

# Never Late, Never Away Chapter 596

Shooting daggers at Finnick, Mark suppressed his roiling anger and left.

He swore to seek revenge for today's humiliation.

Be it Finnick or Vivian, none of them will escape unscathed! I'll make them pay for what they did!

The doctor made a hasty exit after Mark, too scared to be in the same space as Finnick.

Is the whole ordeal over? Nothing will happen to my career, will it? Can't the two gentlemen just disregard my presence and pretend I didn't exist?

Immense regret swelled within him. He should have never agreed to participate in the first place. Karma did not let him off easy—it just was not his time yet. For the past five years, the incident had been buried so well that it faded from his memory. Who would have thought that it would be unearthed at a time as such?

Only Finnick and Evelyn were left in the office, but the atmosphere was a world's difference from before.

Finnick remained quiet ever since his sudden outburst. In fact, he did not even spare Evelyn a glance. He sat in silence with his head bowed. It was impossible to tell what was running through his mind.

This side of Finnick was even more frightening to Evelyn. She had grown up with Finnick and spent the past five years with him, so she understood him to a certain degree.

If he yelled at her, it meant that somewhere deep down in him, he still yearned to trust her. But now? Now, he refused to speak or even acknowledge her presence. Is he convinced that I'm the perpetrator? Is this the calm before the storm? What will he do to me?

No, I can't lose Finnick! She was no longer the princess of the Morrison family. She had thrown away everything she had for Finnick—her ability to walk, her identity, and her luxurious lifestyle!

She would have nothing left if she lost Finnick's protection and her status as Mrs. Norton. How will I push through the rest of my life?

Fear shook her body as her mind swam with intrusive thoughts. She rolled her wheelchair towards Finnick and implored, "Finnick, you have to trust me. I didn't do any of this! We grew up together. You know me. You understand me best! You know that I'm not capable of something so foul. Please believe me; you've always believed me! Please trust me again this time."

"It must have been Vivian! She must have bribed Mark and that doctor to sabotage me! She wants you back, which is why she's framing me! Finnick, you can't fall for her lies! Don't get tricked!"

"Did you forget how she slashed my face because of envy? You saw the video with your own eyes. You have to believe that it's real. She was never a good person. She purposely—"

"Shut up!" Finnick bellowed, cutting Evelyn off. He was positively livid. The truth had surfaced, and yet Evelyn still had the audacity to vilify Vivian. Does she take me for a fool?

All he could feel now was agonizing heartache.

It had taken him five years to finally see the true colors of his so-called first love, the woman he had grown up with and vowed to cherish for the rest of his life!

It was too late now.

The belated apprehension did him no good, for the despicable woman before him had hurt the love of his life!

It was only at this moment that he finally realized how greatly Vivian had suffered because of Evelyn.

See with my own eyes?

Indeed, he had watched the video clip sent by Mark with his own eyes, but look at how things ended—he put too much trust in what he saw and wrongly accused Vivian!

And what about last time?

What Evelyn claimed happened at the café—was that also a misunderstanding on my part? Could it be that the gash was not inflicted upon her by Vivian but rather a product of Evelyn's own doing so she could frame Vivian?

Finnick drowned in resentment for himself as fragments of memories began to resurface.

How did I react that time? Vivian had begged him to trust her, sobbing inconsolably as she explained that Evelyn had tripped on purpose to frame her, but he refused to believe her. Instead, he launched into an angry tirade, saying that she had been blinded by jealousy. After that...

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After that, Evelyn slandered Vivian, claiming that Vivian had been tainted. Finnick fell for the baseless rumors and refused to believe that the child she carried was his. He persuaded her over and over again to abort it. She must have been frightened back then. She must have hoped fervently that I would trust her, that I would protect her and our child.

But I was a b\*stard. I never accepted that child as my own. Even after I conceded for Vivian's sake, I never loved the child. That was his biological child, his firstborn. Yet, Finnick had abhorred the innocent child, loathing that the child had lived.

Afterward, his prayers came true—the child ceased to exist before it had the chance to see the world. Finnick would never know how that unborn child would grow up to look like. He wondered if it was a boy or a girl.

Finally, Vivian was disappointed in him. She left him and the country altogether, heading to a foreign country to start afresh.

When she came back years later, she was no longer the Vivian William he knew. The woman who returned was Vivian Morrison. Gone was the gentle, sweet woman, and in her place was a stranger who regarded him with indifference.

It is what it is. Finnick chuckled ruefully. I was the one who drove her away from me. It was me; it has always been me!

