

Arabella 1891

Chapter 1891

Ever since Arabella came back home, every family holiday turned into a photo shoot. Thanksgiving,

Christmas, and now it was clear that New Year would be no different.

"Bella is just so smart." Kenneth said with a twinkling smile. "Now that Bella has caught on to the

pattern, I might as well spill the beans. Indeed, we've got a photo crew coming over tomorrow. We'll all

dress up in matching family outfits and take pictures without any fuss."

"This means I'll get more snapshots with Bella," Clark boasted to Sean.

Sean couldn't swallow his pride, but then he heard his sister ask, "Sean, didn't you say on the way

home you wanted to take some selfies with me?"

"Oh, right, I almost forgot." Sean, thrilled that his sister was saving face for him, eagerly pulled out his

phone, wrapped an arm around her shoulder, and snap, snap, snapped away.

Clark couldn't help but tease, "Can't you ever stop? Taking so many shots in the same pose, aren't you

tired? Bella must be exhausted!"

"You have no clue. It's about different angles!" Sean retorted, then posed for the phone again. "Come

on, Bella, give us a smile."

Arabella lit up with a grin, and Sean tapped the screen multiple times, capturing several more images.

"That's hideous, what's there to photograph?" Clark complained when he saw Sean baring his teeth in the shots.

"Mind if I join?" Chasel pushed his way in, standing on Arabella's other side, eager to get in the frame.

"Who wants to take a picture with you? Move over, you're blocking the shot of me and Bella."

Everyone around couldn't help but laugh.

At For-ena Villa.

When Serena woke again, her lifeless eyes betrayed no emotion, as if her spirit was crushed by the world.

"Serena, you're awake? Thank goodness." Dora quickly fished out her phone to call Martin.

The attending doctor stepped forward to examine Serena, ensuring there were no complications before heaving a sigh of relief.

Martin, who was in the middle of a shower when he heard Serena had awakened, threw on a robe and rushed over.

Serena noticed his hair was still damp, and his skin looked soft and clean from the steam.

Truth be told, Martin looked handsome from this angle.

"Serena? You're finally awake." Martin was elated. "Are you thirsty? Hungry? Want something to eat?"

The doctor said you could have some broth now that you're awake, right Doctor?"

He turned to the doctor with his question.

The doctor, momentarily enchanted by Martin's dashing appearance, snapped back to reality and

replied, "Yes. Serena can start with some broth. She should eat light, in small amounts, and frequently.

She can't fill up all at once."

After all, it had been days since she had eaten.

"Shall I have someone bring up some broth?" Martin asked softly, looking at the woman in the bed.

"Mhm," Serena nodded, causing Martin's face to light up - she finally wanted to eat.

It was a positive sign.

If her mood continued to be low, it would only worsen her condition.

"I'll go get it," Dora chimed in joyfully. "Just a moment, Serena, I'll be right back."

"You can go now," Martin said to the doctor.

Though the doctor seemed reluctant to leave, she bowed and exited at Martin's request.

Dora quickly returned with a bowl of broth.

"Let me do it," Martin said, taking the bowl to feed her.

Chapter 1892

"You insist on having the kitchen prepare food for all three meals. Today, it's finally come in handy,"

Dora said with a smile. "I'll just wait outside, then. Mr. Martin, Miss Serena, if you need anything, just

holler."

Serena never imagined that during her unconscious spell, Martin would have the kitchen make her

share, hoping she'd wake up.

At that moment, Martin scooped up a spoonful of broth, gently blew on it to cool it, and brought it to her

lips.

Serena hadn't eaten in days, and with the first taste of the broth, she realized how wonderfully flavorful

it was!

She had grown accustomed to the lavish feasts at the Collins household and couldn't remember the

last time a simple bowl of broth tasted so good.

Had the Collins family starved her for so long that she had forgotten the taste of plain food?

Or had she indulged in delicacies to the point where she had forgotten the straightforward flavor of broth?

Right then, she wanted another spoonful, and then another, and another.

"Take it slow, there's more," Martin said, seeing her appetite return, his heart swelling with happiness.

"If you like it, I can feed you like this every couple of hours."

Soon, Serena had polished off the entire bowl.

