

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 511

The crowd fell silent when the auctioneer opened the box to reveal the ring. But an instant later, there was an uproar.

“How is that a special item?”

“I thought it was a ring worn by an emperor or some concubine. What is this?”

“This isn’t special. This isn’t even an antique! Looks to me like a modern piece of craft.”

“If you are going to include modern items, you might as well auction an antique ring. What is the ring about? Are you insulting us?”

“I guess there’re no other items worth bidding for after this.”

Despite the contempt the crowd had for the ring, Finnick’s eyes widened at the sight of the ring. He grasped the handle of his chair tightly as his whole body trembled with rage.

How could it be? How dare she?

Finnick stared angrily at Vivian a few rows in front of him. As if by telepathy, Vivian looked back and met his gaze.

Vivian smiled at the sight of Finnick’s ill-concealed anger. She ridiculed him as well as herself.

What right does he have to be angry? It was his cruelty and betrayal that had shaped their lives to what it had become. She just wanted to auction off their wedding ring.

From now on, this ring to her is only an item to be used to exchange for money. It no longer bore any sentimental value.

She intended to make peace with her past and move on once and for all.

Move on from the foolish, starry-eyed Vivian William who fell in love with Finnick.

But now, Vivian asked herself. Is it really just to move on from the past? If she was serious about moving on, why did she have to sell their wedding ring in front of Finnick? When she witnessed his anger, why did the sight please her?

Not daring to think much deeper, Vivian turned back to the front to look at the wedding ring on stage.

Does she have any reluctance? Of course.

She used to be so fond of it that she never took it off, not even when she was in the shower. After the incident, she was so pained by the sight of it that she took it off and locked it in a drawer. It stayed there for five years. It was as though all the feelings she had for Finnick were condensed into this tiny ring.

To Vivian, this ring was a representation of them and their past together. For five years, she did not dare to look at it, for fear of being reminded by the sweetness and bitterness of their marriage. She was afraid that it would come tumbling down, burying her completely and destroying her.

Before returning back here, she mustered the courage to retrieve it. Holding it tightly in her hand, Vivian reminded herself that she was about to go back. Five years ago, she didn't have the courage to face this. Now, the time was right.

When she decided to auction this ring, it nearly broke her heart, because it did felt like she was giving a piece of her heart away. It hurt her so much that she trembled.

But if it doesn't hurt, how would it ever heal?

"Order, everybody. Order." The auctioneer raised his hands and when silence fell, he told the story of the ring's origin.

"The owner of this item is Ms. Morrison of the Morrison Group. To her, this ring carries a special meaning. Let us give her a warm welcome to get on stage and tell us about the story behind the ring."

Under the gaze of the crowd, Vivian walked slowly towards the stage. Watching her walking step by step closer to the stage, Finnick felt that she was inching away from him.

"Hello, everybody. My name is Vivian Morrison, the owner of this ring. As the auctioneer has pointed out, this ring holds a very special meaning for me. I would like to put it up for auction

today. At the same time, I would also like to pass on a message to the new owner of this ring. If you're willing to endure cutting away the pain, you will be able to get a new start with your life. Thank you very much for your attention."

Vivian bowed slightly to the crowd, and resumed her seat.

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Vivian Will- no, Vivian Morrison got off the stage without even looking at him. Finnick let out a bitter laugh.

However, he felt as if her speech was directed to him.

Cutting away the pain? Does she want to cut away the feelings between us? That's impossible, I wouldn't allow it!

"Alright, the bid starts at zero, as requested by Ms. Morrison. You are free to bid at any price."

"Twenty thousand."

"Thirty thousand."

"Fifty thousand."

Though they complained about the ring's plainness in design, the crowd bid furiously, intent on impressing the Morrisons.

Spending several thousand was little compared to the favor they would get in return from Benedict and Vivian. If an opportunity to work with Morrison Group could materialize, this small loss was insignificant.

And since this was an event organized by the Morrison Group, the attendees comprised mostly of people and entities in business with the Morrisons frequently. They were considered friends and were more than willing to support Benedict.

"A hundred thousand."

"A hundred and twenty thousand."

"A hundred and fifteen thousand."

The bid climbed steadily. Vivian's mouth hung open slightly in disbelief that her ring would fetch this much. How could someone spend hundreds of thousands on this ring? Aside from the meaning it held for her, she didn't think it was worth much.

Vivian glanced sideways at Benedict. He seemed to find this completely normal. In fact, he smiled like he was enjoying himself.

At last, the bid approached two hundred thousand, and no one else dared to beat it.

"This gentleman at number seven bids two hundred thousand," the auctioneer called. "Anyone else?"

The crowd remained silent. They did their best to show their support. Two hundred thousand for a ring like that is just crazy. If it goes up any further, it is no longer a favor but the act of a fool.

Vivian sighed in relief when no one else bid a higher price. It was already unimaginable to her when the ring fetched a high price of two hundred thousand. If this went on, she would be feeling really guilty.

"Anyone else?" the auctioneer asked, to no avail.

