

THE PRINCESS AND THE PAUPER (ARABELLA)

Chapter 2041

Chapter 2041

"Sure thing."

Bella turned to Romeo with a nod, "I'll be right back."

Romeo gave a casual thumbs-up, "Cool."

Bella followed Louisa over to a foreign gentleman, "Ms. Bella Collins, it's been a while! I never realized

you were the heiress to the Collins family. I was quite shocked when I saw the news."

Louisa appeared taken aback, "You two know each other?"

"Well, we've collaborated a few times before." The gentleman grinned at Bella, then glanced at Louisa,

"Mrs. Collins, I must say, your daughter is incredibly talented and capable."

Bella offered a modest smile and explained, "His imports are top-notch; I've sourced from him a few

times before."

Louisa hadn't expected that the connection she wanted to introduce to her daughter was one Bella had

already established long ago.

She engaged in light conversation with the gentleman before introducing her daughter to other potential

contacts.

Meanwhile, at the hospital.

A nurse administered an injection to Serena to ease her condition.

Seeing Serena lying weakly in the hospital bed, Martin took her hand with a tender grip, "Serena, the

other doctors are on their way; they'll find a way to save you."

"What's wrong with me?" A tear glimmered in Serena's eye, "Why?"

Why she had to be admitted to the ICU out of the blue.

Martin was heartbroken and at a loss for answers.

He couldn't fathom why the girl, who was all smiles just a moment ago, suddenly showed abnormal

vital signs.

None of the doctors at the hospital, not even the renowned ones summoned from nearby, could

diagnose the root of her illness.

On the TV, the evening's gala was still the hot topic.

Martin and Serena saw a photo of Romeo and Bella dancing at the gala.

Despite it being just one

image, the poise and expressions of the couple elicited envy from onlookers, with applause from the

surrounding guests.

A tear welled up in Serena's eyes.

Why?

Why was she suffering for no reason, while Bella got to wear a dazzling gown and dance with the

world's most distinguished gentleman?

The more she withheld, the more they desired it.

How radiant she used to be.

But now, it was Bella standing in the center of the dance floor, basking in the glory that once belonged

to Serena. Content of

Seeing her distress, Martin offered, "I'll turn off the TV."

Serena shook her head; she insisted on watching!

She vowed to remember every person who had trampled her underfoot!

Chapter 2042

The television screen flashed with another live photo, capturing Louisa, arm in arm with her daughter,

chatting with guests, her smile as radiant as the early spring sun. It appeared she was introducing her

daughter to some influential figures.

Tears brimmed in Serena's eyes, her gaze flecked with a hint of resentment.

Her mother, who had once showered her with love and affection, showed no sign of sorrow over her

loss. Instead, this once tender mother now beamed with warmth and cordiality, a stark contrast to the

cold-hearted woman who had locked her in the basement not long ago.

Serena felt a mix of anger, frustration, and hurt as her tears fell like pearls slipping off a broken

necklace.

The following morning.

When Arabella woke up, the house felt eerily quiet. Upon inquiring, she learned that her grandparents

had gone to Hope Hospital for a check-up.

"Are they not feeling well?"

Arabella wondered if her grandparents were unwell and, not wanting to disturb her after the evening's

gala, had quietly slipped away to the hospital for an examination.

"They didn't mention why, but your parents heard about it and have already rushed over. I'm not quite

sure what's going on."

Arabella tried calling her mother, but there was no answer. She then called her father, but again, no one

picked up.

Just as Arabella was about to drive over, a servant hurriedly brought her a sandwich, "Ms. Bella, you

should eat something first. In case there's something there that needs your attention, you might go

hungry for a while."

Touched by the servant's concern, Arabella smiled, accepted the sandwich with a thank you, and ate

her breakfast on the go. As she arrived at Hope Hospital, her mother finally returned her call.

"Bella, why are you up so early? Did you hear about your grandparents coming to the hospital and got

worried?"

Louisa's voice was cheery, "They're fine, dear. They just wanted to show their appreciation to Dr. Pierce

from Hope Hospital. Before you came home, Dr. Pierce took good care of you, and when you were

trending on social media, he stepped in to clear up the situation and explain things for you. So, to thank

him, your grandparents donated some medical equipment to the hospital."