Martin gently wiped her mouth with a napkin, "The doctor said you shouldn't eat too much at once. How

about I feed you another bowl in a little while?"

Serena wasn't full, but for the sake of her health, she nodded in agreement.

"How are you feeling now?" Martin asked softly, full of concern. "Did the broth warm you up a bit, give you some energy?"

"Where's my dad?" Serena suddenly asked, lifting her eyes. "Has he been in touch with you? I mean, my biological father, the former butler of the Collins family—Erik."

Martin didn't expect this sudden question and his expression faltered.

"Has something happened to my dad?" Serena's mind raced. The Collins family had used her as a bargaining chip, demanding her father reveal himself to save her. Had something bad happened to him?

Otherwise, why wouldn't he have shown up?

After all, what a father would abandon his own daughter.

"Serena, don't worry." Martin feared that the truth might be too much for her to handle.

"Just tell me." Serena grasped Martin's hand with her bandaged hand, refusing to let go despite the pain, "Has he fallen into the hands of the Collins family?"

Finally, Martin stood, as if making a decision. "Wait here for me."

Serena, relentless, held on tight, unwilling to release his hand. "Tell me, has something dangerous happened to him?"

"He left something behind. I'll get it for you."

"Left behind?" The words struck Serena like a bolt from the blue. She could hardly believe it. Her

mother, Martha, had recently fallen to her death from an unfinished building, and now her father too?

"What do you mean 'left behind'? What did the Collins family do to him?" Serena cried out, her

emotions in tatters, clutching Martin desperately, "Did they kill him?"

"No." Martin struggled to find the words. He had envisioned this scene countless times, but now that it

was happening, he was still reluctant to hurt her, "Just wait for me a moment."

He brought Erik's old phone to Serena, "Your dad said that when you woke up and asked about him, I

should just give you this phone. Once you see what's inside, you'll understand. The password is your

birthday."

Tears streamed down Serena's face.

She recognized her father's phone; back when he was still the butler, on one of his birthdays, the

Collins parents had planned to give him a hefty bonus and order a birthday cake, surprising him

discreetly.

Her father had always looked after her, and she thought of him as a good butler.

So, using her own pocket money, she had casually bought him that phone.

Chapter 1893

Back then, Serena worried he wouldn't grasp the features of his new smartphone because of his age,

so she took the time to explain it to him.

Serena never imagined that in the blink of an eye, he'd have been using that phone for three whole years!

And even less did she expect that all that left for her would be this phone.

He was gone!

Serena didn't turn the phone on right away. Instead, she held it with both hands, staring at the screen saver—a birthday photo of her and her dad. Tears involuntarily streamed down her cheeks.

"When I went to the Collins family to get you, they refused to hand you over." Martin could only explain the situation back then and then said, "Anyway, you'll understand after you see it."

Serena cried for quite a while, her heart aching until she could hold her emotions no longer. She then shakily entered the password and unlocked the phone.

While she scrolled through the phone, Martin sat beside her, not looking at the contents, just silently there for her, occasionally wiping away her tears.

In truth, when he'd first opened the phone, he had only looked for Arabella's number, not bothering with

anything else.

So he had no idea what else was in there.

Serena alternated between crying, laughing, and being utterly devastated.

Her emotions were like a roller coaster, peaking high and then plummeting down.

Finally, after reading the first pinned memo her father had left for her, Serena understood what had happened.

Her voice hoarse, she said, "He was coerced, had no choice but to take poison. Before you brought him to the Collins family, he had already ingested it. Even in his final moments, he wanted to use the little life he had left to trade for mine."

Serena broke down again at this point.

She always knew deep down that no father doesn't love his daughter.

For their own child, they would face death without hesitation.

Seeing her tears, Martin tenderly wiped them away. This was the second time she had cried since waking up!

Every time he saw her cry, it was like his heart was being sliced open.

"Who forced him to take the poison? Did your dad mention it? Do you need my help?"

It was obvious to Serena that Martin wanted to stand up for her, to avenge her father.

She reached out and embraced this man who had given her his whole heart, saying nothing, just silently shedding tears.

Without her saying a word, Martin understood that this was a matter they couldn't talk about; speaking of it might bring trouble to them both.

It seemed her father had been entangled in something very complex and frightening.