"Two hundred thousand going once..." The auctioneer raised his gavel.

"Two hundred thousand..."

"One million," a deep male voice interrupted him just as the auctioneer was about to strike the gavel.

One million! The crowd turned around to the source of the voice, to see what kind of a fool would bid away his inheritance.

However, their incredulity transformed into comprehension when they detected the source. Who else would spend a million on an ordinary ring? Of course, it is her ex-husband.

"I told you Finnick still had feelings for his ex-wife. Why else would he spend that kind of money on the ring?"

"A million! My God, I thought it ended in a divorce? What's going on?"

"I didn't think that Mr. Norton would be so generous even with his ex-wife."

"Is this part of the routine of a reconciliation? To first make the lady smile?"

"They say that a man who's willing to spend on you truly loves you. Why would Ms. Morrison even divorce a man like that? If it were me, I wouldn't leave him even if I get clobbered to death!"

Finnick paid no attention to the gossip surrounding him. He looked straight at Vivian. He did not call for a bid earlier because he was busy studying her expression.

As soon as the bid exceeded the six-digit mark, he saw Vivian's worried frown. Finnick was pleased to see that. He knew that deep in her heart, she didn't really want to get rid of the ring.

But when the auctioneer banged the gavel to his bid of a million, he saw Vivian heave a long sigh, her face looking relieved. What does it mean? Was she frowning because she couldn't bear to part with it? What is the reason? Does she feel embarrassed that the price is too low?

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Sensing the anger rising in his chest, Finnick took a few deep breaths in an attempt to control it. Fine! Let's do it her way!

Hearing the familiar voice and the preposterously high price, it was as though a fire was set ablaze in Vivian's soul, rage pulsing through her veins. What is this b*stard doing? Attempting to paint himself as a good husband after all the sh*t he's done?

Blinded by her fury, Vivian decided to outbid Finnick. "One and a half million!" With anger clouding her judgment, she added five hundred thousand on top of the price Finnick bid. That man is not leaving with this ring today! I will not have it! That will be the polar opposite of today's intention!

"What is going on?" The crowd was dumbstruck.

"Can you bid for the very thing you put up for an auction?"

"I don't think there are any rules against it..."

"B-But why? Although it will cost you only a little in the end, what's the point? Besides, didn't they say there is some meaningful reason or whatsoever behind selling the ring? Why is she bidding for it now?"

"No clue. I'm just as lost as you are." Murmurs and whispers arose from the room as the crowd tried to make sense of the scene that was playing in front of their eyes.

Finnick glanced at his former wife, realization dawning on him. Ah, so it has nothing to do with money. She just doesn't want me to get it.

The anger in Finnick's chest flared up even higher. Memories from years ago flooded to the surface. He remembered instances where he had given in, where he had compromised. But in the end, she still left me in the dust and without contact for five long years! And now, after so long, she has returned, only to cut ties with me completely? And with such enthusiasm!

"Two million," Finnick announced coolly.

Finnick refused to let Vivian get rid of him and their memories together so easily. Not then, not in a million years.

"Two- Did I mishear it?"

"Are my ears deceiving me?"

"I am now certain that Finnick is still madly in love with his ex-wife. If he isn't, well, I'll be damned and the sun shall rise from the west tomorrow."

"Why do I not have an ex-husband like this? Wait... How did they manage to make one feel jealous of their divorce?"

"Two million! That's enough for a luxurious car, a mansion, a grand renovation... All that money for a ring? There aren't even any diamonds on it!"

Another wave of commotion rippled through the crowd as the people became visibly agitated.

Vivian was on the edge of losing her mind. Two million! Does Mr. Moneybags think he's made of money? Or does money grow on the trees in his backyard?

It's fine. Everything's fine. The crowd's voices reminded Vivian that even if she outbid Finnick at the end, she would only lose a little commission fee. There was no way in hell she would let Finnick lay his hands on the ring.

"Two and a half million." Vivian felt stupid as she called out that price, sensing all eyes on her.

By now, the crowd could no longer contain their amusement. What a show put on by two idiots. A few in the audience snickered, clearly enjoying themselves.

Hearing the number bid by Vivian, Benedict frowned slightly. Not regarding the price, no. That wasn't the issue. Not to mention, no amount of money could ever be worth up to his sister. It's just that, for the past five years, Benedict had never seen his sister so riled up.

She was always gentle and caring, with a smile constantly on her lips. Even on rare occasions when she's upset, Vivian never let her tears fall in front of anyone but herself. That way, she could spare himself and her precious child from worrying.

At that point, however, Finnick managed to arouse her dormant rage with a snap of his fingertips. The very person that regarded a few hundred thousand as exorbitant was now willingly bidding millions, purely out of spite.

Seeing Vivian with her fists clenched tight, face burning hot and eyes glimmering with wrath, Benedict couldn't deny that she looked so full of life. Mixed emotions swirled within his heart.

Perhaps—just perhaps—she's still the same person. She's still Vivian. Does that mean she's still in love with Finnick?