Louisa continued, "Now that the equipment has arrived, Dr. Pierce invited them to have a look and take

the opportunity to do a check-up. It's also a chance to encourage more seniors to commit to yearly health screenings."

Arabella sighed in relief, "That's good to hear. I'm at the hospital now, where are you guys?"

"My dear girl, you came all the way here? Did you have breakfast? I was chatting with Dr. Pierce and

had my phone on silent, didn't see your call. We're now in the emergency building, on the twenty-

second floor. Dr. Pierce has been singing your praises all the way."

"Okay, I'm coming up." Arabella had just ended the call when someone tapped her shoulder.

"Clark? Did you hear about grandparents' check-up at the hospital too?" Read at Dramanovels.com

But since he was there, he might as well go up, see the grandparents, and keep his sister company.

Chapter 2043

"Did you grab breakfast yet?" Clark teased, slinging an arm affectionately over his sister's shoulder.

"There's a diner just around the corner, let's grab a bite."

"I ate before I came over, Clark. How about you?"

"I did. When I was heading out, I've got a bagel to eat on the way."

"I got one too."

They chatted as they walked, and when they reached the 22nd floor, they were surprised not only to

find their grandparents and parents but also their other brothers who had made the trip.

"Why the family gathering." Bernard chuckled, touched by the concern of his grandchildren. It seemed

he'd have to be more explicit next time to avoid such a stir.

"Why are you and Bella here together? Get your arm off her this instant!" David stepped forward upon

seeing Clark's arm around Bella's shoulders, "You're crowding her, she's not comfortable."

"I think you're just jealous." Clark refused to let go, instead pulling her in closer with a mischievous grin.

"You guys hog her all the time, and I never say a word. Finally got my chance to bond, right?"

"Fine, bond all you want, but do you have to be so handsy." David pried his hand away with a smile,

turning to his sister, "Bella, did you have breakfast yet?"

Chasel stepped in, "If not, I can go grab something for you."

Hans added, "Or should I take you down for a snack?"

"How would you know Bella's tastes? I'll go." Sean stepped forward and affectionately ruffled Arabella'

hair. "I will treat you."

"Get your hand off her!" The brothers chorused in objection to his gesture.

The room erupted in laughter at their antics, and Dr. Pierce joined in heartily, "You guys are so

protective, I'm scared to even step forward."

"Pierce." Arabella greeted him with a light smile, then turned to the other elders in the room.

Dr. Pierce beamed, "Seeing you so loved and cherished by everyone here eases my mind. Today, we

owe you big time. Thanks to you, the hospital has received a load of cutting-edge equipment. Your

grandparents sure know how to give, donating hundreds of units."

Cornelia smiled, "We should be thanking you. Before we found Bella, you took such good care of her

for so long."

"Oh, it was nothing." Dr. Pierce waved his hands dismissively, "If we're talking about care, it's her eight

'grandfathers' who deserve the credit, not me. I'm nothing compared to them."

Laughter filled the air once more.

Clark caught Arabella's gaze and followed it, just as surprised to find Serena here.

Serena's caretaker, Dora, was also taken aback, her hand frozen mid-air with the medication for

Serena. She hadn't expected the Collins family to show up en masse.
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He had no idea Serena was a patient in his own hospital, and he paused, taken aback.

Chapter 2044

The rest of the family followed his gaze, and there they saw Serena.

Tears brimmed in Serena's eyes as she instinctively cried out, "Grandma, Grandpa."

Her voice was choked with emotion.

Bernard and Cornelia caught sight of her propped up in the hospital bed, her complexion ashen, limbs

swathed in bandages. A complex expression flickered in their eyes.

In that complexity, there was not a trace of pity.

Serena's tears fell as she turned to look at the couple she once called her parents, her voice hoarse as

she tried once more, "Dad, Mom."

Kenneth and Louisa turned away as if they hadn't seen her, without a single word of response. It

seemed as though they had long become strangers to her.

As Serena's tears continued to fall, she looked to her older brothers, her voice small and tentative,

"Hans?"

Hans' expression remained indifferent, his voice as calm as ever, "You're no longer a part of the Collins

family, and I'm not your brother."