It was quite possible that even he was outmatched.

"Did your dad leave any tasks for us to carry out?" Martin asked gently.

Like funeral arrangements or some unresolved matter?

"He asked me to stay by your side." Serena looked up at Martin as she said this.

Martin gazed at the girl in his arms and hugged her tighter, affirming, "I promised your dad I would take good care of you, to ensure you live a healthy, happy, and safe life."

Serena knew that at this moment, this man was all she had to rely on.

Chapter 1894

Erik had told her that Martin was a trustworthy man, and that he truly loved her with all his heart. He urged her to stick with him, implying that one day this man might serve as her sharpest sword.

Had it not been for the secrets she unearthed in the encrypted memos, she would never have known the extent of the dangerous web her father had been entangled in. Alone, she was nothing but a sitting duck.

It was like bringing a knife to a gunfight.

Her father had made her promise to play the fool, to keep mum no matter what, never to reveal the truth behind the fire that happened years ago. If she did, she would meet a grim fate before she could spread her wings, let alone avenge him.

Serena etched her father's words deep into her heart.

She would grow those wings and wait for the right moment to strike back with vengeance, to thrust the blade into the heart of the despicable mastermind behind it all!

Serena was determined to have her revenge!

And she intended to leave them with nowhere to hide!

For now, she had to bide her time, to wait and endure.

"Alright, Serena, no more tears," Martin's voice was gentle and soothing. "You've cried enough."

"But you haven't finished the story," Serena nudged him away lightly, gazing into his eyes, "You rescued me from the Collins family, but what happened next? How did I wake up? Who saved me?"

In that basement, she had felt so close to death she even hallucinated seeing her mother, Martha.

Who had brought her back from the brink?

Or had the Collins family eventually called a doctor for her?

Was it Arabella who saved her?

Deep down, she still held a sliver of hope for the Collins family.

But after listening to Martin, that faint hope extinguished.

"It went like this." Martin reluctantly revealed the dire circumstances, including how critical her condition

had been. He had to unlock Erik's phone without permission to contact Arabella, begging her to save

Serena. But Arabella had ultimately refused.

Serena's eyes dimmed with despair; she knew it. Why would Arabella care about whether she lived or

died?

And Arabella was always so detached, but what about her parents from the Collins family? They didn't care for her either.

Her heart ached as if it were being sliced open.

"But I swear I didn't peek at any other content on your father's phone," Martin, fearing she would misunderstand, raised his hand to swear, "If I did, may I be cursed to never be with you, Serena, in this life or the next!"

Serena knew that for him, that was a truly potent oath.

"I believe you," She gave him a tender smile.

Martin was touched by her sincere warmth, a rarity from her. She believed him! She still trusted him!

"What happened after? How did you manage to save me? If Arabella refused to help, how did you find someone else in such a critical situation?"

"Somebody called me out of the blue, claiming they had medicine that could help. They wanted a favor in exchange. Don't worry, it wasn't anything shady. After you took the medicine, the hospital declared you out of danger, and I brought you home. And today, you woke up."

Martin kept the details about the mysterious caller vague, instead, he cradled her face and said, "This estate, it's called For-ena Villa, and from now on, it's our home."

For-ena Villa.

Serena hadn't expected him to name it something connected to her.

"From now on, you rest here and recover. I'll be with you for the holiday. You're used to lively celebrations, but a quiet one this year might not be so bad," Martin said with a gentle gaze.

Chapter 1895

Serena nodded in agreement.

"Alright, take a break for now," Martin suggested, hoping to coax her into rest. But all of a sudden,

Serena chimed in, "Martin, will this gash on my forehead leave a scar? What did the doctor say?"

She had banged her head on shards of broken glass, and the cut was undoubtedly deep.

Martin's gaze fell upon her forehead, which was usually smooth and fair but now appeared swollen, rough, and fierce. Still, his eyes softened as he spoke, "No matter what it takes, I'll make sure your forehead heals."

"Hand me the mirror," Serena said, sensing something was amiss and wanting to see for herself.

"It's late. We'll check it tomorrow."

Martin tried to sidestep her request, but that made Serena even more eager to see her own face. She remembered the coffee table that Kenneth had flipped in anger, the glass splinters that flew everywhere, even nicking her chin.