He recalled an incident where he reproached her because of Fabian. "A trick to seduce men," he had lashed out. He couldn't believe that he had said such degrading words to her.

Did I let my eyes blind my judgement? Was that yet another incident where I let my assumptions overshadow the truth? Is that why she was so enraged?

Finnick wished he could punch himself in the face. I am an a\*\*hole, the scum of the earth!

He leveled a stare at Evelyn, his eyes so cold that it turned her blood to frost. "I'll ask you one last time—what exactly happened? Think it through before you reply. This is your last chance to redeem yourself."

When Evelyn noticed the rage blazing in Finnick's eyes, she finally came to terms that nothing she said would save her. Finnick had lost all faith in her. He would only detest her more if she continued to deny it.

"Yes, I did all of it," she broke down and admitted. Tears streamed down her face as she wept in anguish. "But I did it all for you, Finnick. It's because I love you so much. I was so scared that I would lose you that I resorted to such petty methods. Can you forgive me this once?"

"Love me?" Finnick repeated cynically. "How dare you claim to love me!"

"There's nothing I don't dare to say! I love you, and that's the truth. I've only ever loved you for all these years." Evelyn's eyes were crazed as she rasped, "I knew you first, and I loved you first! What right does Vivian have to be with you? How is she better than me? Nothing about her is worthy of being with you!"

“Even if that were true, you shouldn’t have done something so horrendous. Are you even the Evelyn I know? Since when you became this vile?” Disappointment seeped through his fierce tone.

Fear gripped Evelyn’s throat when she heard Finnick’s harsh description of her.

She could not let Finnick view her as conniving. Her life would be over once she was labeled as such.

“That’s not true! Finnick, you can’t say that about me. I’m not a horrible person; I was just overwhelmed by jealousy. I know now that what I did was wrong. Please forgive me, won’t you?” Evelyn reached out to grasp Finnick’s hand, but he flung her outstretched hand away.

“Finnick, I can’t live without you. I’m nothing without you. I’ve already lost my legs; I can’t lose you as well.”

“Finnick, you are the reason I can’t walk now! You can’t abandon me! You promised me. You swore that you would be by my side forever. You can’t go back on your words so easily!”

Obstinate as she was, she made another attempt to sway Finnick, tugging on his arm as she beseeched him to give her another chance.

Fueled with contempt for Evelyn, Finnick pried his arm free of her death grip. Perhaps the Evelyn he knew had died. He could not recognize the woman before him, and he had no intention to know her.

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A pang of pity stabbed Finnick when he glimpsed Evelyn’s legs, which had shriveled up over time. When he got to the bottom of it, it was undeniable that his mistake had resulted in her paraplegia. He was the reason Evelyn had to spend the rest of her life in a wheelchair.

"Your disability is a punishment for all your wrongdoings. I won't hound you for what happened that year. From now on, we're even. I don't owe you anything, and neither do you, I. I have nothing to do with you starting today."

Having said his piece, Finnick promptly turned to leave. Now that he had made things clear, he did not want to spend another second with the woman.

"You can't do this to me! Finnick, you can't abandon me!" Evelyn screeched. She lunged forward to grab Finnick, but his strides were so wide that he became out of her reach. The sudden momentum caused her to lose her balance, and she toppled out of her wheelchair.

Refusing to give up, Evelyn crawled forward on her arms, her limp legs dragging behind her like dead weight. She clung to the hem of Finnick's trousers, crying, "Finnick, you can't treat me this way! I have nothing without you. You're all I have now. I'm begging you, don't leave me. You can't leave me. I lost my legs because of you. You're the reason I'm in this pathetic state! You can't just say that you're done with me. How am I supposed to get through the rest of my life? How will I live..."

Weighed down by Evelyn, Finnick's footsteps came to a halt. Although sympathy flashed across his face, his conviction stood firm. He could not let such a venomous woman stay by his side.

"Evelyn Morrison, I've given you five years of care, separation from Vivian, and my firstborn. These are the punishments I have to bear for my mistakes. You can't guilt-trip with your disability. I've already paid my price. I don't owe you anything anymore."

Finnick took a strong step forward and left the office without a backward glance.

Evelyn bawled as Finnick disappear from her line of sight, her pain and heartbreak pouring out in wails.

All my years of hard work, gone in seconds. Indignance rose within her. This is not the end!

Evelyn's cries penetrated the office walls and invaded Finnick's ears. Irritated, he pulled out his phone and made a call to Noah.