Concern flickered across Benedict's face at that thought, distressed. No, Finnick Norton had hurt her once, I will not let that happen ever again! Not if I can help it!

"Three million." Without hesitation, Finnick raised his paddle.

The initial shock of the crowd had subdued. Everyone decided it was better to keep their mouth shut and enjoy the spectacle. After all, Finnick Norton was notorious for his riches. A mere three million was nothing but a number to him. It was no longer the money that interested them anyways, but rather who would win—Finnick or Vivian?

The drama between the ex-married couple had got them hooked.

Even Vivian was stunned by the price called out by Finnick. What is he up to? What does he want? It was him who didn't want me back then. So why is he putting up this "lovesick ex-husband" act now?

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Looking around herself, Vivian was aware that the crowd has gone from bewildered to entertained. The mocking gazes bore into her head, causing her to feel as if she were a paid actress whose purpose was to put up a scene. The look in Finnick's eyes frustrated her even more.

If I continue playing this game with him, I might lose up to a couple of hundred thousand. And he surely isn't worth it.

Regaining her senses, Vivian clenched her teeth and put down the paddle in her hand, resentment coursed through her veins. Forget it! I'll let him have his way. So what if he got the ring? As long I don't care, it doesn't matter.

After Vivian backed down, this round of bidding ended, closing the curtains of the "play" starring her and Finnick, allowing the ring to end up in Finnick's hands with a sky-high price of three million.

The auctioneer had a hard time concealing his smile as the gavel hit the table for the third time, calling this round of bidding to an end. Never in his wildest dreams would he have imagined a simple ring as such could win such an extravagant bid. The auctioneer's eyes shone just by thinking about how much commission he would be receiving.

Before long, another item was brought onstage, signaling the start of a new round, causing the crowd to redirect their attention towards the auction. Even so, Vivian could still hear soft mutterings from the crowd, all of which consisted of speculations about her relationship with Finnick. Some even went as far as saying the two of them were arguing out of unresolved sexual tension, and they're going to reconcile with each other soon.

Hearing those ridiculous, baseless arguments, blood pounded in Vivian's ears as she was consumed by blinding rage. Her original intention was to sever all ties she had with Finnick that day, not to cause a commotion.

There was nothing Vivian wanted more than to leave at that moment, but the event was held by the Morrison Group. As a Morrison herself, it would be rude if Vivian were to leave before the auction ended. Unwilling to cause another ruckus, and to save Benedict from any unnecessary troubles, Vivian remained seated in her seat amidst the whispers, counting the seconds till the end of the event.

Immediately after the event ended, Vivian turned to Benedict, "Sorry Ben, I'm gonna head out. There's something I need to do," she mumbled. She had no intention of staying there for a moment longer.

Originally, Benedict wanted to introduce Vivian to the shareholders of the Morrison Group after the auction. In fact, that was one of the reasons he brought her there today. Ever since they had decided to let her come out to the public as Vivian Morrison, Benedict wanted to secure her status in the Morrison Group as soon as possible.

However, seeing Vivian eyeing the exit every now and then, Benedict's heart clenched in pain for his sister. Her eagerness to leave was plain for all to see. He knew the incident earlier had taken a toll on her. It's probably best for her to leave. It's not like she can get her head in the game now anyway.

"Alright, be careful." Benedict smiled. "Don't stay out for too long."

"Mm hmm." With that, Vivian got up and left.

Vivian walked away in an attempt to shake off what had happened in the auction. Even so, she still felt suffocated. Finnick. Ex-wife. Divorcée. Three million. Those words repeatedly played in her head, causing Vivian to feel as if she's slowly losing her mind. Without a doubt, Vivian knew the scene she and Finnick had caused was the highlight of the auction.

Her resentment towards Finnick deepened as the image played in her mind. After today, there's bound to be countless, exaggerated rumors regarding me and Finnick all around Sunshine City. Vivian could already imagine how the media coverage of that day's event and her relationship with Finnick would look like.

Increasing her pace backstage, Vivian desired to change out of those extravagantly elegant clothes, so she would be able to leave that wretched place as soon as she could. Away from all those whispers, those discussions, those judgments, and definitely far, far away from Finnick Norton. I never want to see him ever again in this lifetime!

Vivian was well aware that she was acting like a coward—one who ran away at the first opportunity they get, but what else could she do? She obviously did not expect her heart to react so strongly upon seeing Finnick. All those walls she had built for the past five years seemed to come tumbling down at the mere sight of him. Her emotions had swallowed her entirely.

Caught up in her thoughts, Vivian did not notice the man who appeared out of nowhere before her, until she was cornered. Vivian snapped out of her thoughts and came back to reality. Once she registered who was standing before her, panic flickered across her eyes and she subconsciously took two steps backward.

Fear consumed every inch of her body. In front of everyone with all eyes on her, she had no problem staring him down. But now with no one around and just the two of them, Vivian realized she couldn't even look at Finnick Norton.

Vivian was fully aware that her body was trembling, and she hated herself for it. It was Finnick who betrayed her, so why should she be the one that was afraid?