Now she could feel a slight pain in her chin.

"Please, just bring it to me!" Serena urged.

Reluctantly, Martin fetched a mirror for her.

With just one glance, Serena saw her forehead, rough and red with numerous uneven cuts - an ugly and ferocious sight that made her hand tremble, and the mirror dropped onto the blanket.

"Serena." Martin began, trying to offer comfort.

But Serena panicked, "My forehead, my face."

What had happened to her?

How could she, of all people, end up looking like this?

In the mirror, she had seen not only her horrifying forehead but also her unattended, coarse face, and a prominent red scar on her chin.

"My face."

She couldn't believe it. Her once-prized beauty had turned into something so dreadful.

Was her face ruined?

"It's just temporary, don't be afraid." Martin had anticipated her shock upon seeing her reflection and hurried to reassure her.

Seeing the worry in Martin's eyes, Serena couldn't understand. She was a mess, and yet he wasn't repulsed. He had spoken to her so gently, held her.

She felt like she would vomit!

"It's okay, Serena, I don't mind." Martin feared she might lose all hope, his voice even more tender,

"The doctor mentioned your forehead wound is deep, so it'll take some time to heal, but it's not beyond recovery."

"No, that's not it." Serena suddenly turned her attention to her hands, which were heavily bandaged and resembled a pair of bear paws.

When she had picked up the mirror, she distinctly felt a lack of strength in her hands, and her fingers

were not as nimble as before.

She initially thought it was due to the bandages around her fingers.

But now, as she moved her fingers, once slender and delicate, they were scarred and clumsy, swollen.

Indeed, not as agile as they used to be.

"Did I damage the tendons in my hands?" Serena asked fearfully, her eyes brimming with tears, "There were glass shards in my palms and on the backs of my hands, and they've been untreated for three days. Are my hands ruined?"

"Don't overthink it," Martin consoled her tenderly, "The doctor said you just can't play the piano for a few months, and your reactions won't be as quick. It'll all get better in time."

Chapter 1896

"Really? You're not pulling my leg?" Serena clearly didn't believe it, "Look me in the eyes and tell me, how much of my old self can I get back?"

"Seventy to eighty percent."

Serena was gobsmacked! It was as if lightning had struck her, and she had been shot through the heart with a thousand arrows!

Seventy to eighty percent?

She could only get back to seventy or eighty percent of her former self?

How was she supposed to play the piano now? How could she paint? How could she be the talented woman she once was?

"I talked to the doctor, and he said that with some practice, playing the piano and painting won't be an issue. It'll just be a bit tough at the start. Like when eating, holding cutlery might be a little wobbly. but it'll get better."

"What did you just say?" Serena was even more shocked!

She thought not being able to play the piano or paint like before was bad enough, but now, even the simplest tasks like eating, picking up food, or sipping soup were out of reach?

How was she supposed to accept that?

"It's just at the beginning!" Martin stressed again, "It'll get better."

Serena's tears spilled over, "How long? How much longer will this process take?"

"Depending on how well you recover, maybe two or three weeks. In a couple of weeks, handling cutlery or a spoon for soup won't be a problem for you anymore."

Serena's emotions crumbled yet again. Two or three more weeks before she could eat like a normal person? Before she could sip soup with a spoon?

What a heavy blow!

Seeing Serena break down and cry, Martin felt his heart shattered. If he'd known, he would have kept it from her, one day at a time.

Now, watching her cry her eyes out, he felt as if his heart was being torn apart.

"Serena." Martin reached out to wipe her tears, his voice soft with comfort, "It's okay, I'll be with you. No

matter how long this process takes, no matter how hard it gets, I'll be there to face it with you. I'll get you the best doctors, the finest treatments, and I'll leave no stone unturned to find even better ways to help you."

Serena sobbed into his chest.

She couldn't fathom why fate had dealt her such a hand!

She had been the daughter of a rich family for eighteen glorious years, only to be cruelly cast down from her pedestal. She thought she had hit rock bottom, unaware that fate would also take her parents

from her, mar her beauty, and rob her of the ability to do even the simplest things like eating or drinking soup!

She hadn't fallen to the bottom – she was in hell!