The pain that pierced Serena's heart was unbearable, tears falling as she looked at Chasel and called

out, "Chasel."

"Miss Lott, it's more appropriate for you to call me Mr. Collins."

"Clark." Serena's tears overflowed once more.

Clark's response was cold, "I only have one sister, and that's Bella."

Before Serena could call out to Sean, she felt his displeased gaze and dared not speak further.

Instead, she turned to David.

"No need to call me. We have nothing to do with each other now," David said, his tone equally cold.

The words from her brothers devastated her, the pain in her heart so intense it nearly suffocated her.

Dora, who had witnessed Serena's suffering, couldn't bear it any longer and hurriedly said, "I don't

know what's wrong with Serena. She started vomiting blood out of nowhere last night, and she's in pain

all over – her heart, liver, spleen, lungs, kidneys. We've had so many doctors look at her, and none

could help."

"Let's check out the front," Kenneth suggested, taking his father Bernard's arm, seemingly ignoring

Dora's plea.

Louisa also supported Cornelia, eager to leave the gloomy scene.

"We have some more equipment to look at up front." Dr. Pierce hinted, ready to move on.

"Please, Miss Bella, save Serena!" Dora suddenly knelt in front of Arabella, stunning everyone.

After spending time together, Dora had grown fond of Serena. She knew Martin couldn't cope without

Serena, and besides, Serena had never really mistreated her or June.

She didn't want Serena to die.

"What does her life or death have to do with my sister?" Sean emitted a vibe of displeasure. "It's

already generous that we didn't pull the plug on her."

"Bella won't save her," Hans stated flatly.

"Serena is going to die—" Dora suddenly burst into tears. "The doctor said she won't last another three

days. Miss Bella, please, save Serena!" Updated at

Serena herself was stunned; she hadn't been told this by Martin.

What illness could be so severe?

Why was she left with less than three days to live?

Could it be...

Chapter 2045

Was Arabella really poisoning her?

The thought crossed Serena's mind, and it suddenly seemed all too plausible.

Arabella knew her way around a pharmacy and had every reason to want Serena out of the picture. It

wouldn't be a stretch to imagine her slipping something lethal into Serena's food, especially when

Serena was too preoccupied to notice, maybe even bribing someone to do her dirty work.

Within the walls of the manor, Serena had no enemies.

But it was entirely possible that Arabella had set her sinister plan in motion even before Serena had

stepped foot in the estate.

And even if Arabella hadn't directly handed over the poison, she had plenty of lackeys at her disposal.

Realizing this disturbing possibility had Serena seething with anger.

How could Arabella harbor such malice, to the point of wanting her dead?

"Ms. Bella, please, have mercy and save Serena. we're out of options!" Dora pleaded, tears streaming

down her face as she implored, "Please, just this once, save her."

But watching Dora on her knees begging, Serena had a sudden revelation. Arabella's possible act of

poisoning was perhaps designed to bring Serena to her knees, to grovel before the Collins family like a

dog begging for scraps of mercy.

The thought enraged her even more!

That damn Arabella, so cruel and vile to the core!

Arabella caught a glimpse of the animosity flashing in Serena's eyes. Clearly, there had been some

misunderstanding, but Arabella couldn't be bothered to clarify.

"You're barking up the wrong tree," Arabella said coolly before walking away.

Her brothers hurried after her.

Bernard and Cornelia didn't even spare Serena a second glance, and neither did Kenneth and Louisa,

as they quickly made their exit.

Even Dr. Pierce seemed eager to leave.

Heartbroken and furious, Serena felt utterly betrayed. With the weight of despair and anger upon her,

blood suddenly spurted from her lips.

She could never have imagined that her so-called family would react to her illness with such

dispassion; not a single word of concern, not even a trace of sympathy on their faces.

As her tears fell, she felt utterly devastated.

"Serena." Dora gasped in horror, frantically pressing the call button on the wall.

He knew that Serena's past transgressions were unforgivable in the eyes of the Collins family, and they

would never lift a finger to save her.

Hearing Dora's panicked voice from the room, Martin rushed in.

The white sheets were stained with blood.