"Evelyn's in my office now. Do whatever it takes to make her leave. I don't want to see her in the office when I return."

With that, Finnick hung up and strode out of the building.

There was something else that demanded his attention. Mark's behavior today was far too peculiar. He was not one to come clean about his wrongdoings without prompt, which meant that there was a deadlier secret lurking in the dark, and Finnick had to expose it quickly.

As things were today, he would die before he let anything harm Vivian.

Noah immediately understood the situation after receiving Finnick's call. Only Evelyn's heinous actions could spur such intense emotion from Finnick, which meant he had uncovered her secrets.

The juxtaposition of elation and distress caused unease to settle in Noah's stomach. He was glad that Finnick finally saw through Evelyn's facade, but at the same time, worry that Finnick knew about his involvement plagued Noah.

He didn't find out, did he? He wouldn't have instructed me to deal with Evelyn if he did.

Reassured by his own rationale, Noah rushed to Finnick's office, hoping to get to the bottom of things.

The first thing Noah noticed when he entered the office was Evelyn's prostrate form on the floor. Her shoulder shook as she wept, overtaken by misery. The scene should have been one that garnered empathy, but satisfaction filled Noah instead.

Women like her deserve to be punished!

Evelyn could sense another presence in the room. She eagerly lifted her head, thinking that Finnick had come back for her. I knew that he isn't so cold-hearted! I knew he would never abandon me.

The disappointment was a great fall from her high hopes. Dismay turned into fury when she realized that the person before her was Noah. "What are you doing here? Where's Finnick? Bring him here! I want to see him!" she shrieked.

Disgust brimming in his eyes, Noah coldly relayed Finnick's message, "Mr. Norton said that he never wants to see you again. I suggest you leave immediately."

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"Impossible! Why would Finnick refuse to see me? He loves me! He cares for me, or he wouldn't have taken care of me all these years. Liars, you're all liars!" Evelyn was losing her grip on her sanity.

"A nightmare—this must be a nightmare!" A delusional smile spread across Evelyn's face as she struck her head with clenched fists. "Wake up! Stop dreaming! I hate this dream!"

Pain surged through Evelyn, confirming that she was wide awake. She crumpled on the ground in sorrow. "How did it turn out like this? Why does it hurt? This is a dream; I shouldn't feel pain."

Evelyn's manic behaviour left Noah stunned.

"What happened? What did Mr. Norton find out?" Noah's own voice snapped him back to reality. He was in such a daze that he did not realize he had voiced his concern until the words hung in the air.

The careless question had lit a fuse, igniting Evelyn.

"What happened? How dare you ask me what happened? Mark exposed the fact that I was the one who hired men to assault Vivian, and it's all because of your negligence! Why didn't you find out sooner? Why did you let him in?" Her incensed screeches pierced the air.

"Why would he suddenly bring this up? Be honest, did you seek him out? Traitors! You're a bunch of traitors who betrayed me!"

Evelyn loathed anyone she could blame. In her mind, their incompetence had soiled her plans, and by association, ruined her life.

"You were the one who set up Mrs. Norton's assault?" Noah exclaimed, floored by her confession. He knew that the kidnapping was related to Mark, but he never made the connection to Evelyn.

So she has been mistreating Mrs. Norton since then! This woman is unforgivable and rotten to the core! How could she commit such a horrendous crime toward another woman?

“What do you mean ‘Mrs. Norton’? Didn’t I warn you to stop addressing her that way when you’re talking to me?” Evelyn growled, on the brink of going mad. “That wh\*re is unworthy of that title. She should have been defiled by those beggars back then and wallow in agony for the rest of her life! No, I take that back; she shouldn’t live at all! She deserves to die!”

Noah’s chest heaved with vexation when he heard Evelyn cursing Vivian. He chuckled humorlessly and rubbed salt into her wound, “You’ve had it coming for you ever since you committed those inhumane crimes. Now that Mr. Norton refuses to see you, you have no one to blame but yourself.”

“I’ve had it coming?” Evelyn burst into deranged laughter, her voice shrill. “You must think that you’re so high and mighty. What right do you have to mock me? Don’t forget that you threatened Vivian into aborting the fetus. Do you think that you’ll be in a better position than me when Finnick finds out?”

Noah’s expression darkened. She’s right. Who am I to ridicule her when I had inflicted harm upon Vivian as well?

At the same time, he felt his anxiety dissipate marginally. Based on Evelyn’s words, Noah figured that Finnick was still unaware of his involvement.

