

The Princess and the Pauper (Arabella)

Chapter 20



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At this moment, Martha brought some fruits and said, “Serena, you’ve been busy all morning. Would you like to have some fruits?”

Before Serena could thank her, Martha whispered, “Miss Serena, there’s something I’d like to talk to you about.”

Serena glanced at her, understanding what she meant. She saw another servant working nearby and stood up, saying, “Martha, take the fruits to the garden, and I’ll eat there.”

“Sure.”

Carrying the fruits, Martha followed Serena to a secluded corner of the garden. Seeing that there was no one around, she couldn’t help but express her concern, “Miss Serena, you’ve been through a lot! In the past, you wouldn’t have needed to go to such lengths to please Mr. and Mrs. McMillian.” Serena lowered her gaze, her lashes hiding the disappointment that emanated from her. While her eyes couldn’t be seen, her despondent aura was palpable.

In truth, she didn’t want to act this way, but in this household, Arabella’s status would only grow stronger while hers would diminish. At this moment, she still had a chance to catch up.

“Miss Serena, these are all imported fruits, and I’ve cut some of each for you. Please, eat them. You didn’t have much in the morning…”

Martha’s empathy was heartwarming. “Oh, and I wanted to tell you that for now, they haven’t revealed Ms. Bennett’s identity to the public, so in the eyes of outsiders, your engagement with Mr. McMillian is still valid…”

Serena’s eyes instantly lit up. Yes, Romeo, she still had Romeo…

What did it matter if she was the daughter of the Collins family? As long as she married Romeo, she would be on top of the world!

“You’ve grown up with Mr. McMillian since childhood. Although you haven’t met often, you still spent more time with him than that Ms. Bennett! She probably hasn’t even seen Mr. McMillian in person!”

“Martha, are you suggesting…?” Serena had a rough idea of what Martha was getting at, but she dared not say it, nor could she.

“I know some people from the McMillian family, and a few of them work at Phillip’s villa. I heard that these days, in order to force Mr. McMillian to show up, Phillip hasn’t been eating or taking his medicine, and he’s practically on the brink of collapse!”

Serena covered her mouth, clearly startled by the revelation.

“But luckily they got to him in time and he’s still kicking! He’s hoping you and Mr. McMillian can pay him a visit. Don’t you have Mr. McMillian’s contact? Why not ask him out?”

“But…”

“He’s running a huge corporation, so he’s definitely busy. But no matter how busy he is, he’s still a red-blooded male! If a pretty girl like you asks him out, he’ll definitely be tempted.”

Martha was confident. “Even if he’s slow on the uptake when it comes to romance and isn’t thinking about marriage yet, there’s no rush. You can spend more time with him, build a stronger connection. Once you two are tight, who cares about Ms. Bennett?!”

“Phillip has always wanted to arrange your marriage. If you gain his approval… what’s there to fret about? You’re practically gonna be his grandchild’s spouse!”

Serena’s desires were reignited, but her rationality held her back.

“Martha, the Collins and McMillian families are engaged, but we both know… that engagement actually belongs to my sister… I’m just a foster daughter.”

Serena seemed slightly swayed by her words.

“Now is the time, while the McMillians are still in the dark about Ms. Bennett. Serena, make your move. This is your best shot!”

Martha had watched her grow up over the years and didn’t want to see her in such a state.

With Mr. McMillian by her side, she could make a name for herself nationwide!

“Ms. Bennett is of high status and won’t have trouble finding a good family to marry into. But you’re different! You don’t have parents or a powerful backing. You’re just a foster daughter of the Collins family, and who knows if they’ll still acknowledge you in the future! You know how high society works. As a foster daughter, marrying well is a tough sell! If you don’t marry Mr. McMillian, you’ll be overshadowed by Ms. Bennett for the rest of your life, always inferior to her!”

Upon Martha’s persuasion, Serena took out her phone and pulled up Romeo’s WhatsApp. There were messages she had sent before.

The messages were things like “Are you asleep?”, “Are you busy today?”, “Goodnight”, but Romeo had never responded to any of them.

The last time she made contact was yesterday, when she had just returned and asked him if he was there. He didn’t reply.

“Miss!”

Martha said a lot more, and Serena finally stopped resisting. She opened the chat and sent several messages in a row.

[Romeo, are you there?]

[I heard your grandpa is sick and in the hospital. Let’s go see him, okay?]

[When are you free today? Can you come pick me up?]

[If not, I can have my driver take me. It won’t be any trouble for you.]

[I’m really worried about Grandpa Phillip!]

On the second floor.

1/2

16:20

Arabella arrived at the spacious balcony and admired the view.

As she was looking, she noticed two figures in the distance apparently discussing something.

She was too far away to hear the contents, but she could tell that those two were Serena and Martha. Serena was sitting in a white wicker chair, and Martha was standing next to her, seemingly persuading her about something.

Arabella wasn’t bothered, and after admiring the views bit more, she went back inside, leaving only Serena and Martha in the garden, nervously staring at the phone.

Unlike before, a new message alert quickly appeared on Serena’s phone screen.

Serena’s heart nearly pumped out of her chest. She looked closely, and sure enough, it was from Romeo.

Romeo had replied.

Romeo had finally replied.

But his response was “No need.”

Serena’s burning heart felt like it had been doused with cold water. It went cold in an instant.

Under Martha’s bad influence, Serena sent a few more messages, saying she was really worried about his grandpa, and knowing he was sick, he’d probably appreciate someone visiting. She was just looking out for Grandpa Phillip on behalf of the Collins family.

By the time lunch was over, Serena still didn’t hear back from Romeo.

She had a hunch that Romeo on the other side was probably not gonna reply.

Meanwhile, Arabella was sitting on the couch with her phone in hand, sending out orders.

Look up the cause of the fire at Mercy Hospital on September 10th, eighteen years ago for me.”

Jeff Boss? Are you pulling my leg? Mercy Hospital???”

That was located at the intersection of three cities, with a hell of a big and complicated population, and so much time had passed, that place was long

gone.

Jeff Boss, why are you looking into this? Does it have something to do with your past?”

Arabella “Mhm”

Arabella always felt that the fire was fishy. Everything was fine one moment, then suddenly there was a fire?

Her mom told her it was a rainy night. Even if someone accidentally started a fire, it shouldn’t have spread that fast.