His heart broke for her. Content belongs to

"Thank you, Mrs. Collins, for your consideration." Dr. Pierce said gratefully, then continued to lead them

on the hospital tour.

Chapter 2046

In the hallway of the hospital, the sound of an urgent bell sent several doctors and nurses into a sprint,

racing toward Serena's ICU room as if it were the final stretch of a hundred-meter dash.

The Collins family seemed indifferent to her plight; not a single one spared her a second glance.

Martin and Dora waited anxiously outside the room.

After a while, Martin's phone rang.

He stepped out to the large balcony on that floor, his voice tense as he confronted the caller, "Did you

orchestrate all of this?"

"Let's not be too dramatic," the voice on the line replied through a voice changer, always sounding

mechanical and cold, "You knew about her condition. Bacterial infection led to sepsis, organ failure

across the board. Not even Hippocrates could help her, but I happened to have an experimental drug

that could work, though it hadn't passed the final stage of testing."

"I thought it was some miracle cure, and it turns out to be an experimental drug." Martin gripped his

phone tighter, his frustration palpable.

"If you could turn back time, you'd still take it, experimental or not, because what other choice did you

have?"

The mystery person's words only fueled Martin's anger further.

"Experimental drugs come with risks, but don't worry, I have the antidote."

"How do I know your antidote isn't flawed?" Martin asked through clenched teeth.

"Just take the antidote, and all the symptoms will vanish. She can be discharged safely."

The voice remained detached, devoid of any emotion.

"However, the antidote is only a temporary fix. We're working on a permanent solution, which should be

ready in a month. Don't flatter yourself; it's not just for you. We have other plans for it. As long as you

do as you're told, I'll set aside a dose for you once it's ready."

"So, you're saying that without the permanent solution, Serena won't fully recover?"

"That's right."

Martin, seething with rage but keeping his emotions in check, asked, "What do you want from me?"

"That Collins girl." the mystery person paused, then continued, "Her existence is problematic."

Martin understood, "I made a promise to the Collins family; I swore never to harm them."

The caller scoffed mockingly, "Do you think you have a choice now?"

"If it weren't for my promise that night, I never would have taken Serena out."

With that, the call ended abruptly.

Martin clenched his phone tightly, closed his eyes, and made a decision.

After Dr. Pierce had given the Collins family a tour of the hospital, he performed a thorough health

check on Bernard and Cornelia. Content belongs to

At his enthusiastic invitation, Kenneth and Louisa also underwent a checkup.

Chapter 2047

Arabella had become a wellness guru among us," Louisa chuckled, "so we won't keep you any longer,

Dr. Pierce. Thanks for taking time out of your busy schedule to show us around the hospital, for conducting our check-ups personally, and for helping us interpret the reports. We'll be on our way now."

"Let me walk you out." Dr. Pierce accompanied them to the parking lot, continuing, "I should be thanking you, really. The new medical equipment you've donated will help so many patients. On behalf of everyone here, thank you, and your visit to the hospital for check-ups also promotes the importance of regular health screenings."

As the Collins family's car rolled up, Dr. Pierce opened the door, gesturing for Bernard and Cornelia to climb in first.

"Drop by for some coffee when you have a moment," Bernard invited through the car window, his smile warm and inviting.

"Will do, I'll be sure to visit," Dr. Pierce replied with a hearty nod, then proceeded to open the doors for Kenneth and Louisa to get into another vehicle.

"Bella, ride with me," Hans offered, opening his car door.

"No, take mine. I'm planning to take you and Myrna to the amusement park," Chasel countered, holding his door open.

"Let's not be a third wheel, Bella. I can take you somewhere else fun," Clark chimed in.

Sean added, "Come with me, Bella. You haven't spent time with me in a while."

"Bella, hurry up and get in. I don't want to be recognized," David whispered, his face obscured by a hat and sunglasses, fearing fan recognition could spoil their plans.

"I drove here myself, you guys go ahead. My car is parked over there," Arabella stated just as someone called out for her.

"Arabella—"

She turned to see Martin rushing out towards her.

"I need to talk to you about something."

Martin looked urgent, as if it was a matter of great importance, but Sean stepped forward, pushing him

back, "What's the deal, can't you leave her alone?"