To her, this was as agonizing and terrifying as being trapped in the depths of hell.

Serena cried for a long time before finally asking with a quivering voice, "Will my hands have scars?

And my forehead."

That was her most pressing concern!

She lifted her tearful, crystal-clear eyes to the man before her, "Tell me the truth. What did the doctor say? Tell me everything, and don't you dare hide anything."

Although Martin couldn't bear it, he eventually opted for full disclosure.

"The doctor said that the shattered glass cut deep into the dermis of your skin. The scars on your forehead and on the palms and backs of your hands can't be restored to their pre-injury state."

"With current medical technology, we can only reduce and improve the appearance of scars, perhaps through surgery or laser treatments."

"Surgery would require one to three months of recovery time, while laser treatments would mean going

in once a month, and after about six sessions you might see a significant improvement. But this kind of result isn't what you're hoping for. The scars will be less visible than they are now, but if you look closely, they'll still be apparent."

Serena's tears started flowing again, "And my feet?"

Martin suddenly fell silent.

Chapter 1897

Serena had a sinking feeling in her gut, "My leg, it's not going to heal properly, is it? Right at the knee? I need to see."

"Don't look." Martin's voice was laced with compassion, "There's nothing to see right now, it's all bandaged up."

Tears streamed down Serena's cheeks as she fumbled with the blanket, her clumsy hands struggling to do what once was second nature – hitching up her pant leg.

She was frantic and furious.

"Let me help." Martin eventually said, slowly and reluctantly rolling up her pant legs to her knees.

Both knees were wrapped in white bandages, obscuring any detail, but Serena could feel the stiffness

in her legs, especially the left one encased in plaster. What in the world had happened?

"My leg." Serena lifted her tearful eyes to Martin, "Is it injured?"

She remembered the moment she knelt in broken glass, repeatedly bowing her head in plea to Louisa.

Tiny shards of glass had embedded themselves deep into her knees.

The damage was done.

But what about her left leg? Why the plaster?

Martin's eyes reddened, "You just can't walk for now."

"What do you mean I can't walk?"

"The glass in your knee was deep, it reached the bone." Martin spoke with difficulty, "When you were crawling on the ground, the glass dug even deeper into your flesh. They've removed it through surgery, but you'll need a wheelchair for now."

Serena felt like she'd been struck by lightning.

No wonder she felt excruciating pain all over, particularly in her knees, as she lay feverish in that basement, deliriously drinking dirty water from a plastic basin.

Was that when the glass had buried itself even deeper?

"And there's more, the Collins family might have been a bit too rough when they hit you, one of your leg bones is fractured, hence the plaster."

Serena's eyes widened.

"The doctors have set the bone back in place, now it needs time to heal about three months. But your knees will need around six months to recover."

Perhaps fearing her despair, Martin quickly added, "After six months, you'll be able to walk. You'll just need another three months of physical therapy."

Serena was beyond devastated.

She was a thousand times, no, ten thousand times more shattered than mere collapse could convey.

This meant for the next half year, she'd be confined to a wheelchair, and even after that, she'd need another three months of rehab to regain her former strength.

"Will I make a full recovery?" The tears spilled over as Serena asked, dreading the answer, "Can I dance ballet like before? Or will it only be seventy or eighty percent of what it was?"

"With current medical treatments, you can expect to recover seventy to eighty percent."

Martin's words sent Serena into a torrent of sobs, her body shaking uncontrollably, unable to digest this devastating news.

Her hands, perhaps, she could accept not fully recovering, but her feet too, unable to dance as before?

"In nine months you'll walk normally, no one will be the wiser, but dancing won't be as graceful as it was. If it comes to that, you could always choose not to dance."

Serena's weeping intensified. In high society, how could one simply not dance?

Chapter 1898

So many dinner parties necessitate a couple's waltz.

She couldn't dance, was she supposed to just stand there and watch her date invite another girl to dance right in front of her?

If she couldn't even dance, couldn't even play the piano, what good was she?

In high society, she was nothing short of a pariah!

Was this some cosmic joke, to take back everything she learned from the Collins family?

Martin held her close, allowing her to vent her frustrations in his embrace.

"Why, why must this happen to me." Serena sobbed uncontrollably, "Why?"

