin"

But it wasn't her son who entered. It was her daughter—Diana.

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"Mom, what are you doing here?" Diana burst through the door, her anger simmering, but upon seeing her mother, she toned it

down a notch, "Are you looking for Martin?"

"Oh, you needed him for something?" Florence, taken aback, confessed, "The staff downstairs said he dashed out, in a hurry, no clue when he'll be back.

What do you need him for?"

"Mom." Diana hesitated, biting her lip. She really couldn't stand Serena. Just earlier, her bestie texted her, saying she bumped into Serena out shopping yesterday, flaunting Martin's platinum card, splurging hundreds of thousands like it was nothing.

She was livid, ready to give her brother a piece of her mind.

But she hadn't expected to run into her mother here.

"Diana, has your brother got himself a girlfriend? Were you aware of this?"

Surprisingly, Florence was the first to ask.

Diana was caught off guard, "Did he tell you? Or did you find out yourself?"

"I was out shopping yesterday" Florence recounted the previous day's events.

Diana hadn't expected Serena to be so rude, running down the QY brand, insulting the sales staff, indirectly mocking her mother, and snatching away the items her mother had her eye on with Martin's credit card.

"Mom, I can't keep this to myself any longer" Diana came clean about what had happened on Rodeo Drive, including Serena's antics at the botanical garden, and her insistence on a private viewing at the Tower.

Florence was shocked to learn that the reason her son messaged his father about the private event was for a woman.

It was so out of character for her son.

After all, when he started his business, no matter how tough or difficult things got, he never once asked for help.

But now, for a girl, he had broken his own rule.

Just then, a message from Fitch popped up on Diana's phone, leaving her thunderstruck.

It took her a moment to regain her composure before she numbly informed her mother, "Serena isn't a real Collins. She was switched at birth! She shares no blood with the Collins family"

"What did you just say?" Florence was even more astonished.

Once Diana explained everything, Florence slammed her fist on the table, "So, she knew she wasn't from a background as prestigious as the Cooper family, yet she's been acting high and mighty because of my son's affection. I will not allow such a person to set foot in the Cooper household! Call Martin right now, I want him here in half an hour to tell him myself."

Diana agreed that their mother needed to step in and give her brother a stern talk. Otherwise, Martin's future and the Cooper legacy could be ruined by Serena alone!

Serena was already on a shopping spree with Martin's card every other day and bullying Martin on top of it.

What would happen if they actually got married?

Diana prided herself on being reasonable. Even if Serena had a troubled background and her biological parents were unknown, it wouldn't be an issue as long as she was willing to live a good life with Martin.

But her constant drama was a surefire way to bring chaos into their home.

She pulled out her phone, dialed her brother's number, and said angrily, "Mom wants you at the office in half an hour. Don't say I didn't warn you. She's fuming. You've already missed Grandpa's birthday once. If you don't show up this time, no one can save you"

Martin's car was midway to his destination when his sister's voice came through, "Mom's heart's acting up again, her old condition. If you make her worse, you'll regret it for the rest of your life"

After hearing the dial tone on the other end, Martin ultimately turned the car around and headed back.

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The Princess and the Pauper (Arabella)

Chapter 1420

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Evening.

Eunice chimed in, "It's such a lively day today. Why don't we go out for dinner?"

"That sounds great. It's been ages since I've had dinner with Grandma and Grandpa, and my uncles and aunts! I miss those old times"

Serena said this to let Arabella know that for the past eighteen years, it was she, Serena, who had been there for the Collins family!

Arabella had no part in that!

"No problem." Arabella seemed unfazed, her expression steady throughout.

"Fantastic, I was just thinking it would be nice for the family to go out for a meal together! Eunice, you read my mind." Belinda

happily linked arms with her daughter-in-law and asked, "So, which restaurant shall we go to?"

"It's got to be one of our own, of course." Eunice's smile was radiant and beautiful, "The service is impeccable, the ingredients are fresh, and it suits your tastes perfectly."

Belinda beamed, "My daughter-in-law always knows the best."

Just then, a servant came forward to report, "Sir, someone outside asked me to give this to you."

Everyone's attention turned to the servant, who presented a beautifully crafted wooden box the size of a laptop. The intricate patterns carved on the box suggested it was quite valuable.

Darren opened it to find a thick stack of property deeds, land titles, keys, and other such items.

There was also a letter.

"Darren, by the time you read this letter, we will have moved away from Dawnstar. Enclosed are our letters of resignation, which have been processed through the company's system and stamped officially. We are no longer part of the group."

"We are too ashamed to face you and can only apologize in this way—sorry, Darren, for sparing our lives."

"We voluntarily give up our monthly company dividends"

"In the last few days, we have sold all our shops, houses, antiques, paintings, jewelry, and other valuables at a discount. The money earned should barely cover our basic needs, and the rest of our assets, which we couldn't sell in time, have been transferred to your name, Darren, for you to deal with as you see fit"

"With deep regret and shame, we once again apologize—sorry, Darren. No words can express our remorse, but we still want to say sorry. We were wrong. We wish you and your family prosperity and a soaring future—your unworthy brothers."

The letter ended with the signatures of the brothers. Darren, with mixed emotions, handed the letter to Belinda and then said, "Bella, come with me."

In the garden.

Darren composed himself, his gaze softening as he looked at Arabella, "You've been back in the family for half a year now. I

have been wanting to give you a welcome gift, but we've never gotten around to it. Everything in this wooden box is a token of my affection, and you must accept it."

Arabella opened the box to see dozens of property deeds and land titles, even car keys, an astonishing amount.

"Tomorrow, you'll accompany me to transfer the titles. All of this will be in your name, including the monthly dividends from those scoundrels. They will all be yours from now on."

"It's too much. I can't accept it." Arabella pushed the box back without hesitation, earnestly saying,

"Grandma has already given me plenty of shares and deposits."

"That's what your grandmother gave you. These are my wishes. If you don't accept them, it's like you favor your grandmother

over me." Darren insisted as he pushed the box back into her hands, his voice filled with affection,

"Take it back to your room for now. Later, we'll all go out for a meal. If it weren't for you, well, I'd still be hovering at death's door"

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