"I have something important to discuss with Arabella."

"Back off," Sean warned, unapologetically protective, "come near my sister again, and you'll have me

to answer to."

"Someone's trying to hurt you—" Martin blurted from a safe distance, his eyes filled with desperate

sincerity. "When I took Serena from the Collins family's care, she was barely hanging on. A mysterious

person offered me a medicine on the condition that I do three things for him."

Martin spilled the details, "He didn't specify the tasks at first. Serena seemed to improve after taking the

medicine, but recently she fell ill again, and no doctor can figure out why. That's when he called to tell

me the drug was experimental, and to get the antidote, I would have to eliminate you. I don't want to

be enemies with you or the Collins family. Can you save Serena's life, considering I've come clean to

you?"

"Who is he?" Louisa couldn't help but ask.

"I don't know." Martin admitted, "His voice was distorted, and all my attempts to track him down have

led nowhere."

Louisa felt a cold shiver, wondering if some puppet master feared Bella's sharp intellect and was

seeking to silence her before she uncovered more. New chapter available on Dramanovels.com

The Murphys had caused the death of Granny Grace; she would never lend them a helping hand.

Chapter 2048

"Arabella." Martin's voice trailed off in disbelief as the girl before him stood her ground, unyielding.

"No matter who he sends, they won't even lay a finger on me," Arabella said with a confidence that was

both fierce and calm.

"But did you ever think about the people around you?" Martin couldn't help but blurt out. "They don't all

have your strength."

"You try messin' with Bella's folks, see what happens!" Sean barked, his temper flaring at the thought.

"That mystery guy, he's not just after you. If he can't get to you, he'll target those close to you. It's a no-

brainer."

"Even if I save Serena, he'll still come after me, then why the hell should I bother?" Arabella's retort left

Martin speechless.

"Let him come," Arabella said coolly as she climbed into her car. "I'm curious to see what tricks he's got

up his sleeve."

Martin watched her drive away, the Collins family's cars disappearing one by one from his view.

In the end, all he could do was turn to Dr. Pierce.

"I'm just a dean here; saving lives is a job for the doctors." Dr. Pierce managed the hospital but wasn't

remotely as skilled in medicine as the big-shot doctors.

Martin's gaze lingered on Dr. Pierce's retreating figure, a sense of disappointment washing over him.

Then, his phone rang.

"Martin, you think you're clever, teaming up with the Collins family against me. You can forget about

getting any antidote from me!" The mysterious caller hung up in a rage before Martin could even

respond.

Before he could digest the threat, his phone rang again. It was Dora.

"Sir, Serena's coughing up blood again, and all the doctors you brought in are clueless. What do we

do?"

Hearing this, Martin rushed to the hospital room.

For two long days and nights, Serena's condition worsened, her vomiting of blood becoming more

frequent, and the pain spreading through her body was unbearable.

"Martin, it hurts so much." Serena lay weakly in his arms, tears of despair rolling down her cheeks.

"When are the doctors you called coming? My ears, my eyes, everything hurts so much. I think I'm

dying. Why haven't any new doctors come to see me these past two days?"

Martin fought back tears, unable to tell the girl in his arms that he had run out of options.

Every doctor within his reach had been summoned, and none had an answer for Serena's mysterious

ailment.

Desperate and helpless, Martin could only watch as Serena suffered, the ordeal draining him of all his

strength.

"Martin, say something." Serena pleaded, her voice weak, sensing his guilt and sorrow. "Is it true?"

Have the doctors given up on me? Are you unable to find anyone? Am I really going to die?" Read at

Tears filled Martin's eyes as he whispered, "I'll find a way."

Arabella had her cornered, demanding that she beg for forgiveness and the antidote.

Chapter 2049

Realizing the grim possibility, Serena spat out another mouthful of blood, a mix of sorrow and fury

overwhelming her until she slipped into unconsciousness.

The medical machines blared their alarming tones, and Martin, sensing the urgency, immediately

pressed the call button.

Doctors and nurses rushed in once again, ushering him out.

Outside the hospital room, Martin, at his wit's end, dialed the number of that enigmatic contact once

more.

For two days and nights, the mysterious person hadn't taken his calls. This time was no different; the

call went unanswered.