Her tears flowed like rivers, her sorrow seemingly endless, "Why does Arabella, after all the hardships,

still come back so beautiful, so glorified to that home, with so many skills to her name, while I, after my struggles, am left with nothing but the aftermath?"

Why had fate stripped her of her prized beauty and status?

Why was she rendered unable to walk unaided, to relearn how to use utensils for eating?

Why?

It felt like she was cast into the deepest circle of hell, experiencing pain beyond comprehension!

Was it just because she was jealous of Arabella, because she had once tried to trip her up, that she deserved such divine retribution?

Compared to her, Arabella's past sufferings seemed trivial!

At least Arabella was taken in by the Murphy family, who provided a decent life, neither lavish nor lacking, and Granny Grace had connections that allowed her to learn so much.

And her. now that she was so destitute, the heavens still decided to take away the very basics of her existence!!

"Why must this happen to me." Serena cried as if her heart was being torn apart.

She had lost everything, yet instead of receiving sympathy from above, it seemed as if the universe itself wanted to crush her all the more.

God was too biased!

Why must it be so unfair!

"So you're telling me my knees will scar, and what will I do every summer? How will I wear skirts and shorts?" Serena wept anew.

Meanwhile.

David came home to the family portrait hanging on the wall and smiled, "This picture is perfect right here, first thing you see when you walk in."

In the living room, his brothers were eagerly trying to get a photo with Bella.

Seeing such a lively scene, and spotting his dear sister, David's smile grew even wider.

"Bella, I'm back," David teased, waving something in his hand, "Guess what tasty treat I have brought for you?"

"Late at night, and you're bringing your sister barbecue?" Hans frowned slightly.

"It's all fresh off the grill. I rushed the driver to hurry over just so my sister could have a bite while it's

still hot." David placed several bags on the coffee table, and the servants promptly began setting out the dozens of grilled delights.

Chasel's brow also furrowed, "Tomorrow's New Year, and the day after is Bella's homecoming banquet, you're feeding her this, what if she gets a breakout?"

"Bella's skin isn't prone to blemishes. Besides, even if she did get a spot, she'd still be my most beautiful, most angelic sister, incomparable to anyone else!" David added, then pinched Bella's soft cheek affectionately, "Plus, my sister's a doctor, she knows all the tricks to keep the skin clear, right?"

Arabella smiled warmly, looking back at David.

Chapter 1899

"Seriously, what if she can't handle it?" Clark retorted, barely able to mask his concern.

"Come on, dude. The skincare stuff Arabella hooked me up with has been like magic for my skin. I could be all glammed up for hours, and not a zit in sight. Sure, if I pull an all-nighter and hit up a barbecue, I might get a spot or two, but a dab of Arabella's miracle cream, and poof! By morning, it's like nothing happened. Makeup still goes on smooth as silk. Arabella's got a treasure trove of secrets, right?" David said.

David grabbed a skewer fresh off the grill and offered it to Arabella, "Here, try this while it's hot."

Arabella reached to take it herself, but David quickly said, "Watch out for the grease, don't mess up your hands. I got it, you just enjoy."

"I can handle it myself," Arabella replied, not accustomed to being fussed over this way.

David took a few more napkins, wrapping the skewer's stick meticulously before handing it over to

Arabella.

The guys nearby overheard the conversation about the miraculous skincare and ointment Arabella had provided David.

"I gotta get one for Molly. She's always freaked out about breakouts," Hans suddenly chimed in.

"Count one in for Myrna too."

"And one for Carol."

"Are you guys ragging on me for being single?" Sean blurted out, his face a mix of jest and earnest. "I

want one for Ophelia!"

"She's taken," Arabella said nonchalantly, munching on her skewer.

"Well then, I want one for myself!" Sean insisted, not wanting to be left out.

"Ms. Bella. we'd love to get our hands on one too." the servants eyed Arabella with envy, having experienced the wonders of her skincare gifts before.

"Ms. Bella, you have no idea, the acne treatment you gave me, I used it so sparingly towards the end, I didn't want to run out, and then I did!" one of the servants confessed.

"Ms. Bella, why don't you start your own acne treatment brand? Then we could always buy it!" another suggested.