The conflicting emotions churned within Noah. He no longer wanted to be under Evelyn’s thumb. Her blackmail hung over his head, ready to fall and crush him at any given moment. However, he was also not ready for Finnick to discover that he had caused Vivian so much pain. He was in a huge dilemma, his conflicting thoughts tearing him apart. He was at a loss as to what he should do next.

Evelyn relished at the sight of Noah’s anguished expression and began to calm down. It was almost as if her pain would only diminish if she saw another person suffering.

She channeled all her hurt into resentment for Vivian. It’s all her fault! Right from the start, Vivian has been the only impediment between me and Finnick! I can’t believe that someone as infuriating as she exists!

Rachel should have strangled Vivian to death at birth. Why did she let the wh\*re live? Now she’s after my status as the Morrisons’ most precious daughter and Finnick as well!

Evelyn was emptied of all emotion but hate for Rachel and Vivian. They should die a painful death and suffer in hell!

It was the only way she could feel relief. Only after they perish would she be able to lead a happy life.

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'You must feel relieved that Finnick has no idea about what you did,' Evelyn taunted Noah after composing herself.

"I'm warning you—don't even think about keeping yourself clean. If you want to hide it from Finnick, your only option is to help me. If not, I'll go to Finnick right now and spill all of your dirty secrets. I can't wait to see how he would treat his most trusted right-hand man."

Panic shot through Noah when he heard her threats. "W-What do you want?" he stammered. He knew that this woman was not above getting blood on her hands now that she had been sent over the edge.

Evelyn gave Noah a side-eye and sneered at his cowardice. "The game is not over yet. They still have a long way to go before winning me!"

After leaving the company building, Finnick rang up a private investigator he knew personally and asked him to investigate if anything unusual had happened to Mark recently.

"I also need your help with sourcing something. It concerns..."

Finnick's eyes glinted with menace after ending the call. He would not let Mark off easy this time round. It was about time Mark bore the consequences of his foolish decisions.

Finnick pulled out of the parking lot and roamed around with no destination in mind.

He slowly drove past numerous shops. Whenever he passed a familiar shop, a flashback related to Vivian would pop up involuntarily.

Vivian used to love the pork ribs from this restaurant. She once mentioned that she liked the aesthetic of this studio because it gives off the retro vibes of the eighties. I remember that there's a market somewhere here; we bought our groceries there before. None of us are good cooks, but we enjoyed the meal nonetheless...

Finnick pulled to a stop in front of a shop—Cindy's Baby Store.

He remembered distinctly that they had shopped at this baby store when they mistakenly thought Vivian to be pregnant. They had been happy then.

Both of them had their eyes on a pair of shoes. At that time, they did not know the gender of the unborn child and bickered over whether blue or pink would be the better choice.

How did I settle the argument? Finnick's lips curved into a gentle smile at the fond memory—he had bought both pairs.

In fact, he bought two of everything they fancied. Vivian reprimanded him, albeit good-naturedly, for wasting money. He then jokingly replied that he was making preparations in case she was carrying fraternal twins.

After learning that Vivian was not pregnant, Finnick was worried that seeing the tiny clothes and shoes would upset Vivian, so he stowed them away in the storeroom.

The bitter irony was that when Vivian actually got pregnant, Finnick never got the chance to shop for the baby with her.

Finnick's eyelids slid shut. He pressed on the corners of his eyes with his fingers, forcing his tears back. She must have felt helpless when I insisted on aborting the baby.

Coincidentally, Rachel had been diagnosed with leukemia at that time. Knowing how filial Vivian was, Finnick was certain that she had kept the baby a secret from Rachel. Fighting a lonely battle must have been wearying and devastating.

Finnick could not bear to imagine how Vivian had endured such torment. He slammed a fist into the steering wheel to vent his debilitating remorse. Why? Why did I choose to trust Evelyn instead of Vivian? How big of an idiot am I?

At this moment, Finnick's phone buzzed, bringing him back to his senses. He collected himself before picking up. It was Noah on the other end.

"What is it?"

"Mr. Norton, Evelyn has left your office," Noah reported.

"Noted. I'm going back now."

With that, Finnick hung up and headed back to the company. There were some things that had to be dealt with quickly or he would not have the courage to face Vivian.

Finnick found Noah waiting for him when he arrived at his office.

"You'll be in charge of anything regarding Evelyn in the future. Don't let me see her," Finnick instructed impassively as he took a seat.