Call after call, Martin's efforts seemed in vain. Clearly, he had been discarded like a useless pawn.

Despair and helplessness washed over Martin as he covered his face with his hands, sobbing.

After what felt like an eternity, the medical team emerged, and with a heavy heart, one of them

announced, "Mr. Cooper, you've got the last three hours to say your goodbyes to Serena."

"What did you say?" Martin stood up, tears brimming in his eyes.

"We've done all we can," the nurse said with regret. "Serena's condition has taken a severe turn for the

worse."

"Can't you do anything else to save her?"

"Her illness is peculiar, complex. We've never seen anything like it in all our years," one doctor

admitted, though it was clear to him that not even Ms. Bella could save Serena now.

Martin's tears fell freely. He knew all too well that Arabella was determined not to lend a hand.

"If Dr. Caden were still here, maybe he could've done something, but he left Hope Hospital a long time

ago. We've only seen him once since then, at Ms. Bella's homecoming party. Other than that, he's been

out of sight."

Finding him was like looking for a needle in a haystack.

And Serena couldn't wait that long.

"We are truly sorry," the doctors and nurses said in unison, bowing to express their deepest apologies

before leaving, helpless.

Martin pushed open the door to the hospital room and saw Serena on the bed, looking as fragile as a

porcelain doll, her complexion pale and weak, eyes closed as if she might slip away at any moment.

The shallow peaks and valleys on the medical monitor indicated her breathing was barely there.

"She brought this on herself," came the cold voice of Diana from the doorway.

Rolling her eyes, Diana walked into the adjacent room. Content belongs to

Martin sat by the bedside, holding Serena's hand, his tears falling unrestrained.

After a moment, Serena's fingers twitched, and her eyelids slowly opened.

She parted her lips, as if struggling to speak.

Chapter 2050

Martin rushed to the railing, "Serena, what are you trying to say?"

"Martin." Serena's breath was faint, as if summoning her last bit of life, she struggled to utter, "I don't want to die."

Tears welled up in Martin's eyes once again.

"I haven't gotten engaged to you, haven't started a family with you. I really don't want to die."

After murmuring those words and shedding tears, Serena slipped back into unconsciousness.

Martin's tears, once more, became uncontrollable, like a dam breaking under the force of a flood.

After composing himself, Martin dialed the mysterious caller again, persistently ringing through without

a response, refusing to waste a single second.

After countless attempts, the call was finally answered.

"Don't hang up!" Martin pleaded urgently, "I'll do anything you ask, just save her."

"How can I trust you again? Besides, I have many pawns in my game; your absence wouldn't be the end of the world."

"As you've said, no one else can save her but you. I'm still waiting for the final antidote. so in the

meantime, I'll do whatever you command! I won't ignore your orders. You might find someone else, but

they might not be as capable as me, and they might not have the right motivation to take on the Collins

family."

Because Serena was his girlfriend, and Arabella refused to save Serena, Martin, in a fit of rage, had

someone take out Arabella. This reason could keep the mysterious person out of the picture and direct

the Collins family's vengeful fury solely at Martin, clearing the mysterious figure.

That was why the mysterious caller wanted him to strike at Arabella.

"Come to the terrace on this floor." The voice on the phone seemed to relent.

Martin immediately left the hospital room balcony and dashed towards the terrace on that floor.

Dora, curious, peeked out from the doorway and was shocked to see her boss kneeling on the terrace.

She had no idea who he was on the phone with, could it be Ms. Bella?

To save Serena, her boss, a man of such stature, was actually kneeling in public to someone on the phone.

Dora was taken aback by the depth of Martin's love for Serena.

Such love was truly staggering.

"Kneel for two hours, and I'll give you the antidote," the voice on the phone ended the call abruptly.

Martin knelt there on the terrace, knowing he had to let the mysterious caller have their way, or else the antidote would not be handed over.

That was all she could do.

She had to preserve the Cooper family's dignity.

The Cooper family's honor was at stake.

Diana, hearing the nurse's instructions through the wall-mounted communication system, was puzzled.

What was happening? Content belongs to

For heaven's sake, why were the families being told not to leave their rooms?