"Yeah, I mean, we feel kinda bad using your stash for free," a third added.

"We sometimes share snacks, and the greasy stuff gives us pimples. Your cream works wonders, but we can't always resist those snacks, and we still get the occasional breakout."

Arabella laughed, "I'll grab some from upstairs in a bit, consider them early New Year's gifts."

"Thank you, Ms. Bella!!" The servants were overjoyed, valuing these gifts far more than cash.

It was something money couldn't buy.

The brothers looked on hopefully.

"You'll get yours too," Arabella assured them, bringing smiles and sighs of relief.

"I heard Grandpas and Grandmas, and our uncles and aunts are here too? Go call them down for dinner," David said, and the servants quickly went to fetch the relatives.

"Oh, and you guys get a share too. Once you're done with your tasks, come and join us," David told the servants. "I had my hands full earlier, but I've asked the bodyguard to bring your portions."

The servants beamed, "Thanks, David!"

"It's New Year tomorrow, and you're only getting home now." Louisa started to scold as soon as she descended the stairs, "Didn't I tell you to wrap up your work early? And here you are."

"Well, if Arabella's song hadn't turned me into a hit machine, I wouldn't be booked solid for the next three years."

Chapter 1900

This year, he had specially pushed back all his work just to have time to spend with his sister.

He was about to release a new album, kick off a concert tour, and he had lined up countless endorsements, commercials, movies, TV shows, and variety gigs.

"My agent cleared a slot just for me, saying that once my sister's identity goes public, we're gonna get swamped with invites to do reality TV together. My agent even met with hers today to talk it over."

"You're thinking of taking Arabella on a reality show?" Everyone was stunned, and they quickly

dismissed the idea, "No way!"

Being on a reality show would put Bella under a magnifying glass for the whole world to see.

They didn't want their precious princess exposed to the scrutiny and judgment of others.

"You guys, chill. It's just an idea for now."

"No way—" they all refused again.

David went silent, but then he sneakily shot his sister a knowing look.

Arabella's lips curled up slightly, as if in on some secret pact with him.

She didn't really care. As long as David needed her, she was willing to be tied to his rising star, even if

it meant his fame would hit new heights.

At For-ena Villa, Serena cried herself to sleep in Martin's arms.

The next morning, she woke up to find only Dora and an unnamed servant by her bedside.

"Serena, you're awake?" Dora was the first to notice, her young face beaming with a cute smile, "Shall I

help you freshen up?"

Noticing Serena's gaze on the other servant, Dora cheerfully introduced, "This is June, she'll be looking

after you with me."

Serena nodded and then asked, "Where's Martin?"

"Mr. Martin had some urgent business but don't worry, today's New Year and he'll definitely be back to join you for the dinner!"

Dora and June quickly brought in warm water, a toothbrush, toothpaste, and a towel.

"Serena, you can't get the bandage on your hand wet, let me help you brush your teeth," Dora offered.

After she finished, June approached with a warm towel, "Serena, let me wash your face for you. Does this hurt?"

Her touch was feather-light, and Serena shook her head, letting them fuss over her.

Once she was all cleaned up, Dora and June wheeled over a couple of clothes racks.

"It's New Year, which outfit would you like to wear?" Dora showed Serena the options, "The master picked these out for you, he was choosing them one by one on his phone and had them delivered here, all cleaned and ready."

"You know, Mr. Martin really cares for you." June couldn't help but praise, "We've never seen Mr. Martin

so taken with anyone before. You're the first."

Serena's eyes flicked over the beautiful clothes before her, recalling how the Collins family had always had the most gorgeous outfits tailored for every New Year.

Compared to the custom-made garments from the Collins family, these ready-made designer pieces clearly fell short, not crafted to fit her figure like the haute couture she was used to.

Martin probably didn't understand all this. Forget an average family; even wealthy households didn't flaunt their wealth like the Collins family, celebrating every holiday with such pomp and splendor, demanding each outfit to be unique.

Compared to the happiness and excitement of years past, this year's Serena felt disinterested, her voice tinged with melancholy, "Never mind."

She didn't want to change.

With her current disheveled appearance, what difference did a beautiful dress make?

This year, there wouldn't be a circle of girlfriends around her, complimenting her beauty and envying her couture life.